Lazar
KAGANOVICH

ПАМЯТНЫЕ ЗАПИСКИ

MEMORIAL NOTES

Lazar KAGANOVICH

MEMORIAL NOTES
WORKER, COMMUNIST-BOLSHEVIK, TRADE UNION, PARTY AND SOVIET-STATE WORKER

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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE BOOK

VATO – All-Union Association of the Automobile and Transport Industry
VOSO – Military Railway School of Military Communications named after Frunze (1918–)
VTsIK – All-Russian Central Executive Committee (1917–1938)
Gosplan – State Plan
GPU – State Political Administration (1923–1923)
zavorg – head of an organization
ZSFSR – Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic (1922–1936)
ECCI – Executive Committee of the Communist International (1919–1943)
IMEL – Institute of Marxism–Leninism (Marx–Engels–Lenin Institute)
CPC – Party Control Commission
CPT – Communist Party of Turkestan (1918–1924)
LKSMU – Leninist Communist Youth Union of Ukraine
MGB – Ministry of State Security of the USSR (1946–1953)
MIIT – Moscow Institute of Transport Engineers
MK – Moscow Committee
Mossovet – Moscow City Council
MTS – Machine and Tractor Station (1928–1958)
MEMI – Moscow Electromechanical Institute of Transport Engineers
NKVD – People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (1917–1946)
NKPS – People's Commissariat of Railways (1917–1946)

NEP – New Economic Policy (1921–1928)
PB – Party Bureau
Politburo – Political Bureau
PPS – Polish Party of Socialists (1892–1948)
Industrial Academy – All-Union Industrial Academy of the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry (1925–1941)
RCP – Russian Communist Party (1918–1925)
RSDLP – Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (1898–1960s)
RSFSR – Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (1917–1922, 1922–1991)
SKF – North Caucasian Front
Sovnarkom – Council of People's Commissars (Sovnarkom of the USSR, Sovnarkom of the RSFSR, 1917–1946)
TSEKODARF – Central Committee of the Active Army and Navy
VKP(b) – All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) (1925–1952)

FROM THE PUBLISHER

The reader will become acquainted with a book that is unusual in every respect.
What's most unusual is the personality of its author. Lazar Moiseevich Kaganovich—a prominent member of Stalin's "guard," one of the first members of the Politburo and the government of the USSR, a leader of the country's industry and transportation for more than a quarter of a century, an unwavering Bolshevik who remained true to his convictions until the end of his long life.
The very existence of Kaganovich's memoirs was long the subject of serious doubt. "Such people take their secrets to the grave"—that summary concluded almost every article about Kaganovich or rare interviews with him published in newspapers and magazines during perestroika (before that, Lazar Moiseevich had been a "figure of silence" for almost thirty years).
But the memoirs do exist. Kaganovich began writing them shortly after his resignation from all party and government posts in 1957 and completed them (or rather, not finished them) on the day of his death in 1991. This enormous work comprises over 14,000 handwritten pages. Many of them are difficult to decipher: in the final years of his life, Kaganovich's eyesight was very poor, his hand was weakening, and he had to write using a special stencil, and he categorically refused to dictate his memoirs.
Those hoping to find sensational revelations about the "bloody regime," gripping tales of "Kremlin secrets," or a savoring of the "private passions of the Kremlin's denizens" in this book will be sorely disappointed. The author, naturally, had other goals in mind.
First of all, Kaganovich’s “Memoirs” are the memoirs of a man who was absolutely convinced of his personal, political, and historical correctness and who did not change his views depending on the situation.
The editorial team has done a tremendous amount of work.

The processing of Kaganovich's archive and the compilation of the book were undertaken. Naturally, any political motives were completely excluded. We deliberately omitted any notes or commentary, striving to avoid any interpretation of the author's text. From the vast array of material, we selected those fragments that would be of greatest interest to the reader (stories about key moments in state and party life, the author's personal impressions, his assessments of Politburo colleagues, his perspective on the country's development after Stalin's death, unique documents and letters, etc.). Much, naturally, was left out of the publication—the book's size did not allow for the inclusion of more material. However, given that Kaganovich often quoted dozens of pages of transcripts from CPSU congresses, Central Committee plenary sessions, and other published documents, the volume of omissions is not as extensive as it might seem.
Lazar Moiseevich's language and style have been preserved intact. Only individual phrases have been edited, with spelling and punctuation verified in accordance with linguistic norms.
Kaganovich's archive also contained a large number of rare, never-before-published photographs. The most interesting of these served as illustrations for the book.

CREATOR OF THE ERA

When I was offered the opportunity to publish "Memorial Notes," I hesitated. My father intended for "Memorial Notes" to be written not for the sensationalist layperson, but rather for the archives. A scholar-historian, a researcher of the era in which L.M. Kaganovich lived and worked, would come to use the recollections of an eyewitness and participant in the events of that time.
Proposals for publication were made at the end of his life, but when the question of publishing the "Notes" arose, doubts and worries arose. He lamented that for 30 years he had striven to preserve

his optimism and dignity, his convictions and principles, but the problems of publishing his memoirs were unsettling him, undermining his health, and causing him anxiety and worry. He did not want the "Notes" to be subjected to editorial cuts and changes that he might not agree with when published. However, he later changed his mind and agreed to publish the "Notes" in an abridged version.

My father began working on the "Notes" after returning from exile in the early 1960s. It is known that, after being removed from all his posts under pressure from Khrushchev (his "protégé" and student) and expelled from the Central Committee, he was sent to Asbest in the Sverdlovsk region as manager of the Soyuzasbest trust, where he worked from August 1957 to June 1959. After Asbest, he was assigned to Kalinin (Tver) as his place of residence, without the right to a residence permit or residence in Moscow. He was later allowed to register in Moscow at the apartment of his wife, my mother, Maria Markovna Kaganovich. After their departure from the residence of a Politburo member, this apartment was given specifically to her, as an Old Bolshevik (since 1909) and trade unionist. She even received "Kremlin" rations for this occasion, which was their main source of food at the time.

After arriving in Moscow, having rested and recovered somewhat, my father began working on his memoirs. He felt the need for this and generally said that his state outside of work

For him, it didn't exist. At times, he expressed surprise and even resentment that his knowledge and experience as a party and economic worker remained unclaimed. He spent a long time choosing a title and settled on "Memoranda," not knowing what it would lead to, and emphasizing that, at least initially, he did not claim to be a comprehensive and systematized work.

In recent years, my father became a completely different person. His characteristic "explosiveness," harshness, and suspicion disappeared, and a humorous, gentle manner appeared, along with a desire to consult with loved ones, especially my mother, and later, me.

Naturally, my father never kept any diaries. His personal library—35,000 volumes—was a great help in his work. He also drew on books from the Lenin and Historical Libraries, materials from the Central State Archive of the October Revolution, and, of course, his own archive, which he maintained in exemplary order.

The work progressed slowly and with difficulty. His poor living conditions, deteriorating health, and his wife's illness all hampered him. In 1959, he was assigned a pension of 115 rubles 20 kopecks. There weren't enough certificates for the regular pension of 120 rubles. I spent a long time going to the Social Security Office with a volume of the Great Soviet Encyclopedia (1953 edition), which listed all his positions, but the office replied that the Great Soviet Encyclopedia wasn't a valid document for them. He underwent two surgeries at Botkin Hospital, but he needed constant care and medical attention. Finally, I made up my mind and, without my father's knowledge, began writing letters to various high-ranking authorities, seeking improvements in the situation of the Hero of Socialist Labor. I wrote to Khrushchev, Kosygin, and Brezhnev—and received no responses, positive or negative. Meanwhile, he was writing letters asking for his party membership to be reinstated. Finally, they gave him a personal pension and the right to use a good clinic (I only asked for a clinic). He, of course, thanked me, but told me, "It would be better if they reinstated me in the party."

My mother died back in 1961; she and my father had lived together for 50 years. From then on, my father remained alone in his apartment. I worked and lived separately with my family, visiting him twice a week. He often cooked his own food or used what I brought him from the cafeteria. During this time, he often repeated the statement that every person

must take care of himself until he dies (or at least as long as he can).

His health deteriorated, and he began to hurry, writing less and less thoroughly. Consequently, the handwritten material devoted to his youth, the revolution, and the first post-revolutionary decades takes up considerably more space than the description of subsequent events. In 1985, he broke his hip and was forced to use crutches from then on. Visits to the library and archives ceased. His eyesight deteriorated sharply. He now watched television through binoculars. We tried using a stencil, the kind used by the blind, and a dictaphone, but all of this was quite difficult. It became especially difficult in his last year, as what he wrote was then almost illegible. In this regard, the editors of this book undertook an incredibly difficult task, deciphering his final notes.

I can't help but mention one more thing. In recent years, after my father's retirement from the political arena, many fabrications and fables, and often downright slander, have surfaced about him and others, picked up and spread by some domestic and foreign journalists. Some did so, obviously, in an attempt to denigrate the past by any means necessary, others in pursuit of well-paid sensations. I am thinking primarily of the book "The Kremlin Wolf" by the American journalist S. Kagan, who, claiming to be his nephew, unearthed a whole bouquet of slanderous fabrications. Suffice it to mention the fabrication of a certain mythical sister, Rose, who never existed. L.M. Kaganovich's only sister, Rakhil, lived her entire life with her husband and six children in Chernobyl and died in 1926 in Kiev, where she is buried. This is not the place to examine and refute all of Kagan's fabrications in detail. What's important is that he isn't related and never met the father, although he cites personal conversations with him as a source of information. In fact, the book's defamatory nature is acknowledged in the afterword that Progress Publishing House included with its publication. Its gist is that the book is terrible and a "historical fantasy," and, taken objectively, it wasn't even worth publishing.

print, but it is done for opportunistic reasons.| My father always treated such things with disdain, recalling Pushkin's words "accept praise and slander with indifference..." But sometimes he still reacted, especially if it concerned

Accusations of involvement with Zionism or anti-Semitism. This was the reason, in particular, for his reaction to the book "Beware of Zionism," which went unanswered, and for a letter published in the newspaper "Arguments and Facts." Kagan's book was published in Russian by Progress Publishing House after his death (which, I believe, is no coincidence). However, a group of relatives sent a letter of protest and refutation to the publisher, which remained unanswered.

In just a quarter of a century, my father wrote over 14,000 pages of handwritten text (about 5,000 pages of typewritten text) for the "Memoranda," never completing the work. He died at his desk on July 25, 1991, at the age of 97, from a heart attack.

I believe he didn't simply want to talk about his life and work, although that was important to him, especially since it offers insight into the lives of all working people before the October Revolution and the early years of Soviet power. An era had passed, and he was one of its active creators, and he didn't regret it, though he repeatedly acknowledged that not everyone had done as they should have, and he didn't hide his own mistakes. But he firmly believed that its achievements should not be lost in people's memories; he wanted to pass the baton on to future generations.

I hope that the publication of the "Notes" will help us understand my father as he really was, dispel the fabrications and slander, and restore his good name. I express my gratitude to VAGRIUS Publishing House and to all those whose efforts enabled this work to see the light of day, and to the sympathetic reader to gain an understanding of the life and work of L.M. Kaganovich and preserve his fond memory.

Maya Lazarevna Kaganovich

MEMORIAL NOTES

PREFACE

I began writing my “Memorandums” in the 60s, after I found myself in retirement, although not immediately.
It took some time to get over the party-political blow that we—Molotov, Kaganovich, Malenkov, and Shepilov—received in 1957, when we were expelled from the Central Committee and the Politburo, and then in 1961 we were expelled from the party as well.
In the following presentation, when I come to the years 1957-1961, I will tell in more detail how the Khrushchev group faction carried out this reprisal against the long-standing members of the Politburo who were most loyal to Marxism-Leninism.
It is difficult, impossible to describe the grave situation of people who gave their entire lives to the cause of the working class, the working people, the cause of the Leninist Communist Party, and who suddenly found themselves expelled from the party.
My personal situation was further aggravated by the fact that, to my great grief, at that time my wife Maria Markovna, my military friend, a member of the party since 1909, with whom I had spent 50 years of family, personal, and party life, passed away.
But I overcame this state of mind as a Bolshevik. It was conquered, above all, by my conscious, scientific faith in the Great Idea of Socialism and Communism.
This idea is higher, more significant, more powerful than personal moments and life, and the struggle for the realization of this idea is necessary and possible under any conditions.
To live as I was before the revolution, a proletarian Bolshevik. That's what I've remained, and still am.
I'm back to square one.
As in the old days, I found an audience in the noble residents of our large building. Workers, employees, and even intellectuals gathered around me. They asked numerous questions on various topics. I answered them willingly and clearly, and then the conversation simply flowed. I was and remain grateful to the residents.

Our and the surrounding homes for their warm and friendly attitude towards me and those who surround me and encourage me. Life is only good when interacting with people. I once again felt like the old propagandist and agitator for the party, for Marxism-Leninism, for socialism-communism.
After classes, they would come to my place in the park, the courtyard, or even, sometimes, in bad weather, to my apartment. They would bombard me with questions. The most common questions were about the history of pre-revolutionary work.
I told them willingly and passionately, and this brought me closer to working on my memories.
I can't say I was completely free of work. Besides the aforementioned propaganda work, I wanted to live a full life for the country and the party; I subscribed to and read more newspapers and magazines than before. I delved into all matters of the internal life of the party and the state, as well as foreign policy.
Moreover, I couldn't break my habit of preparing amendments to draft Politburo decisions and Council of Ministers resolutions. And, based on the decisions already adopted and published in the newspapers, I noted my potential amendments that I would have made had I participated in the meetings.
Some of my friends have criticized me for not writing memoirs. They haven't taken into account that it takes time for me, as they say, to come to my senses and focus. I've told them that I place great importance on memoirs, or, as those who like foreign words say, "memoirs."

I became even more focused on my self-education and began visiting the V.I. Lenin Library. It was during this time, in the second half of the 1960s, that I began work on my memoirs, "Memoranda," and worked on them continuously for many years, until 1985, when I spent five months in the hospital after a broken hip and left on crutches.
It should be noted that my work was not easy because, unlike other memoirists who focused on limited areas, I was tasked with working across many geographical areas and sectors. Therefore, I had to strain my memory, gathering relevant materials across all these areas and sectors. My archives, if they survive, are also scattered across many places, and I had no access to them. This was especially true in the Central Committee of the CPSU, the Central Committee of Ukraine, and the Moscow Party Committee.

But, as always, necessity and determination mobilize forces, and I am accustomed to the tension of work.
In approaching this work, I proceed from the premise that the memoirs of Bolshevik communists, regardless of the scale of their work and the scope of their activities, are of great importance not so much for satisfying the natural desire to recount the path they have traveled, but rather for providing all possible assistance in revealing, through concrete facts of the workers' and party collectives' participation in the struggle and work, the full grandeur and richness of the experience of our mighty Leninist Party. Without claiming to offer scholarly historical generalizations or a comprehensive account of events, these memoirs supplement scholarly history with the lived experience of the masses and their organizers who participated in the revolution. In this way, they contribute to the objective scientific generalization of the historical meaning of events. Furthermore, it seems to me that memoirs capture the essence of an era, sometimes perhaps even more so than history textbooks.
If a Bolshevik memoirist succeeds not only in recounting his actual journey as a revolutionary fighter within the great proletarian and party collective, but also, at least partially, in revealing the inner process of the formation and development of his revolutionary class consciousness and his understanding of the surrounding world with all its class, political, and psychological contradictions, then he will especially help young people of the present and future generations to seek, find, and choose the right paths for their lives and the revolutionary struggle for the victory of a new world, communism. This is crucial not only for finding the path, but also for avoiding stumbling along this difficult path to a new world in which the exploitation of man by man will be finally abolished and where a full-fledged, universal, true humanism will be realized—the world of communism.
It was precisely to this great goal that the entire life, work, struggle and creations of our brilliant teachers—Marx, Engels and Lenin, their great comrades and all communists, their faithful students and followers—were dedicated.
The memoirs of communists should also be dedicated to this; they are written not to avoid remaining in obscurity, but to continue the struggle for the complete and final victory of socialism and communism.
This is precisely the main task of memories - to show

The past should not be like last year's snow—bright, colorful, and useful in its time, but supposedly of no value for the present and future—but rather reveal the past as a sharp weapon for the present and future struggle of communists, the proletariat, and the oppressed of all countries. Only then will our memories refute the bourgeois adage that "old people live only on memories of the past." By accurately illuminating the past, they will continue their international communist work and revolutionary struggle in the present.

The past, linked to the present, to living reality, is both the present and the future. Our Bolshevik, Leninist past is not the dead history of a supposedly completed revolutionary struggle, but the living, active history of an unfinished, still-ongoing revolutionary struggle in the present stage. The history of the Great October Revolution is a living, instructive history for all proletarian revolutionaries of all countries of the world, created today by revolutionary peoples, first and foremost by the proletariat – it is the life and struggle against capitalism-imperialism of hundreds of millions – past, present and future.

Therefore, memoirs must be filled with revolutionary content, the essence of that selfless struggle and its results, which the proletariat waged and achieved in alliance with the peasantry under the leadership of Lenin's party.

To achieve this, the coverage of specific facts in the memoirs must not be empirical, but closely linked to the general fundamental ideological and political line of the party, its revolutionary consistency - bringing the revolution to the victory of dictatorship and socialism-communism.

The memoirist is an important assistant to the historian. And he or she must adhere to the same fundamental law that confronts every historian. This fundamental law is a specific historical approach to the context in which a particular fact, a particular phenomenon, occurred.

Ignoring the specific conditions of the historical stage in which certain events, phenomena, and facts occurred inevitably leads to a biased coverage of the facts that took place.

A historian or memoirist who ignores the law of historicism and compares and evaluates facts solely by their superficial appearances, regardless of specific historical circumstances, is, in essence, a historical counterfeiter. Unfortunately, many such historians have emerged in our country, especially since 1987. And, even more regrettably, it must be said that among such historians are also communists, especially among the scribblers.

A Bolshevik memoirist cannot and should not simply recount facts; they must have an ideological, revolutionary, and party-principled position, firmly adhering to the party's general line, which guides their coverage of facts, the results of the past, their assessments of the present, and the resulting prospects for the future. Fulfilling this task is a difficult and complex undertaking.

My "Memories" cover all periods of my participation in the revolutionary workers' movement, the struggle and work of the Leninist Bolshevik Party, beginning with the period of a new upsurge of the revolutionary workers' movement of 1911-1914 and ending with the period of building socialism in our Soviet country, the victory of our socialist fatherland over German fascism and Japanese militarism, the restoration and development of the socialist economy on a new, higher technical basis and the development of the construction of the material and technical base of communism.

At all stages, I fought and worked as a revolutionary Marxist, as a loyal Leninist, on the tasks of the party and the instructions of its leading bodies, starting with the cell, the district committee and ending with the Central Committee of the party - as an advanced worker, as an ordinary party member, as a grassroots party organizer, agitator and propagandist and as a leading figure of the party as a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU and a member of the Soviet government - people's commissar, minister, deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, member of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and member of the Presidium of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, etc.

But the main thing that I always remember is that the ability of a worker, his role develops only in a team and thanks to the team, and therefore in memoirs the use of the pronoun "I" should in no way push aside or obscure the main thing: the team, the masses, the class, as well as the objective historical conditions of the struggle and the like, that is, everything without which the individual not only cannot

develop, but also simply live and exist. Therefore, even where I have to talk about myself (especially in the brief summary of this introduction), I always mean myself as part of the collective —that constant, true creator of all that exists.
In 1985, I suspended my work on the “Memorandums,” finishing the notes in 1953, when the Party and the Soviet people suffered a grave loss—the death of their leader and director, Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin.
I subsequently resumed work on the "Memoranda" from 1953, including the years 1957-1961, but I did not complete this period. I will have to finish it.
I do not intend to describe and evaluate the entire period of my leadership of the party and the country in the 1960s and 1970s in my "Memoirs," as I was not involved in this work, and writing about it would amount to historical reviews rather than memoirs. However, I cannot avoid commenting on the current stage of the grave economic and political crisis facing our homeland and our beloved Communist Party of the Soviet Union. It is very difficult to dwell on the affairs and reminisces of bygone years when today the Soviet people are experiencing difficult material and cultural conditions, when all active forces are seeking the causes of the current difficult situation, which has now lasted six years, and a way out. As a communist, I, along with all communists, am concerned about the state of my party and seek ways for it to regain its former authority as the leading force of our Soviet socialist workers' state.
I confess that, having lost my sight and unable to read newspapers and magazines myself—some of which are read to me—it's difficult for me to take on such work today. Especially since I can't write about everything that's happening in the country today; I'll try to write these thoughts, albeit haphazardly, in a light, haphazard manner.
And we must write, because today we are talking not simply and not only about educating people, but about an ideological struggle against all those who seek to discredit, denigrate, and besmirch all the heroic, ideological, cultural-theoretical, revolutionary-educational work that our great heroic Marxist-Leninist Party of the Soviet Union has carried out over its hundred-year existence.
Decisions taken by our party itself, on its initiative, on the expansion of democracy. democratic foundations of our state

and public life, the development of glasnost and the permission of a multi-party system (unfortunately, even without restrictions for such parties as the monarchist, fascist and similar ones) are used by elements and groups hostile to the working class, the collective farm peasantry and socialism to undermine the strength, power and independence of our Soviet state and even to restore the old, pre-revolutionary order in which the exploitation of man by man reigned.
Of course, among the mushrooms that have grown abundantly in the soil of the multi-party system, there are edible mushrooms from which one can cook an edible dish, but along with them, numerous poisonous fly agaric mushrooms have also grown, which poison the atmosphere of consolidation of revolutionary socialist forces and hinder the exit from the crisis.
If all genuine communists, not mere weathervane-like ones, and honest Soviet people take up the ideological and political struggle against the opponents of socialism, and especially against its enemies, and repel all those who muddy the waters, denigrate everything old, and slander the achievements of not only our great leaders Lenin, Stalin, and even Marx, then our Communist Party of the Soviet Union will regain its political authority. If all workers, all revolutionary collective farmers, and the best revolutionary elements of the Soviet intelligentsia mobilize their creative energies in production, in the workshops, in the fields, and in cultural and scientific institutions, then the enemies of socialism will be defeated, and socialism—and then, in the long term, communism—will triumph!
1960-1991 L.M. Kaganovich Moscow Hero of Socialist Labor, personal pensioner
Union significance

Chapter 1

THE BEGINNING OF THE JOURNEY: CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE

KABAN VILLAGE

The village of Kabany is located deep in the Ukrainian Polesia region, on the border with Belarusian Polesia (for example, the village of Pavlovichi, two miles from our village, was already in the Minsk province). Our village wasn't a remote Polesia village; a major road from Chernobyl to Khavnoye ran through it. Our village was located 30 kilometers from Chernobyl, and this road was used by tarantasses, wagons with passengers, and sometimes even closed carriages carrying high-ranking landowners and officials, for whom the unpaved road was intensively repaired by the surrounding peasants. The village of Kabany was, one might say, a large village—over 300 households, and on its western outskirts was a small Jewish colony of 15-20 households. We children were interested in the history of our village. Our neighbor, Anton Kirilenko, considered an enlightened peasant in the village, told us a few things. He served as a soldier, learned to read and write, was a middle-class peasant of modest means, kept bees, and loved children, since he was childless. We, the boys, were frequent guests at his home. We listened to his stories about the railway that carried him to the army, about the great steam locomotive, about great bridges, about the wide Volga, which is ten times wider than our Usha River, about the huts floating on the Volga, "which are called steamboats, ten times larger than my house", and more.
There were plenty of animals around: moose, badgers, otters, wild boars—all of them had died out, and the only thing left of the boars was the name of our village, "Kabany." There were still foxes, minks, ermines, and beavers left, but in much smaller numbers—the peasant hunters.

In my time, people still hunted, especially mink, ferret, and ermine. Wolves were always active; I remember even in my time, entire raids were organized to exterminate them. They killed a fair number of them, but never managed to eradicate them completely. Birds were also heavily hunted: ducks, black grouse, hazel grouse, and so on. Fishing was also a popular pastime, not only to feed the family but also to sell, mostly frozen.
Anton Kirilenko considered his family to be one of the first to settle the village of Kabany, “but when it happened, I myself don’t remember”.
Even in my time, there was plenty of forest near the village, plenty of wood for building, but it had to be harvested at night, as it was forbidden and foreign to the peasants. They, however, managed to build houses for themselves from large, thick logs. But in the village itself, the forest had long since been almost entirely cut down; only a few willows remained, and then some, along with small woods on the outskirts of the village. Because of the deforestation, the river that flowed through the village itself had become shallow and, in places, dry, flooding only in the spring. But further from the village was the large, navigable Usha River and some fairly full-flowing ponds, filled by the spring floods, where we usually went swimming. The small woods that remained on the outskirts of the village were both a place for us children to stroll and a place to pick berries, wild apples, and pears (there were few cultivated orchards, only three or four belonging to the wealthy kulaks). Here we prepared good birch bathhouse brooms and, in addition, stripped off the bark, which was bought from us for 1 kopeck per substantial bundle by a customer who came from time to time.
The large forests remained five miles from the village: these were industrial forests, primarily pine, spruce, and oak. The oaks were thick, about an arshin or more in diameter, and were specially edged into "plaksons" (or "plaksons") and, as the peasants said, "sold abroad for a large price for ships." Unfortunately, all that remains of these thick oaks is the name of the village and the recently built railway station, Tovsty Lis.

In 1947, when I visited the village, the peasants of Tovsty Lis told me with bitterness how, during the occupation, the Nazis completely cut down all the oak groves and rapaciously cut down the forests throughout the entire area.
As in most areas of Polesia in the Kiev province, our village is dominated by sandy loam, sandy, and slightly podzolic soils, plus marshy areas. There are also good soils that provide

A good harvest, but through various combinations of wealthy and powerful individuals in the volost government, they ended up in the hands of wealthy kulaks, of whom there were approximately 5-10 households in the village, and wealthy peasants, of whom there were approximately 30 households. They were the ones who got good harvests.
The poor peasants, who lacked draft animals and implements, farmed the land poorly, had little or no manure, and didn't even consider other forms of fertilizer. As a result, the sandy and sandy loam soils yielded meager harvests for the poor, while the middle peasants, of whom there were about 100 households, also had meager harvests. Therefore, by January, most poor peasants, and even some of the middle peasants, were left without enough bread to feed their families. They fell into bondage to the kulaks, and many went out to earn money, especially in logging.
The peasants of our village, like many others around it, had historically been "state" peasants and lived by laws established by Peter the Great. In fact, there was no significant difference between the so-called "state" (government) peasants and the landowners' peasants. After the so-called "liberation" of the peasants from serfdom, laws were also passed regarding the "state" peasants, who were granted the right to perpetual use of their land plots for a quitrent, which was unaffordable for the poor. A subsequent law in the last quarter of the 19th century forced the "state" peasants to forcibly and obligatorily redeem their plots, making large redemption payments over a period of nearly 50 years. Naturally, the poor and some of the middle peasants found themselves in an extremely difficult situation, which was exploited by the kulaks and the wealthy, enslaving the poor and some of the middle peasants and alienating their lands.
Many poor people actually sold their land and went wherever their eyes looked, in search of non-agricultural work.
Some went to work as farmhands on nearby landowners' estates. The largest and wealthiest landowner was Horvat. His main estate and distilleries were located 10-15 miles from our village, but his lands and branches were right next to our village and the village of Martynovichi, where the branch manager, a former officer named Ladyzhensky, was "notorious" for his cruel treatment of farmhands and peasants.
For the so-called "state" peasants, the tsarist autocratic

The state acted as the same landowner exploiting the peasantry. Lenin always pointed out that after the so-called reform, the peasants remained tax-paying cattle, abused by the tsarist authorities, who extorted taxes. In addition to high redemption payments, the peasants paid the state land tax and various other zemstvo, volost, and village dues. The tsarist authorities timed the collection of taxes to the fall, i.e., the harvest, so that in fact, the majority of the peasants' harvest was already doomed to confiscation. Consequently, arrears grew monstrously, and the peasant lived in perpetual bondage, "not himself," as they said, forever in debt and bondage to the kulaks and the wealthy.
The "state" villages were governed by a zemstvo chief, who was also a nobleman, but impoverished and even more embittered, and by a volost government, which encompassed a number of villages and hamlets, headed by a headman, and in each village and hamlet, by a village elder. The headman was usually a kulak; the poor peasants opposed to him were scattered; they rarely succeeded in bringing in a more lenient, accommodating leader from the wealthy middle peasantry, but this gained them little.

There was a so-called peasant commune, but its role was severely limited, especially since it was dominated by kulaks and the wealthy. The enslaved status of the poor resulted in the best lands ending up in the hands of kulaks and wealthy peasants. This was the primary class antagonism in our village. Land holdings, already small among the poor, were shrinking year after year due to the division of families. This resulted in extreme land shortages.
Very often, sometimes annually, lands were redistributed and subdivided as families grew and separated. Wild fights erupted over boundaries. Those terrible days—weeks of redivisions of land and meadows, always ending in bloody brawls—have remained etched in my childhood memory for the rest of my life. I have never forgotten, and will never forget, the harrowing sight of our good neighbor being brought home from the meadows with his belly slit open by a scythe, his entrails spilling out. Naturally, I didn't fully understand the class implications of this event back then, but I knew that our neighbor was very poor and that the poor man had been stabbed to death by his wealthy relative, which evoked anger and curses from us children, while the slain man's family evoked great sympathy and childish tears.

Due to the presence of significant tracts of meadow in the village, livestock farming developed, but the poor had one cow, and some did not even have that, not to mention oxen and horses.
I remember how our neighbors Ignat Zhovna and Tereshko struggled all their lives to acquire “at least small oxen”, but they never succeeded.
Everyone's huts were wooden, but the poorer ones were very cramped. Everyone slept together on the sleeping platform, while the elderly and children slept on the stove. The floors were clay. There was plenty of wood around, but there were no planks. In winter, calves and small pigs were allowed into the huts. Not everyone had kerosene lamps, and many who did have lamps didn't have kerosene, "because they didn't have the money to buy it" (because they had no money to buy it—ed.), so many huts were lit with torches. The roofs were thatched and often leaked during heavy rains. The middle class had reed roofs; only the rich and well-off had shingles. Clothing—trousers, zapaski (spare boots), shirts, svitkas (a fur coat), and, in winter, a kozhuk (a sheepskin coat, for the poor, was simply a name)—was made from local village fabric and sheepskin. Only for major celebrations and weddings would they wear brightly embroidered shirts and harem pants, and after returning from work, the boys would appear in clothes made of cheap, "urban" fabric and cut. Footwear was predominantly postoli (bast shoes); the rich and well-off had boots.
By nature, the people were not violent, one could say peaceful, but vodka (Monopoly was discovered in our village in the early 1900s) when a sufficient supply of nervous irritation from the “good” life had accumulated - vodka did its bad work, and bloody fights were a frequent occurrence.
The development of monetary economy and commodity relations has particularly strengthened class differentiation in our village.
The vast majority of the population was illiterate. A one-class school (later expanded to two classes) opened in the late 19th century, but the poor, and even many middle-class families, did not send their children to school due to poverty, lack of shoes and clothing, and not everyone understood the need to learn to read and write. Meanwhile, there were very talented children with great potential.
The ruin of a large number of poor farms led to the annual departure of approximately one hundred healthy men from the village for seasonal work: logging, timber rafting, railway construction, harvesting in distant lands, and then the complete departure from the village "to the city." Some left

to resettle in Siberia to develop the lands provided to them, but it was so poorly organized by the tsarist authorities, especially in terms of assistance with economic development on the spot, that many returned back.

I could cite many living examples of the poor, especially from our close neighbors: Ignat Zhovna, Tereshko, Yushchenko, Semyon Gemba, Tarakhtun, Kabavika Vovk, Otanas 'Tapets' from the Jewish colony, Shaya the shoemaker, Tsukhok the blacksmith, Elya the carpenter, and others (I call many by their nicknames, as they entered my memory, since I don't remember their last names exactly, and they weren't called by their last names in the village).
Let me tell you more about our two neighbors.
Here's the kulak Maxim Marchenko (Marochka), the owner of approximately 30 dessiatines (100 acres) of land. He had plenty of livestock—horses, oxen, cows, sheep—and always had ample grain reserves. He lent grain to the poor on extortionate terms, receiving one and a half or even twice the loan from the new harvest, or on the condition that they work it off with hard labor during the harvest season, under extortionate terms. Maxim Marochka even played the "benefactor" and sometimes affectionately patted the shoulders of those who obediently bent their backs before him. Maxim loved not only capital but also honor and power. He had already been elected as a volost elder once, having supplied the peasants with more than one bucket of vodka, and he wanted to be elected again. Therefore, his self-confident and arrogant demeanor sometimes radiated a false kindness. But he quickly replaced this "kind" outlook with a kulak-like, bestial attitude toward those poor peasants who did not want to be Maxim's slaves. Such a person, for example, was our neighbor and my father's closest friend, Ignat Kirilenko, nicknamed Zhovna. He was an intelligent man, a very poor peasant, without draft animals, having only one cow. He suffered, often going off to work in the logging industry, but he did not turn to Maxim for help and openly expressed his criticism of him and even of higher authorities. Maxim Marochka found ways to pressure the proud and intelligent Ignat, either for tax arrears or for some other offense for which a fine was imposed, and Ignat patiently argued, sometimes achieving his goal, sometimes losing, but always speaking out against Maxim.
I remember how Ignat often said to my father: “It’s okay, Moshka, why are we poor people with you, but you and I are growing in fives?”

"It doesn't matter, Moshka, that you and I are poor people, but we are raising five healthy and handsome boys, this is our wealth, when they grow up, our life will become easier.
It's no exaggeration to say that Moshka and Ignat's boys, like their parents, spontaneously and instinctively set an example of not just neighborly but brotherly friendship—in modern terms, one might say, spontaneous internationalism. They were friends individually and collectively: Izrail with Roman, Aron and Mikhail with Savka, who, incidentally, later went to the city entirely and proletarianized (became a proletarian—editor's note) there, for which the kulaks nicknamed him "the tramp"; Yasha and I were friends with Nazar and Onikey, and Sila—Ignat's youngest son—was friends with everyone. We would visit each other in turn, eating jacket potatoes at each other's houses, and, when available, with sour milk, sometimes even lard, when Ignat had it. It gave mischievous Sile great pleasure to run to my mother and report to her, “that your Leyzar ate his fill of lard and even crossed himself".
This close friendship and intimate friendly relations are not an isolated, particular fact, but a typical one, reflecting the general relations of my family with the surrounding poor peasantry.
It so happened that our family was the only Jewish family living outside the colony, on the other side of the village, in the thick of the poor peasant population. This was no accident, but a consequence of the very circumstances of my parents and grandfather's lives. My father, Moses, was born, raised, and lived for 60 of his 63 years in the village of Kabany. His father, my grandfather Benya, did not receive the land promised during the resettlement and found himself in dire straits—he worked in the logging industry. Naturally, he could not provide his eldest son, my father, with any education and sent him out to work at the age of 13. Starting out as a farmhand and logging laborer, my father later became a skilled worker at a tar and tar factory. My mother, Genya, was born and raised in the town of Chernobyl, in the family of a coppersmith named Dubinsky, who

owned a copper foundry where, besides himself, his two sons and his daughter—my mother—worked. After my father's death and the ruin and closure of the workshop, my mother came to live with her sister and brother, a blacksmith, who lived in the village of Kabany. Having met my father—he was poor, but intelligent and handsome, just like our mother—they fell in love and married, living happily for many years. After their marriage, they arranged a home for themselves, renting a "stepka" (a small structure) in the village.

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They converted the vegetable storage shed and settled in, cramped but not unhappy, without considering whether it was possible to have children in their conditions, and everything went as "God intended." In due course, the first child was born, but then—the worst thing that could happen—the mother gave birth to 13 children, seven of whom died, leaving six alive—five sons and one daughter. This alone gives an idea of the difficult living conditions of our family.

These difficult circumstances became even more difficult and aggravated after my father suffered a serious injury at the tar factory. A boiler accident resulted in hot tar splattering all over him, burning his chest, and he suffered serious illness for the rest of his life. He received no compensation from the owners, of course, no social security, and so this capable, intelligent, and, as the peasants called it, "honest man" found himself in a difficult situation. He didn't own any land; he rented a plot of land to grow potatoes, vegetables, and buckwheat. We children helped him; we had a cow to feed him.

My mother shouldered the brunt of supporting the family. She learned to sew by hand from my father's mother, my grandmother (there were no sewing machines in the village then). She sewed skirts, blouses, and shirts for the peasant women. She learned to dye skeins of yarn—linen and wool—for the peasant women, who paid my mother in kind: flour, rye (wheat was not grown in our village then), millet, and buckwheat. Sometimes, some of the young women paid in cash after returning from harvesting beets on Horvat's estate. We lived poorly, in need; my mother and father themselves, and we, were taught not to whine or complain about poverty.

Having borrowed money on exorbitant terms, which were later covered with the help of my mother's brother, Uncle Mikhail, and my older brothers, Israel and Aron, who had started earning money (Israel in logging, Aron as a carpenter), we managed to replace the famous "stepka" with a somewhat more spacious, ordinary village hut. Our new hut consisted of one relatively spacious village room, half of the floor was covered with boards (the "capital" was not enough for the entire floor), the other half was clay. This room was entered through a cold entryway, on the right of the room stood a large Russian stove, on which we children usually slept. Along the walls stood long, unpainted "benches" - narrow benches (about 1/3 of an arshin wide), opposite the stove in another corner stood a trestle bed and a large wooden chest, which were used as a bed, and in the other

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In the corner stood the parents' bed, draped with a chintz canopy. In the corner near the stove stood a tub of fresh, raw water, and nearby, hanging on a cord, was a "quart"—a ladle for drinking water. When we lived in the small "steppe," few people came to visit us; our connections with the surrounding peasants and the residents of the Jewish colony were naturally limited to private visits to us and them. In the summer, of course, things were simpler. Having settled among peasants, and primarily poor peasants at that, we naturally grew close, became close to them, and took their hardships to heart, just as they took ours to heart. We, of course, also had connections with the Jewish colony, where relatives and friends lived, especially from the artisan poor, who constituted the majority of the colony.

And in that small Jewish colony, there were also social and class contradictions: out of 20 families, two were prosperous, one might say wealthy, engaged in trade and agriculture, three or four were middle-class, and the rest were poor, mostly individual artisans who worked from their homes and

traveled through the villages, serving the peasants: tailors, shoemakers, blacksmiths, carpenters, and others. The poor were always in debt bondage to these wealthy families, who charged them high interest rates for "loans." There was an antagonistic struggle between them. My family, naturally, had close ties with these poor people in the colony. However, due to the distance from our house to the colony, these ties were less close than with our neighbors—the poor peasants.
When the opportunity arose to visit Moshka and Genya in a more spacious hut, “and even with a kerosene lamp, where you can sit and talk”, the close neighbors became frequent guests, especially from the early 1900s onwards.
There were evenings when our one-room hut was filled to capacity; people sat on the floor, stood, and talked in groups about all sorts of things – personal and social, hunting and fishing; they told jokes, laughed, cackled, and "luskali nasinnya" (sunflower seeds).
Soon, however, the nature of the conversations changed. Beginning in 1903, when my older brother Mikhail first arrived in the village from the town of Ivankov, where he had already worked as a metalworker and become involved in politics, the peasants would turn to him with questions like, "Tell us, Mikhail, what's going on in the world?".

Mikhail told them about the famine, unemployment, the industrial crisis, the workers' protests, and, in some provinces, the peasants' protests. In short, he concluded, the people were dissatisfied with the landowners, the capitalists, and their rule. Out of caution, he hadn't mentioned the Tsar yet.
There were no organized statements, but the groups discussed restlessly and heatedly: "Maybe, things are really bad in the state." And one of them, who was considered an eccentric, said: "It seems that our Tsar is not very smart, or rather a fool."
They waved their hands at him, not so much in protest as in fear: "Shut up, you're kind of a fool yourself". "Or maybe I really am strange", he said, also frightened. This entire conversation sank deep into the hearts of the peasants present – this was evident in the nature of their behavior at subsequent "meetings" in our hut.
I read them stories and poems. They asked me to read and reread more of Nekrasov, Gogol, Tolstoy, and, most importantly, individual brochures and newspapers that Mikhail sent from Kiev. Unfortunately, we didn't have Shevchenko's works at the time, nor any other books in Ukrainian (with the exception of a few small books like "If You Don't Like It, Don't Listen, But Don't Stop Me from Lying").
With the onset of 1904-1905, the revolutionary fervor of the peasants grew. Now, after I read them this or that brochure or newspaper, they didn't immediately disperse, but quietly began a conversation about the question of "what is happening in the state". They spoke vaguely, but anxiously and critically: "What will it be?" asked the first. "What will happen with pepper," answered another. "What will be difficult to say," said a third, "but it seems that the landowners and the police will be beaten".
When Mikhail came to the village again, he, having grown politically, began to campaign more actively in the village, especially in front of those who gathered in our hut.
The main question posed to him by the peasants was about the Russo-Japanese War, including its causes. His presentation of the war's causes provoked internal protests against it. The peasants were particularly outraged by his reference to the interest of capitalists and many princes from the royal family in gold mining in the Far East.
I remember when Mikhail spoke about the working class, about the fact that it

He rises up in an organized revolutionary struggle against the tsarist regime, and that he already has a real party; the peasants said: “May God give them health and courage.”

The conversation didn't end that first evening, and we agreed to continue it the following evening. Unfortunately, the conversation never continued because someone (I don't think it was anyone present) reported Mikhail to the police officer. And so, during the night, one of our neighbors, well-informed as the sotsky, woke us up and said, "Let Mikhail run quickly, because the police officer and the guard are coming for him."
Mikhail quickly got dressed, jumped out and, together with his neighbor, rode out of the village on horseback, but not to Ivankov, which would have led him towards the police officer, but in the opposite direction – to Chernobyl.
We successfully hid the remaining brochures and newspapers. I quickly dug a hole in the middle of the yard, correctly calculating that no one would search there. We filled it in and leveled the surface so that it was impossible to distinguish it from the rest of the yard.
The police officer's search was thorough; he searched everywhere, but found nothing. He interrogated us for a long time about Mikhail's whereabouts. We told him he'd gone to Ivankov via Martynovichi (the police officer's residence), which enraged him even more. He went ballistic, as they say: he screamed and stamped his feet, but left empty-handed.
By this time, a fairly stable group of oppositional and even revolutionary-minded peasants, mostly poor, had formed in our part of the village. They expressed the growing revolutionary indignation of the peasants, who were preparing to resist the authorities at the right moment. They had connections with the peasants of the nearby village of Lubyanka, who, unfortunately, as I now understand, rose up spontaneously, prematurely, without the necessary coordination with the surrounding villages, especially ours, the one closest to them.
The greatest event that filled my childish soul and consciousness, as well as my memory from childhood to the present day, was and remains the peasant uprising that took place three miles from our village - in the village of Lubyanka.
It began in mid-December 1904. The direct and immediate pretext for the uprising was the forced collection of tax arrears that had accumulated over several years, which had reached a huge figure. It must be emphasized that the peasants of this

The villages had the peculiarity of a well-developed pottery industry, with the produce often transported to Chernobyl and Khavnoye, which contributed to the peasants' cultural and political development. Even before the aforementioned December uprising, they had protested against conscription in the autumn of 1904. Thus, this second uprising against the collection of arrears was political in nature.
In the Martynovicheskaya volost, which included the village of Kabany and the village of Lubyanka, there was a very zealous elder, Rebrik - he was an arrogant satrap who mocked the peasants of the volost, with the exception, of course, of the kulaks and the rich.
You could describe him as "young and precocious." He wasn't a local, but from Radomysl itself, the son of an official, and for him, the position of elder was just a stepping stone to a great career. So he decided to make a special appearance at Lubyanka—he arrived there on December 15th with a large detachment of police sent from the district. I remember this detachment passing through our village, which itself was ready to support the Lubyanka men. The detachment consisted of at least 40-50 guards, police officers, and bailiffs, and at least fifty sotskys (commanders) were behind it. They rode on horseback in a cheerful, dashing mood. At Lubyanka, the elder began working through the church warden, Kovalenko, counting on his assistance. However, he was gravely mistaken - Kovalenko turned out to be a good, steadfast man, in solidarity with the peasants of Lubyanka, and he told Rebrik that his efforts were in vain - the peasants who were in arrears, including him, Kovalenko, would not pay.
Rebrik gave the order to begin an inventory of property by households and forcibly confiscate it for sale, and he began this operation with the church warden himself, Mark Kovalenko.

Kovalenko himself resisted in his home, and more than 300 peasants, armed with clubs and sticks, gathered outside Kovalenko's house. The main leader of the peasants was Makar Yushchenko. He was ardent and militant, and it must be assumed that he was the main organizer of the uprising. This comrade Makar Yushchenko organized a gathering of peasants at Kovalenko's house; when the police began attacking Kovalenko's apartment, Makar, as described in the police report itself, published in a collection about the revolutionary movement in Ukraine, shouted to his fellow peasants: "Ring the bells, let all the people of Lubyanka gather." When the magistrate approached him

The intermediary asked why the bells were ringing, and Makar answered: “Because there might be dead people.”
The peace mediator paid no attention to Makar's warning, and the police, led by the elder Rebrik, broke into the peasants' houses, threw everything they could find into a pile, beat, including with sabers, the peasants who resisted them in their homes, threatening to use firearms.
Makar Yushchenko and his closest aides organized peasants armed with clubs and stakes. They advanced in close ranks on the police detachment, shouting, "Beat the dogs!"
The defeated police detachment fled from Lubyanka together with the “brave” sergeant major. This greatly raised the spirits of the peasants in our village. They'd never seen anything like it—not only an entire squad, but even a single policeman had been beaten. And then, these simple peasants defeated an entire squad of police.
I remember that the leading peasants who had gathered at our place that evening were particularly excited and joyful. "It means," they said, "that the devil isn't as terrible as he's painted." This meant the government was weak if it couldn't cope with just one village. Some, like Ignat, warned, however, that they might "come again with greater force."We must come again with greater force. Therefore, we must provide assistance to the Lyabyanka residents, first of all, we must send people to Lubyanka to find out everything and decide what we should do in the city".
Before any measures could be taken, word arrived from the volost that a grenadier regiment (perhaps an exaggeration: perhaps not a regiment, but part of one) was approaching Lubyanka, our village, and several other restive nearby villages. This force had been stationed nearby in advance. It was said that it was at the insistence of the landowner Horvat, who wielded considerable influence in the province, that the regiment was so quickly dispatched to the area where the peasants were rebelling.
The military punitive authorities brutally suppressed the rebels, dealing with the leaders, some of whom, including Makar Yushchenko, were tried and sent to hard labor or exile in Siberia. In our village of Kabany, the grenadiers acted like punitive forces, terrorizing the peasants. They especially targeted the poor, opposition-minded peasants, known to the police as sympathizers.

Lubyanka, but no one handed over the leading peasants, including Ignat.
Of course, they were especially picky about our family, interrogating many people about Moshka Kaganovich's family. The punitive forces, working with the police officer, knew that Moshka's son, Mikhail, was a revolutionary and had visited the village, and that our hut was a gathering place for peasants, but they had no official evidence. They summoned my father for questioning, but they couldn't get anything out of him. My father maintained his composure, denying all accusations, citing neighbors who immediately corroborated my father's answers and explanations. When the tone of the police increased and the manifestation of menacingness, the neighbors stood up and said, “Moshka is a sick person and shouldn't be picked on, we go to him because he is our good neighbor and doesn't do anyone any harm, and his sons are the same, we are grateful that the

youngest, Leizor, reads books to us, just the other day I was reading about Taras Bulba, which Gogol wrote, so does this Gogol write against the government or the police?”.
When other peasants were summoned for interrogation, they, as agreed, all answered: “We don’t know anything, we walked to Moshka at the house like all the neighbors walked one after another, and even the bark was that their kerosene (gas) lamp was burning all evening, they walked and walked, and no politicians it was like poor people, living like poor people” (We don’t know anything, we went to Moshka’s house like all the neighbors go to one another, and it was also beneficial that they had a kerosene lamp burning all evening, so we went, but there was no politics, they are poor people, they live like all the poor people - editor’s note). That's how all the poor and middle-class peasants responded, well aware of the role of our hut, my parents—my father and mother, especially their sons, and especially Mikhail. Even the wealthy kulak Maksim Marochka, who had gained even more influence with the presence of punitive soldiers in the village, sent his adopted daughter Paraska to us and conveyed the message: "So that Moshka and Moshenyata don't fear, I won't allow them to be caught."
According to Paraska, he had, of course, his own calculations. As a smart and cunning man, he used to say in his family: “There is some kind of disaster going on, which is called a revolution, we don’t know what will happen, but still, guys like Moshki, some kind of self-righteous people, maybe they will still have some kind of power – that’s why I need not give up Moshki today and They are swindling me to torment, and then the neighbors who protect them will completely brand me and put me on the pillory.
I remember that the girls, in particular that same Paraska, with whom the soldiers flirted, told us: when this or that grenadier soldier pestered them with affection, the girls told them that they would not respond to their affection because they were committing a “pogane delo” (bad deed - editor's note).

they bring evil to their own brothers, the peasants, to which the soldiers bashfully and quietly replied: “But is it of our own free will, we were ordered to do so, and if you don’t do as ordered, you yourself will rot in a casemate, or even be shot.”
Although the defeat of the peasants in Lubyanka left a great sense of oppression in the souls and moods of the peasants and in our village, it gradually dissipated.
The years 1905–1906 brought with them a need for more systematic and regular political work among the peasants. Mikhail in Kiev began regularly receiving newspapers and political brochures, which I read to the peasants in our hut, explaining specific issues to the best of my limited knowledge. Mood was also lifted by the return of peasants who had left for seasonal work, and by the arrival of fully proletarianized peasants, bringing the revolutionary sentiments of 1905–1906 back to the village.
Although Lubyanka never happened again, its impact remains profound. Along with the Lubyanka residents, our village of Kabany was and remains a revolutionary hotbed in the Martynoviče volost of Radomysl district in Kiev province.
This had a great influence on the development of my revolutionary consciousness.
Thus, it can be said without exaggeration that the social-class environment with which my family was organically connected had a decisive influence on the formation of my personality, on filling my soul and consciousness with feelings of solidarity, class kinship with the poor, indignation at injustice, oppression and the emergence of revolutionary activity.
Naturally, in this social environment, the most important place was occupied by its primary cell - the family and its upbringing within the family.
Social origin is important, although it alone does not guarantee high quality of the "product"—the individual. Even using my village as an example, I could cite many facts showing how, from the same tree roots, "fruit" of completely different quality and taste grew. A good social class

background, as a crucial objective factor, necessarily requires a corresponding subjective factor—the good qualities of the family, especially the parents, who in most cases have primary

A decisive factor in raising their children, whether positively or negatively. Children, including those with the potential for talent, can develop only through education and work, and this depends primarily on the immediate family environment, the behavior of the family and parents, and on living example, which has a more powerful influence on a child than any prodding or harsh educational measures (sometimes necessary, but rarely, not as a system). Of course, school also plays a major role, which I will discuss later.

Although my parents were poorly educated, or rather, practically illiterate, they possessed such intelligence and tact that they were able to raise their children in a positive spirit. I highly value their role in my upbringing and allow myself to cite some key facts of social and instructive nature.

First of all, I must mention my father and mother's exceptional work ethic. For most of my childhood, I saw my father ill after an accident and injury at the factory, with a heart-rending cough. And despite his illness, he couldn't sit idle for a moment. He always found some kind of work around the yard, the house, the "pantry", where he would occasionally rearrange, as he saw it, the meager "resources" of food, potatoes, and vegetables, working in carpentry, and so on. Sometimes he would venture out again for seasonal work, particularly in the summer at the nearby tsigelni—local brick factories. He earned some income, but his illness worsened.

My brother Yasha and I helped him, working alongside him, receiving one kopeck from the kiln owner for carrying 200 bricks a considerable distance to the dryer and from the dryer to the floor kiln. (This, incidentally, was the first "school" for the future Minister of the Construction Materials Industry of the USSR.)

In the same way, we all helped him with the work of twisting vines for clamps, and rafting timber rafts on the banks of the Usha River.

In the spring, summer, and fall, my father was content to cultivate the rented plot of land. We, his children, helped him, and the days of potato digging were especially joyful and fun for us children, and most importantly, eating the most delicious dish—potatoes baked over a fire.

I already talked about my mother, how selflessly she worked

and in housekeeping, and especially in sewing and dyeing, earning enough to feed the family and to ensure that the children and they themselves - father and mother - were dressed in cheap, but not torn clothes, so that they, as their mother said, would not go on holidays in rags (and this was due to her urban origins).

Mother's situation became especially difficult after our only older sister, Rachel, got married. The entire household fell on our mother's shoulders, and we sons, especially Yasha and me as the youngest, had to help her. I, for example, washed the floor, swept the house, did the laundry, washed the dishes, carried water, looked after our cow, who fed us, and also helped our mother with her dyeing business.

We all grew up and were brought up to hate idle life and love work.

An important element in shaping our character was the fact that, despite the difficult living conditions, my father and mother never lost their sense of cheerfulness and human dignity, and they never indulged in whining or complaining about the harsh conditions. Instead, they grew increasingly indignant and protesting against injustice. I remember how my mother often lost her temper, scolding the rich and sometimes blaspheming. "Where is God?" she exclaimed. "What is He looking at? Why does He give wealth and a good life to swindlers, while we, honest people, suffer and perish?" (Here, my mother was referring to her wealthy acquaintances, including Jews living in

the Kabany colony, Martynovichi, and Chernobyl, who exploited and squeezed the Jewish poor.) "Mikhail must be right," she concluded. "All the poor people need to band together and fight." The father was no less indignant, but, he said, they had to prepare for this matter wisely, otherwise the Tsar would hang everyone before they even started, and nothing would come of it. Never mind, the mother replied, our sons won't do anything stupid. The main thing, both mother and father agreed, was that they shouldn't resign themselves to the status quo, shouldn't sink, shouldn't cry, shouldn't beg for alms from the rich like beggars, and shouldn't lose heart.

It must be acknowledged that such systematically repeated, sharp “oratorical” remarks from my mother and father had a beneficial effect on us, particularly on me, arousing feelings of indignation and pushing us to fight.

By nature, my mother was active, restlessly active,

She was temperamental, sometimes even hot-tempered. For example, she sometimes scolded us children, but we didn't argue with her; we saw how she was struggling to support the family, and besides, we knew that in a few minutes her anger would subside. She was, as they say, forgiving, and some of us, perhaps especially me, inherited her character. Mother was cheerful, steadfast, and full of life.

Our father was able to endure his sorrows more quietly, restraining his anger. He rarely even scolded us children, but he did admonish us, sometimes, despite all his composure and patience, allowing himself to show rare but serious anger.

My father, like my mother, was of crystal-clear honesty. His neighbors, the peasants, especially respected him for this. They would say to my father kindly and smiling, "You, Moshka, are very honest, but that's why you're so poor." My father would reply, "It's better to be poor than a swindler." "You're right," they would reply.

It is clear to me that my parents, poorly educated but naturally intelligent and honest, gave us a lot of positive things, devoting all their energy to their children, while nearby, equally poor people lived by themselves, caring little about themselves, about their children, about the honor of the family - as it turned out, so, let it go, we just need to get by somehow, eat and go to bed, and then what will become of the children - God knows.

Our parents not only bore and nurtured their children, but also, as best they could, raised and molded them. If, in addition to their natural intelligence, hard work, tact, and energy, they had also been educated, they, and likely their children, would have been of greater benefit to people and society as a whole. What I say applies not only to the ancient past but, to a certain extent, to modern parents and children as well.

We children grew up and became modern people—Bolshevik revolutionaries—but we didn't oppose our father and mother, but rather absorbed all that was best from them. We loved and, most importantly, respected, and still respect, our parents.

I think that my parents have a significant share in the fact that all five of their sons, who grew up in a remote village in the remote Ukrainian Polesie, joined the ranks of Lenin's Communist Party, the fighters for victory over tsarism and capitalism - for Soviet power and socialism.

I highly appreciate them sending us to the city, to join the ranks of the proletariat. This was, of course, primarily a result of poverty, but also a manifestation of their will and determination.

A major influence was the fact that Mikhail was the first to leave in the early 1890s. He quickly became proletarian, developing socially and ideologically as a conscious proletarian. As early as 1903-1904, he demonstrated his energy in the class struggle in Ivankovo, Chernobyl, and then in Kiev, where he became a Social Democrat Bolshevik in 1905. This, of course, had a significant

impact on all of us, and especially on me personally, who followed his example and joined the Bolshevik Party even before the revolution, in 1911.
Having joined the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (Bolshevik), Mikhail stood under Lenin's banner, proving himself a fearless revolutionary—a participant in the 1905–1907 revolution. He was a passionate agitator among workers and peasants, a fighter against tsarism and capitalism, for internationalism, and against Jewish nationalism and the Black Hundred pogromists.
It must be emphasized that Mikhail was the first to bring the ideas of revolution and socialism to our family and to the village of Kabany.
His revolutionary influence on me personally began when I was still a boy, during his visits to the village. Noticing my curiosity and particular interest in what was happening in the city—in particular, what a strike was, what a party was, what a revolution was, and so on—he tried to answer my questions. But as I grew older, my questions grew so numerous that he once said to me, chuckling, "You want to know too much at once; it's not so easy for me to answer all your questions." But I was helped by the arrival of a friend of Mikhail's from Kiev, also visiting his parents in the village of Ilyintsy. He called himself an anarchist and a Socialist Revolutionary. He was semi-intellectual and spoke fluently, but when an argument arose between him and his brother, Mikhail demolished his intricate propositions more simply, clearly, and in a businesslike manner. I can't recount the entire argument now—I didn't understand it all then. I remember Mikhail telling him: "You anarchists rely not on the proletariat, but on the lumpenproletariat, which today will march with you, but tomorrow might march with the nationalists and even the Black Hundreds. We need a solid foundation for the revolution, and only the proletariat can provide that foundation." When his opponent got on the Socialist Revolutionary horse, saying that the peasantry was the main base of the revolution, Mikhail replied: “The peasantry is truly a revolutionary force, but there is no single

"There is no peasantry. Most of the villages are poor, horseless, starving, and enslaved by the kulaks. Your Socialist Revolutionaries are lying when they claim to defend a supposedly united peasantry. In reality, they are defending the wealthy kulaks. But Lenin calls for the poor and truly working peasantry to join the proletariat, then the revolution will triumph and tsarism will be destroyed."
I understood Mikhail's arguments well from examples from our own village. It may seem strange, but words and their sounds were very important to me back then (perhaps this is typical of children). I liked words like "revolution," "proletariat," and "party." I was also intrigued by the new word I heard, "lumpenproletariat," and especially by the word "Bolshevik." I remember asking Mikhail what a Bolshevik and a Menshevik were. At first, he told me: when you grow up, you'll understand, but then, when I asked him more precisely whether this meant that the Bolsheviks wanted more and the Mensheviks less, he answered that, strictly speaking, Bolsheviks meant the majority and the Mensheviks the minority, but one could, of course, consider the Bolsheviks big and the Mensheviks small, that the Bolsheviks wanted more and the Mensheviks less, because the Bolshevik-Leninists view the revolution in a big way, to clean out all the dirt of the old regime and build a new edifice—a republic, and then socialism, while the Mensheviks want a small way—to clean up from the outside, but leave things as they are inside. I inquired about socialism. Mikhail explained it to me, and I remember his explanation: under socialism, everyone will be equal, there will be no rich and poor, there will be no private property, everything will belong to the whole of society, and so on. Although, apparently, Mikhail’s explanations were incomplete, socialism firmly took root in my soul as a just way of life.
A child's soul is especially receptive to everything new. I already felt the influence of the bold new ideas of socialism and revolution. Although this was more a manifestation of my feelings than my consciousness, already at the age of 13—in 1906—I declared to Mikhail that I would follow in his footsteps—the revolutionary path of struggle for socialism.

And when I later came to Kiev, Mikhail helped me with this by connecting me with his comrades in the underground Bolshevik party organization, mainly workers, who involved me in the labor movement and helped me get a Bolshevik

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education and in preparation for joining the party in 1911, which will be discussed in my memoirs. Our three brothers—Izrail, Aron, and Yasha-Yuli—joined the Bolshevik Party after the Revolution, but under Mikhail's influence, they too were revolutionary-minded even before the Revolution, which exerted a stimulating, beneficial influence on me. This was especially true of my beloved brother Yasha, who himself, even before the Revolution, while working in Aleksandrovsk (now Zaporozhye), was involved in the labor movement and the Party's Social Democratic circles.
My brother Yasha was distinguished from childhood by his warmth and kindness. From a young age, he was preoccupied with the welfare of others, and he dedicated his entire life to fighting for the good of humanity. Like me, he absorbed the socialist ideas brought to our family by our respected older brother, Mikhail. Yasha grew into a prominent party and Soviet official, serving as First Secretary of the Nizhny Novgorod (Gorky) Regional Party Committee and Chairman of the Gorky Regional Executive Committee, and then as Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade of the USSR.
I felt Yasha's positive, helpful influence and support even in my childhood, during our shared studies, which were incredibly difficult. Our parents and older brothers had to overcome enormous obstacles so that, as my father said, we wouldn't remain as illiterate as he had been; and my grandfather, feeling a kind of guilt that his eldest son (my father) hadn't received any education, especially insisted that we, his grandchildren, study. "Otherwise," he said, "they'll forever be lost, just like us, the older ones."
I especially appreciate the merit of my parents and older brothers, who persistently sought to ensure that their son, the “little finger,” that is, me, was literate and, as they said, educated.

STUDYING AND TUTORING

However, conditions in our village made it extremely difficult to realize this intention—to give me an education. The village's two-grade school did not admit children of Jewish non-landowners, although I later attended it unofficially.

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The cheder attached to the synagogue in the colony, led and taught by a respected and honorable resident of the colony, was extremely primitive. General education subjects were completely absent, including Russian, as the teacher himself barely knew it.
My family and I didn't want me to study there. I remember at one of our family councils, we decided not to go to cheder and to find another way out.
By agreement with some of the colony's progressive residents, we decided to look for a teacher in Chernobyl who could teach general subjects well, especially Russian and mathematics. Luckily, we found a teacher in Chernobyl who agreed to come to our village. He was a paralyzed cripple who had lost both legs. He was young, but very fat due to his lack of mobility. I remember how we children arranged a stroller, and in the winter, a sled, which we used to move him, since the "school" and the teacher alternated between the homes of one student and the next, every month. We, the students, had to care for him, bring him food and water, and transport him.
Despite his strictness and his use of a specially designed long ruler to "influence" any of us, we loved him very much. He had a clear and, as I now appreciate, even talented mind. He had a brilliant knowledge of Russian language and literature and general subjects. He was not a religious

fanatic, so he wittily presented the Bible to us, ridiculing its inconsistencies and emphasizing prophets like Amos.
My brother Yasha-Yuliy also studied with him at first.
But our idyll with our teacher, "Shamshul," came to an end. The district school inspector arrived unexpectedly in the village, burst into the house where our "school" was located, and attacked our teacher. A heartbreaking image remains etched in my memory: the inspector and the police officer dragging the legless teacher across the floor, punching and kicking him, cursing obscenely, tearing up all the textbooks, including those on all Russian general education subjects, and throwing the tattered pieces into the street. They wanted to throw the teacher out into the street as well, but we children clung to him and prevented them from fulfilling their intention. Finally, the inspector and the police officer drew up a report banning education in a school illegally permitted by law.

with the threat of arresting the teacher if he decides to resist this prohibition.
We, of course, were powerless to do anything. The only thing we kids could come up with was to change the inspector's last name from "Buchilo" to "Burcillo." Somehow, it stuck with him. At least in our district.
Thus, our makeshift school—our secular general education cheder—was liquidated. Some of the students adapted to the synagogue cheder in the colony, and my family once again began looking for another way out for me, since Yasha had already been placed, with great difficulty, in the school in Martynovichi. As the saying goes, there are always good people in the world. Such a good person turned out to be Petrusevich, the newly arrived teacher at the village two-grade school. He didn't seem like an ordinary teacher. Although he was silent and withdrawn, his entire demeanor, particularly toward me, made it clear that he had come to our remote village for some political reason. He had learned that our family had a son, Mikhail, a revolutionary. He knew that his association with our family could lead to trouble, but despite this, he agreed to let me attend classes at the school as a sort of "external auditor," without being officially enrolled. Moreover, he later tutored me at home, as I had to interrupt my school attendance from time to time due to fear of "Burcillo" raids. However, despite these interruptions, I accomplished a lot, especially in history and Russian. In these subjects, as well as geography and arithmetic, I learned almost everything required by the two-grade school curriculum. (I believe this old two-grade school curriculum was more comprehensive and provided more knowledge than today's two-grade high school curriculum.)
Because of this, and especially because of the fear of causing trouble for my benefactor, I had to seek further, extremely difficult, options. The first and foremost opportunity was a school established in the nearby village of Martynovichi, which, thanks to the influence of the timber merchant's chief business manager, was practically legalized, or at least protected from the hooliganism of "Burcillo" (since money was more important to him than his Black Hundreds). Two highly qualified teachers were hired for this school in Kiev—a father and his son—who divided the labor: the father taught in Hebrew, including the Bible and Talmud, and the son taught general subjects in Russian. With great

Through hard work and persistence, my father and brothers managed to arrange for Yasha to study at half the cost before me.
However, subsequent attempts to place me in this school met with even greater resistance from the influential, wealthy Jews who were its patrons. "We cannot allow the children of the poor to overrun our school," they said, "especially since Moisei Kaganovich cannot afford the full tuition."
After much hardship and exceptional persistence on the part of my father, my older brothers Israel and Aron, and with the active assistance of my father's brother, Uncle Aron, we managed to

overcome the resistance of most of the school's authorities. But the issue was finally resolved thanks to the energetic assistance of a young teacher, my son, who, after testing my knowledge and abilities, decisively declared: "I came here to teach the children not only of the rich and well-off, but also of the poor. You should be ashamed that you pay lip service to protecting Jewish rights while trampling on those rights of poor Jews, preventing them from educating their children. I demand that Lazar Kaganovich be admitted to our school, and at half the cost."
The masters of the situation were forced to capitulate, and I was accepted into the school. This young teacher, Weiner, knew Mikhail was a revolutionary. I can't say whether he himself was a revolutionary, but he was one of those progressive Jewish intellectuals who defended the poor from oppression by the rich. He was a good, progressive teacher, and his students loved him. He was particularly warm to me, the newcomer to the school. He encouraged my particular focus on history, Russian language, and literature.
I was helped by the fact that my older brother, Yasha, was already a "long-timer" at the school. We helped each other. Yasha, for example, helped me with math, and I helped him with history. I must say that Yasha also helped me with his gentle, even-tempered nature. I was mischievous, but he had a restraining effect on my wild nature and sometimes stood up for me. But in terms of the actual classes, no one could find fault with me, since, like Yasha, I was ahead in all subjects.
We lived in difficult conditions. We'd leave Kabany for Martynovichi for a few days, and my mother couldn't provide us with food except for rye crackers and dried fish. It was especially bad.

There was a shortage of winter clothing and footwear. When I arrived in the village in 1934 as secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), a peasant reminded me how he had saved me, already half-buried in snow, on the road from Martynovichi to Kabany. The thing was, my father had made me felt boots from his old ones, but he couldn't fix the heels: they were sewn shut, but they let the cold in. So I froze to death on the way. Walking was difficult because of the snowstorm, and I collapsed on the road. As the peasant passed me, his dog spotted me and alerted its owner—he picked me up on his sleigh, bundled me up, and brought me home, barely alive. In addition to my father's previous thanks, I—already in 1934—expressed my heartfelt gratitude to him. He, smiling, said in response to me: “I did it as every decent person should, and now I am happy that I saved the future famous leader.”
We lodged with a tailor, who shared the cramped apartment with a blacksmith and his family. We slept on a clay floor, but youth conquers all. Since the landlord was stingy with kerosene for lighting in the evenings, we rose early at dawn, especially in the summer, to work on our homework. Our success in our studies delighted our parents and brothers, but irritated the wealthy parents of the other students, who, like spoiled brats, performed poorly. I remember the student review and, most importantly, the exam. Yasha and I were "questioned" with rigor. We answered well in all subjects, especially the general ones, even excellently, as the teachers later said.
However, soon the teachers left, and two new ones arrived. Yasha left, and I was left alone. I became more cautious in my mischief, focusing on my studies and, at the same time, on the sports available in the village environment of the time: swimming, boating, popok-gorodki, tsurki, and the like. Plus, in the evenings, singing with the boys and girls, something I'd enjoyed in my own village.
My studies continued to progress well and diligently. This was facilitated by the fact that one of the two new teachers, in charge of general subjects, was a remarkable educator and a good person. History, geography, Russian language, and Russian literature were taught well and in depth. I independently read the available works by Pushkin, Lermontov, Nekrasov, Leo Tolstoy, and Turgenev. My teacher encouraged me in this, allowing no concessions or allowances in the general curriculum. Of the general subjects, I remained most fascinated by history—both Russian and world.

Additional historical literature was purchased, which I devoured greedily, later reporting what I had read to the teacher.
I did well in all my exams, especially in general education (we didn't have "excellent" grades back then); I sometimes slipped in math and had to make up for it. I remember how, during one exam, I almost made a mess of things in history: in response to a question on ancient history, I recounted Spartacus's rebellion in the spirit my teacher had personally told me—sympathetic to Spartacus. Naturally, the teacher chided me, saying, "You can't do that: you could, without intending to, put me in harm's way." Of course, I was also upset by this mistake and promised not to repeat it.
But during another test, I gave my teacher some compensation in literature. I recited a poem by the great Russian poet Nekrasov, also given to me personally by the teacher—"Song of Labor." They praised me, saying I had good pronunciation and diction, and that I read it with feeling.
There were Bible exams in the presence of the so-called elders, including the spiritual director. The second teacher, who taught Jewish subjects, including the Bible, was displeased with those students who, in his opinion, weren't diligently studying the Talmud. He was especially angry with me, so he began the test directly with me. After a few questions, to which I answered fairly well, I was asked about the prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Amos. I began my answer with Amos. I knew him better than the others, even from my first teacher, and probably also because his "prophecies" most clearly expressed the feelings of the poor, and he himself came from a background of shepherds. I began by quoting Amos, who castigated the greed of the rich, who violated justice and accumulated their wealth through violence and robbery. Amos exposed the ruling nobility, cursed the kings, princes, and military leaders who, like the rich, live in stone chambers, sleep in ivory beds, feed on choice lambs and calves, drink wine from golden cups, rub their bodies with balm and have abandoned concern for the difficult and plight of the people, and so on.
We, who studied the Bible as children, felt that Amos was criticizing kings and rich people, and we really liked that. But, of course, we weren't critical of these prophets back then,

Reflecting the discontent of the masses and criticizing the oppressors, they called for patiently awaiting salvation from God and his messiah, rather than calling for a fight against the oppressors of the poor people.
As a child, I naturally didn't understand this last conclusion, but I remember how in 1912 in Kiev, when I had to speak out against the Zionists, I made good use of and reiterated Amos's words with the corresponding Bolshevik conclusions. Amos, I said, denounced and cursed such rich men as your current Zionist Kiev millionaires—the Brodskys, Ginzburgs, and others—with whom you Zionists call us, workers and poor, to unite in a supposedly single Jewish nation. Amos hoped that God would punish them and that his messiah would save us. But we workers today will not wait for God to punish the Brodskys and Ginzburgs or for the messiah to save us. We, together with all revolutionary workers of Russia of all nations, will fight the capitalists of all nations to destroy the oppression of the rich and their ruling patrons.
But my studies didn't last long. Soon both teachers left—disagreements between them had forced their departure.
My studies at this school, which had broadened my knowledge and provided me with the foundation for self-study, preparing for the fourth-grade exam at the city school and realizing my dream of further education, also ended. In any case, here I truly felt the great role of school and teachers, even the imperfect school I attended in Martynovichi.
But I would also like to add that in Martynovichi I not only received a minimum of knowledge, but also expanded my horizons politically, and acquired a lot of new things in understanding the negative aspects of the existing tsarist system.

The village of Martynovichi was the center of a volost. It was larger than our village, with more kulaks and wealthy peasants and more poor peasants. The center of the volost government, with its elder, Rebrik, was a menace not only to the peasants but to all residents, except, of course, the wealthy. The poor of all nations acutely felt the oppression of the existing tsarist regime, which was directly inflicted upon them through the volost government—its elder and policeman, who interpreted and applied the laws of the tsarist empire at their own discretion.
How many times, for example, have we, children, witnessed heartbreaking scenes when people were pushed out, or even thrown out into the street from the volost

The rule of the ragged poor who came to the volost to complain about the mayor or the rich kulak who had fleeced them, or who came to ask for a deferment on their tax arrears. There were similar scenes with the poor artisans. Some roared, others cursed loudly, invoking the gods and innocent mothers. But with what honor and even a low bow the toady-clerk escorted the rich kulaks in their fine coats, sheepskin coats, and well-made boots thickly smeared with tar, or in winter, felt boots. I remember an incident that was etched in my memory, when two alleged horse thieves were brought to the volost office. We saw them as they were being led away. They were ordinary, poorly dressed peasants, tall and stately. But the next day, when we saw them in the "cold" cell, they were unrecognizable. Their faces were a complete mess, swollen, their eyes were invisible, they no longer stood or sat, but lay and groaned. They were thus "treated" at the volost office, mercilessly beaten. But the most terrible, tragic thing was that a week later, the actual horse thieves, who had a reputation for being "decent" because they were rich, were caught. Meanwhile, those previously labeled "horse thieves," beaten half to death, and left disabled, were decent and honest poor people. They were simply released without any compensation, assistance, or even the most basic rehabilitation.
I've already mentioned Sergeant Major Rebrik himself in connection with the Lubyanka Uprising. I remember when he walked down the street, children would run ahead and shout, "Rebrik is coming." This meant: stay away, because the "cold cell" was close by; he'd find fault with something, and you'd be there in no time. The sergeant wasn't formally subordinate to him, but in fact, he carried out his orders, since the sergeant major was from Radomysl itself and, God forbid, would even rise to high command. We often ran to the "cold cell," passing bread or a lump of sugar through the bars to those sitting there, and we always sat there.
One day we heard loud, unfamiliar, peculiar singing, not Ukrainian. When we approached, the constable, unlike before, refused to let us in, without explaining anything. This worried us. It turned out that they had brought in a political "criminal" exiled to our volost. When he was released, he, being a blacksmith by trade, went to work for our blacksmith, with whom we lived together at the tailor's. The new exile also settled there and slept on the floor with me and Yasha. He spoke little, and it must be said that he did not seem developed enough to carry on a serious conversation.

He was having a political conversation, perhaps intending to escape, and he didn't want to elaborate, but he didn't tell us who he was—a Social Democrat, a Socialist Revolutionary, or an anarchist. He only said he was against all vile oppressors. This alone won us over. He sang revolutionary songs brilliantly: "Varshavyanka," "Marseillaise," and a song that began with the words, "My brains are drying up in my head"—a prison song, he explained. Three weeks later, there was no trace of him—he had escaped. Although he added little to our political education, his mere contact with him, and especially with revolutionary songs, undoubtedly infused a revolutionary, militant, and courageous spark into our young souls.
So, my school years ended, and I began my own self-education, which has continued throughout my life to this day. It was difficult to begin learning anew, especially on my own. But at first, I was

assisted by my original benefactor—Petrusevich, the teacher at our village school. He was more educated than was required for a two-grade village school, especially in history, and he helped me focus on this subject. He also helped me with literature, particularly Ukrainian literature. Although I didn't have books by Ukrainian writers, including Taras Shevchenko, he knew about them and told me about them in detail (besides Shevchenko, he also talked about Panas Myrny, Kotsiubynsky, and others). These were the first steps, the first contributions to my understanding and subsequent deep study of remarkable Ukrainian literature and culture. It was also important that Petrusevich presented this to me with the soul of a person who was not nationalistically inclined, contrasting the glorious Ukrainian literature with the great Russian classical literature, but, on the contrary, connecting its progressive, popular aspects with the revolutionary democratic features of Russian classical literature in the spirit of Belinsky and Chernyshevsky.
Teacher Petrusevich was the first representative of the progressive Russian-Ukrainian revolutionary democratic intelligentsia I met in my village of Kabany, and he left a lasting impression on me, along with a feeling of deep respect and gratitude. These feelings were especially heartfelt then, because I vividly compared him to such a Black Hundred character as "Burcillo," and I saw that Petrusevich, this Russian-Ukrainian intellectual, treated the working poor with integrity and sensitivity, and provided assistance without distinction.

nations, showing this, so to speak, internationalism of mine and strengthening in my soul the seeds of international, fraternal feelings towards all workers of all nations and peoples.
I told him my plans and intentions for further education. He not only agreed, but even said that I knew more in a number of subjects than the four-year city school curriculum required, especially history and literature, and therefore could even expedite my preparation for the high school diploma exams. He even encouraged me to pursue literary work. When I told him about working with my father and brothers, building rafts and floating timber, he said, "You tell stories so well, I should try writing about it." So I wrote a short story on this topic, adding a note about a living forest, uncut, which people enjoy and enjoy its fruits. He really liked this story, which, as he said, realistically reflects nature and human life.
Soon Petrusevich left, and it was time for me to prepare for my departure to my cherished Kiev, where I dreamed of getting to Kiev University.
But to leave the village, I needed to dress up, get some shoes, and, as my father said, have a few rubles in my pocket in case I couldn't find work right away. My parents couldn't give me anything for that; I had to earn it myself.
Since rumors had spread in our village that a "literate man"—the son of Moshka Kaganovich—had appeared, some people from the village of Ilyintsy, four miles from our village, approached my father to ask me to tutor their sons in general subjects. We agreed on payment: one ruble for each lesson, twice a week. To do this, I had to walk there and back. (I was probably the youngest "teacher" in the country at the time.)
My ordeal as a teacher in Ilyintsy didn't last long, as the blacksmith with whom Mys Yasha had shared an apartment in Martynovichi approached my father. It turned out he was moving to a more advantageous location just outside of Kiev, in the Gornostaipol district, in the village of Khochava. Besides the peasants, there were also the Lukomsky and Trubetskoy landowners. They offered him a blacksmith shop and the prospect of a good income. So he approached my father with an offer to apprentice me as a blacksmith, so that I could simultaneously teach his two sons general subjects, especially Russian. My physical growth had almost completed, and I was able to perform

the duties of a blacksmith's assistant, even a hammerman, and in terms of knowledge, to play the role of a teacher to his sons - for this he agreed to pay me 3 rubles, and if things go well for him, 4 rubles a month with everything included, that is, with food.
This blacksmith was personally a pleasant man. But his offer to my father and me was a rather lucrative deal for himself—he was getting both a worker—a blacksmith's assistant—and a "literate" teacher, renowned in the surrounding villages, to teach his two boys (ages 10 and 7). We understood this, but my father, mother, and I personally agreed. For me, the most attractive thing about this was that I was going to a region closer to Kiev, where it would be easier to relocate. Both prospects were attractive: either becoming a skilled worker—a blacksmith—or, after a combined "teaching" period, the possibility of further education.
I left Kabany feeling as if I'd long since emerged not only from childhood but also from adolescence. Strictly speaking, in those days it was difficult to determine when childhood ends, adolescence begins, and then even youth—it's a matter, in my opinion, of the individual and the social circumstances that accelerate this process. However, even with the maturation of new content, threads and forms remain that linger long afterward, reminding us of our former childhood —and that's what happened to me when I left my village, bidding farewell to it, to my childhood and adolescence.
My farewell was marked not so much by the material side (I had very few possessions) as by the psychological. I met up with my friends and peers again, and we walked through the same places, through the woods, meadows, ravines, and gullies, reminiscing about the "long" life we'd shared. And, it must be said, although it was quite short, there was plenty to reminisce about.
However poor our village childhood life was, it had many of its charms, its unadorned, but genuine, life-affirming romance.
Poor people, regardless of their nationality, especially their children, feel that without small joys, when there are no big ones, it is impossible to live, and they often create these joys for themselves. They know how to find them in communication with each other and mutual assistance, in the nature that surrounds them: in meadows, fields, rivers, in flowers and, finally, in song and dance. (Some adults, of course, have perverse

"Radosti"—drinking and the like, but this isn't joy, it's tears). For example, how much spiritual joy, purity, poetry, and romantic delight were and are brought by summer evening songs and dances on the playground or on the wide street of young "boys and girls, when the moon begins to shine and the singing and dancing begins and unfolds, and each one strives to surpass and conquer the other—it's breathtaking!" (boys and girls, when the moon begins to radiate its light and the singing and dancing begins and unfolds, and each one strives to surpass and conquer—it's breathtaking!—ed.)
But the most important thing was that soul-warming environment: family, neighborly, which developed over the years and grew strong, deep roots into the souls of people, especially into the young, pure, unblemished souls of children.
I don’t want to sugarcoat reality now and idealize everyone and everything - there were fights, and dirty tricks, and cunning tricks - everything that children perceive from adults, along with the good and the bad.
We guys also argued among ourselves about how some of them would needlessly break young trees out of sheer mischief. One guy, for example, loved chasing chickens and once grabbed one by the legs. When we chased him, he threw it back at us, killing it. We boycotted him for a long time for this, simply not speaking to him, until he tearfully apologized to us.
Generally, we, the braver ones, protected the timid and weak kids from bullies. For example, I particularly remember one big guy who was older than us and beat up the kids, thus enforcing their unquestioning obedience. And then one day, when he, with his usual brazenness, started advancing on me, I whipped him with the twig I had in my hand. At first, he continued to advance bravely—

the scratch was minor. But when he saw blood seeping out, he began to cry. And from then on, he stopped beating the kids, for which the kids thanked me for having the courage to stand up to him.
It's especially important to emphasize that, as a rule, both adults and children experienced a natural social-class selection of friends, comrades, and acquaintances, choosing those of equal status based on their poverty and regardless of nationality. Children of the poor and middle classes—Ukrainians, Russians, Jews, Poles, and Belarusians—were friends. There were exceptions, but, as a rule, I never saw cases in either Kabany or Martynovichi where children of the poor became close friends with the children of a wealthy Russian, Ukrainian, or Jewish family, much less the children of the elder, police officer, clerk, and others from the volost government.

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We, children, saw and already understood how Great Russian nationalists, for example, contrasted Russians as representatives of a more cultured nation with Ukrainians, as representatives of a supposedly more backward nation, supposedly hostile to Russians, while in fact the Ukrainians ("khokhly," as they were contemptuously called) treated the Russian working people as their own brothers, while the Ukrainian elders, together with the Russian sergeants, suppressed Ukrainian culture and the Ukrainian workers.
The Black Hundreds—both Russian and Ukrainian—incited Russian and Ukrainian workers against Jews, calling for pogroms. But in our village, for example, and not only in ours, and among the surrounding peasants, even at the beginning of the 20th century, when news of Jewish pogroms came from Chisinau, Odessa, and other places, there was no such sentiment, much less action. There was a group of Black Hundreds in the village, led by the son of a shopkeeper—a Ukrainian who competed with the Jewish shopkeeper—who attempted to incite the peasants against the Jewish colony, including the poor, that is, the majority of the colony. But all their efforts failed to gain the sympathy of the majority of the working peasants.
The Jewish nationalist Zionists, who sought to instill in the poor Jewish workers a distrust and hostility toward Russian and Ukrainian workers, were also unsuccessful. The bulk of the Jewish working poor, and especially, as I later saw in Kiev, the Jewish workers in Ukraine, did not succumb to national chauvinism. They saw and knew that the Russian proletariat, the workers of St. Petersburg and Moscow, were fighting for the liberation of all oppressed nations—Ukrainians, Poles, Jews, and other nations of Tsarist Russia.
During my childhood in the village, words like internationalism, workers' solidarity, and the like were unknown. Yet the essence of solidarity between the working poor and the workers, the instinctive, elemental feelings of internationalism, lingered deep in the souls of the oppressed, driven by their very position as oppressed. Without idealizing the situation and the people as they were, or glossing over the realities of unconsciousness and ignorance that made many people, including workers, victims of nationalism, chauvinism, and anti-Semitism, I want to emphasize that my childhood memory retains no instances of chauvinism in general, or anti-Semitism in particular, among the bulk of the working peasants and artisans of our village.

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I remember when I was leaving the village, not only my friends, for whom this was a great event, came to see me off, but also adult neighbors—peasants and artisans. All of them shook my hand in a warm, friendly manner, and some even kissed me. Each of them expressed their best wishes for a happy life. Many of them, as they said goodbye, said, "Thank you, Leyzar, for enlightening us". Close neighbors, seeing the sadness of my father and mother seeing off their youngest son, consoled them: "You, Moshka and Genya, don't be sad, Leyzar is a fast-paced fellow, and his language is so strong that it's not only, as they say, that it will take you to Kiev." "You, Moshka and Genya, don't be sad, Leyzar is a dynamic guy, and he has such a tongue that he can take you not only to Kiev, as

they say. And you, Leyzar," they instructed, "don't forget us, after all, our village is your closest, it's the nest where you grew up, remember where you came from.
Deeply touched by the warmth of those seeing me off, I thanked them with emotion, both in a childish and adult way, and vowed: “I will always remember my village Kabany, my native land, and never forget where I came from.”

ON THE WAY TO KIEV

I left the village with the firm feeling and awareness that I was leaving for good, forever, that Gornostaipol was merely a transit point to Kiev, especially since it was just a stone's throw away. My parents sensed this too; while they were pleased that I was becoming independent, they were also grieving the departure of their youngest of five sons—their favorite son—with parental anguish. My father was also upset that I was going to work as a blacksmith, whereas he and my mother had dreamed, as they said, that I would become a good teacher.
I left the village by stagecoach. First, to Chernobyl, on a passing cart; from Chernobyl, also on a passing peasant cart, to the Detkovskaya paper mill; and from there, in the mill clerk's cart, which was taking his son to Gornostaipol, I reached the village of Khochava.
My journey wasn't without a serious accident. The thing is, leaving Chernobyl, my driver drank a fair amount of gorilka (vodka - editor's note), sang Ukrainian songs along the way, and sang so much that during one of the "rowings," our "podvoda" capsized, and we ended up in icy water. To my great singing voice,

to the driver: he quickly dealt with the accident, put the cart back on its wheels, and the horses did their job—pulled us ashore. But our clothes were completely wet, and we ourselves, especially I, were freezing cold—our teeth were chattering. Luckily, there was a peasant farm nearby, and in it, good-natured owners. I remember the owner gasped, looking at me: "You're all blue, take off all your clothes and shirt, I'll give you a dry, clean one, boy." "We don't have any medicine, just a gorilka, that's the best medicine for a cold". She not only wiped my legs, chest, and shoulders with this medicine, but also insisted that I drink a "velika charka gorilki" (a large shot of vodka – editor's note), with a snack, of course. After sleeping and warming up, I felt fine, no signs of a cold, although there was certainly a danger of pneumonia. I was touched by such care and sensitivity on the part of this generous and warm-hearted peasant woman.
Khochava turned out to be an interesting place for me. The thing is, in our village, I had little direct contact with landowners' estates and their exploitation of farmhands and peasants, because there was no landowner in our village itself. But here in the Khochava area, there were two landowners' estates: one medium-sized one in Khochava itself—the Lukomskys'—and the other, two kilometers away, the large estate of Prince Trubetskoy. The latter was a particularly "example" of the brutal remnants of serfdom after the deceptive, so-called Great Peasant Reform (Emancipation reform of 1861—editor's note). An incredible patchwork of farms, land shortages for the peasants, colossal tax and redemption payments, the peasants' dependence not only on the prince himself, but also on his numerous lackeys, not to mention authorities and officials of all kinds.
I witnessed a particularly dire situation among the peasant settlers from distant Volyn. They had purchased plots of land from Trubetskoy and partly from the landowner Lukomskaya. They paid partly in cash, partly by working in the fields. They had no houses; they dug dugouts and lived in them. I visited their dugouts, which made our poorest huts in Kabanovo seem like "palaces." In conversations with the Volynians, getting to know their lives, I saw hopeless poverty, tattered clothing, and a half-starved existence. There was no school in Khochava. The children didn't go to school, especially since while in our village of Kabany they spoke Russian, or more precisely

"surzhyk," a mixture of Ukrainian and Russian, and understood everything, the Volynians here spoke Russian poorly.

And not everyone understood. Apparently, the Tsarist policy of Russification in Volyn had less of an effect.

The old residents of the village of Khochava lived better than the Volynians, but even here the poor constituted the majority, and from this group came the cadre of farmhands who worked for the Lukomskys and Trubetskoys. I was deeply interested in the plight of peasants and farmhands on the estates. I had to squeeze in time during a busy workload to study and familiarize myself. There was plenty of work in the forge. I diligently studied all the processes of blacksmithing, right down to shoeing horses. I had to perform the duties of a hammerman, a forgeman, handle charcoal, select metal (much of it was scrap metal), and so on. In short, I did everything that an assistant—a blacksmith's apprentice and general laborer—should do. But there were occasional breaks, as the owner would leave the village, either to Gornostaipol, or even to Kiev, or to visit the estate manager, and so on. During these times, I could concentrate on reading or on teaching the boys, who were quite bright and quick to grasp the subject. I also used this time to wander around the village, meeting peasants and farmhands, talking with them, and learning about the new living and working conditions of farmhands and the poor living under the landowners. I quickly found common ground with the peasants, the poor, and the farmhands, especially the young men and women. I learned that in 1905 there had been a major farmhands' strike here, which had almost escalated into a riot. One section of the Trubetskoy estate had been set on fire, and they were planning to set the main palace on fire as well.

The peasants said they supported the farmhands and even demanded that the land be transferred to the peasants for use under acceptable, favorable terms, and that rent be immediately reduced. The Volyn residents also demanded a reduction in the redemption and labor costs for their plots of land. The farmhands demanded that work be carried out from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., with an hour for lunch and half an hour for snacks; payment during the harvest season of one and a half rubles per day; and a number of other demands. The landowner, Lukomskaya, was forced to make concessions, although not immediately: the farmhands' demands were not fully satisfied, approximately two-thirds. Although later, not in 1906, but in 1907, she retracted some of her concessions. Things went differently for Prince Trubetskoy. He refused to give in for a long time, threatening to call in the troops. A police detachment arrived, but was unable to do anything. In the end, Trubetskoy

He capitulated and accepted most of the strikers' demands. But then the situation changed. The farm laborers wanted to organize a new strike against the oppression that was lowering the level they had achieved, but they no longer had the same organization and revolutionary drive they had in 1905. Nevertheless, I saw that the farm laborers were still determined to prevent the level they had achieved from being lowered.

I developed close, friendly ties with some of the young men; we met, and I read them stories and newspapers. But we had no brochures, much less revolutionary leaflets or newspapers, back then. I explained what I could to them on general matters, commenting on legal newspaper reports. I must say that this connection and direct exposure to the lives of farm laborers and peasants on the landowners' estates was very helpful to me in my future life and revolutionary activities.

In Khochava, I was lucky enough to stumble upon a well-stocked library at the Lukomskaya estate. My master, fulfilling orders for the estate, learned of this library and helped me obtain books. This was made even easier by the fact that the wife of the landowner Lukomskaya's son, rumored to have disappeared somewhere—either for a duel or for some other reason—was living with the

landowner. In any case, his wife showed interest in my master's request and granted me access to the library.
I considered this a noble gesture on her part. When we spoke, she was quite surprised that I, so young, was already teaching. She seemed to be a teacher, because after indirectly testing my knowledge, she said, "Yes, you really know what you teach," and agreed to let me borrow books from the library, warning me to handle them with care. In particular, looking at my blacksmith-like hands, she smiled and told me to wash my hands before reading or turning the pages of a book. I sheepishly replied that I would certainly do so. I expressed my gratitude for the books, to which she replied that by doing so she was fulfilling the duty of a cultured person. When I told the landowner this, he told me that, according to his information, the landowner herself treated her daughter-in-law poorly, but tolerated her presence on the estate because of her grandson.
As a result, I read, one might say, devoured a large number of important works, including: Tolstoy’s War and Peace, Turgenev’s Fathers and Sons, Gogol’s Dead Souls, Dostoevsky’s Crime and Punishment, Goncharov’s Oblomov, and much more.

I hadn't read anything before, including the works of Pushkin, Lermontov, Nekrasov, and even some of Maxim Gorky and Chekhov. There I also became familiar with some classics of foreign literature: Dickens's "David Copperfield," Victor Hugo's "Les Miserables," and others. Needless to say, this enriched me, raised my cultural level, and broadened my horizons.
I'd like to mention one more episode. A talented young peasant musician lived and worked in the village. He played the violin beautifully, and we became friends. Our friendship was expressed not only in conversations but also in the fact that I taught him to read and write, and he taught me to play the violin. Although I appreciate music in my soul, I never became a violinist, but I did teach my Semyon basic reading and writing.
Although I was getting quite tired from working in the forge, I continued my self-education. At the same time, I also tried to ensure that my two apprentices gained as much knowledge as possible. My master was very pleased with this, but at the same time, he squeezed every drop of energy out of me at the forge, even though I was a good person by nature.
Getting ready to go to Kiev to buy iron, he told me: "As a bonus for good work, I'll take you with me to Kiev. There you'll help me settle accounts with the iron dealers so I don't get ripped off." (He himself was barely literate.) Needless to say, I was delighted with this trip to the city of my childhood dreams, Kiev.
I joyfully met my brother Mikhail, expressing my delight at my arrival in Kiev, outlining to him my plans and prospects, hatched in the village, for studying alongside physical labor. I said that I would not go to Khochava anymore and wanted to remain in Kiev. Mikhail, pleased, as he said, with my rapid maturation and cultural advancement, nevertheless did not express enthusiasm for my plans to find a job where I could simultaneously study. I noticed that he was even somewhat upset and worried, although he showed restraint and tact not to immediately douse his young dreamer brother with a bucket of cold water and cool his enthusiastic mood. But a little later he said to me: “Your plans, brother, are wonderful, I would be very happy if you succeeded in realizing them. But I feel and know that this, especially at the present time, is an unrealizable dream, and above all because in Kiev, as in all of Russia,

"There's crisis and stagnation now, colossal unemployment, people are dying of hunger and cold. So, your work and study plan is impeded not only by the general current conditions of Stolypin's black reaction, but above all by the simple question of your daily bread. "I, for example," said Mikhail, "am a skilled worker, and I can barely hold on to my job, climbing on old roofs and repairing leaky iron roofing. It's more life-threatening than putting up new roofs, which are gone

now, because they're hardly building new structures. Still, I'll consult with my comrades; maybe we can come up with something. I think they'd be interested in a 'smart guy' like you." After meeting my employer and learning that he was buying a substantial amount of scrap metal from Nizhny Val, Mikhail asked him to talk to the owner of the scrap yard about hiring me as a worker there.
My "good-natured" host resolutely objected. "How could I," he said, "go against my own interests? He teaches my boys and helps me with the forge. Besides, keep in mind that I'll make a real blacksmith out of him."
After long and repeated conversations with him, he gave in, and at his request, the owner of the scrap metal warehouse agreed to hire me.

Chapter 2

IN THE RANKS OF THE WORKERS OF KIEV AND DONBASS

NEW TESTS

So, I'm in the great city of Kiev, among the Kiev workers. True, the job isn't what I wanted, but I was pleased, firstly, that the first part of my dream—living and working in Kiev—had come true, and secondly, simply because, despite the difficult circumstances of unemployment, I'd found a job. Mikhail was pleased with this, too.
Not far from our business, on Nizhny Val, there was a lodging house, or, as the owner called it, a "guesthouse" or "inn." It was truly a combination of a guesthouse and a lodging house. It consisted of three classes:
1st class - on the first and second floors of the main building, where visiting guests were received, who came to Kiev on business from the surrounding settlements and towns, who paid 3 hryvnias per day on the second floor, and 2 hryvnias per day on the first floor; there were no separate rooms; in the common rooms they slept on separate folding beds, which were taken out during the day;
2nd class - a semi-basement, dark and damp, with bunks paid at 10 kopecks per day; this "class" housed working people (non-family), including some unemployed; I also found a place there;
And the third class—a large barn-like structure (converted from a stable) in the back of the yard, where people slept on a clay floor—paid 5 kopecks. This "courtyard" was inhabited primarily by people commonly referred to as "tramps." Some simply lived there, unemployed people for whom the second class was no longer affordable.
Between the 2nd and 3rd grades there were social gatherings; for the first time in my life I saw firsthand this “tramp” element, about which I knew something

From what I read in the stories of my favorite writer, Maxim Gorky. I saw firsthand how truthfully and realistically Gorky described various types, with all their negative sides, and some positive traits as well. Among them were diverse: some who had completely sunk to the bottom, and some who still retained a human form, dreaming of restoring their human identity. There were also extremely contradictory elements—proletarian elements, from those who favored anarchy to those who favored the Black Hundreds, in particular, some desperate unemployed, spurred on by hunger, associated with the tramps and from time to time took part in their "deeds."
I must say that, despite the extreme unattractiveness, primitiveness, and inconvenience of my housing, and as hard as it was to live in that damp, semi-basement dosshouse with its bunks —"every cloud has a silver lining"—it did bring me a certain benefit, politically and psychologically: I got to know the common people of the city—the workers, the unemployed, with all their positive and negative sides—at close quarters, so to speak, in an accelerated manner. I

became close to the best of them as to my class brothers. Although most of them were psychologically crushed by the burden of their material lives, among them were people who had not lost faith that our time of work would yet come, especially among those who had experienced the 1905 revolution.
Naturally, it was difficult to have open conversations on political topics in 1907 and 1908, but individual, seemingly random remarks were made, and tongues were especially loosened after drinking.
In third grade, arguments among the lumpenproletariat centered on various topics, often leading to fights. I recall one such interesting incident when I had to intervene as an educator.
One day, one of the residents of our doss house—a revolutionary—told me that there were heated arguments going on in the third grade about "Chelkash." At first, I didn't understand—what did Gorky's Chelkash have to do with it? But then everything became clear. It turned out that in the third grade of the doss house there was an extremely negative character who called himself "Chelkash." Although this newly minted "Chelkash" was a thief and a crook, unlike Gorky's Chelkash, he pretended to be an anarchist, but was actually a Black Hundred supporter. The argument began with him systematically insulting a villager.

Gritsko, the boy, persistently called him "Gavrila," after the second hero of Gorky's story; despite his protests, he slapped him with epithets of a greedy man willing to do anything for money. Some, especially the unemployed, supported the boy, but it was to no avail.
When I arrived in the third grade, I found such a heated argument about this that it was beginning to turn into a fight. Without getting involved, I said loudly, "You're arguing without even knowing why—let's read Maxim Gorky's story "Chelkash," and then we'll decide who's right." Most of the class responded enthusiastically and instructed me to get the book and read it to them one evening when most of them were there. On the appointed day, most of them were there; they listened with exceptional attention; I read slowly, deliberately, and, one might say, with enthusiasm. I was struck then, and especially now, by the great interest and approval with which these doomed people—tramps and hungry unemployed—received Gorky's story and the controversy it provoked. I won't recount all the subsequent statements, but they can be summarized as follows. The tramp elements spoke bitterly of Gavrila, finding in him traits they believed common to peasants—from a greedy man, they said, anything can be expected, including treacherous murder, as Gavrila had intended to do to Chelkash, who had done him a favor. In contrast, the predominantly unemployed peasants, while not defending Gavrila and even censuring him, also criticized Chelkash, who stole and drank everything away—both for himself and for others. They particularly and rightly insisted that it was not true that not all peasants were greedy, as some tramps claimed; there were, of course, those who were greedy enough to do anything for money, but for the most part, we poor peasants "have no time for fat—just to survive." So, out of ruin and need, we came to the city and are perishing along with you, and at any moment we might even become tramps.
Personally, I concluded by saying that in the villages, as in the cities, there are greedy and self-serving people, but the poor and middle class peasants are honest and not like Gavrila. Gorky himself emphasized and sharply condemned Gavrila's greed and duplicity in order to prevent the downfall of others prone to the same, but he in no way generalizes Gavrila's traits of greed to all peasants, especially the poor.
Recalling the entire course of this unique “literary evening”, I must say that it was on the verge of degenerating

They were drawn into politics, but, conditioned by the experience of frequent, unexpected police raids on their homes, they didn't cross the line without permission. I recall with great satisfaction

this first initiative, my mass action, which demonstrated to me the great power of literature and words for educating people. It was very useful for me and, I think, for the people who participated in it.

Although my interactions with the residents of our "flophouse" did much to foster a sense of solidarity with workers and the poor of all nations, naturally, my most crucial, primary class education came at work, through direct contact with proletarian workers selling their labor power as a commodity. After working there, I became close to them, and we got to know each other better. Not everyone was alike in their behavior; in their consciousness, there were extremely backward elements, drunkards, but there were also many class-conscious workers who were outraged not only by economic exploitation but also by the political reaction that reigned in the country.

With great caution, a small group of such conscientious workers formed, among whom I was the youngest—as my comrades called me, "young and precocious." This, of course, wasn't a party group, but simply revolutionary-minded workers of a socialist persuasion. I told them as best I could about the history of the French Revolution, the Decembrists, the peasant reform, and—what I knew—about the Russian labor movement, what I'd learned from my contacts with the old Bolsheviks with whom Mikhail had introduced and connected me.

A particularly important contribution, if I may say so, or my first contribution to the class consciousness of my comrade workers, was my story about reading Wilhelm Liebknecht's small but important pamphlet, "Spiders and Flies," which I received from the old Bolsheviks. I will not set out here the rich content of this small book, but I advise all young comrades to find it and read it, not only because I loved it in my youth, but also because it vividly, figuratively, and briefly conveys the essence of the capitalist system and the capitalists who, like spiders, suck all the blood out of the proletarian flies. I remember what a tremendous impression my story about it made on the workers, not only because it reflected their life and situation, but also because Wilhelm Liebknecht, this old comrade of Marx (the father of Karl

Liebknecht) called on workers not to be flies, but to fight against the blood-sucking spiders-capitalists.

And it must be said that this wasn't simply a matter of educating the workers; it led to the fact that, under the harsh conditions of the Stolypin reaction, the workers, albeit little by little, began to show that they weren't flies. In our case, this manifested itself concretely in a small, if not quite a strike, then a serious "showdown"—an active expression of their discontent and protest. The problem was that the employer didn't provide us with any special clothing, so we came up with various ways to "save" our tattered clothes. I, for example, used this "invention": I found a large, thick bag, cut slits for my head and arms, and pulled it over my head—it became something like a robe—tied it at the waist with a rope, and thus created a unique kind of special clothing. All the workers followed my example, chuckling and saying, "Necessity is the mother of invention," while others added, "Both cheap and cheerful."

But we couldn't cope with mittens; burlap wouldn't do—winter was coming. Those who had old ones were torn, and without mittens you can't go near metal in winter.

And so, after "Spiders and Flies," came the second effective, practical contribution to the workers' consciousness. I won't hide the fact that I recall with pride my initiative in presenting the employer with a demand—give us gloves. Not everyone agreed at first, fearing dismissal, as there were many unemployed workers around whom the employer could immediately hire. But finally, having come to an agreement, the workers insistently told the employer that without gloves, no worker, no matter who he hired, would be able to work in the winter. At first, he dismissed it with the phrase, "Where am I supposed to get them? Get them yourself." We told him that we work 12 hours a day and have no time to look for them, and that it would be easier for you to get them. We essentially presented a demand with a warning that we could not and would not work without gloves. It was a threat of a strike. The owner, apparently not wanting, as he said, a scandal, or even possible police

intervention, and in fact not considering it advisable to change the composition of a well-established team of workers in winter, especially with urgent orders, gave in, got the mittens, and supplied us with them. You should have seen our joy, not so much from the mere fact of receiving the mittens, but from the first small victory—the collective, unanimous action of the workers—that inspired us all, even the timid ones. Moreover, the struggle for the "mittens" in the warehouse

The scrap metal collection became known to workers at other Podil factories and made a positive impression on them. The old Bolsheviks, to whom I told about it, were particularly appreciative of this action. They said it was a small but positive sign of workers' activism.

My proactive, effective contribution to the fight for the gauntlet worsened my situation at work—the boss learned of my activity and drew his own conclusions. He assigned me to more demanding work, handling large-scale scrap metal, despite the indignation of many workers that the boss had assigned such a difficult task to a still-young worker. I didn't give up, worked vigorously, or at least tried my best not to show that I was struggling, and worked like a pro. But, naturally, my young body was struggling physically, and even worse, the work clothes weren't warm enough, and I had no warm clothes underneath, much less warm underwear or a sweater. As a result, I caught a cold and developed pneumonia.

It was impossible for our brother to get into the hospital, and it was also impossible to stay on the bunks in the dosshouse, so Mikhail arranged for me to stay in the room of an old Bolshevik, a metalworker and cousin (on my mother's side) named Grigory Shimanovsky, who was visiting his sister Pasha, who helped care for me. I was visited and treated by an old doctor, a liberal, in a good sense, Schreiber, whose daughter, Serafima, had connections with the Bolsheviks and later became a Bolshevik herself.

The illness had passed, and I began to recover—my youthful body had triumphed. As I was saying goodbye, the doctor said, "Thank your parents for giving you such a strong body—you'll live a long life, but right now you need good care and good nutrition. You need to go to the village. There, your parents will finally get you back on your feet." I balked, declaring that I would stay in Kiev, but Mikhail's word, which I held dear, sealed the deal, and I temporarily moved to the village.

I was greeted with joy in the village. My mother and father were, of course, dejected that I was ill and looked unwell, but they were happy that I had arrived alive, secretly, without telling me, cherishing the dream that I would stay in the village for a long time. The neighbors were also happy to see me, especially, of course, my peers (Nazar Zhovna, Levko Tereshko, Esip Tarakhtun, Shmilik Weisberg, and others). My parents did everything they could to help me recover quickly and get stronger.

With the arrival of spring I already felt so much stronger,

that I told my parents that it was time for me to get ready for the return journey to Kiev.

My parents tried to object, but they themselves realized that there was no other way out; I couldn’t live in the village.

However, the same eternal difficulties arose once again on the road to departure: neither my parents nor I had any money, so we had to earn it. Fortunately, my modest literacy skills were in demand. Therefore, both I and my employers were satisfied with the agreement under which I would teach general subjects, especially Russian, for several months to a small group of students, including my Uncle Aron's sons.

Having earned 12 rubles in three months, I was able to return to Kiev. After comforting my beloved parents, saying a warm and touching farewell to them, all my relatives, all my neighboring peasants, and my friends, I left the village again, but this time directly to Kiev via Chernobyl.

Just like my first time, I arrived in Kiev during the years of ongoing industrial stagnation, unemployment, and the Stolypin reaction. Kiev was home to a huge number of unemployed people who steadfastly endured their hardships, scraping by, earning a pittance in the occasional day labor or odd jobs—I fell into this category. My job search was unsuccessful; the good fortune I had had on my first visit to Kiev, working in a scrap metal yard, was not repeated.
When I went to this warehouse immediately upon arrival, the owner refused me, saying that there was no work, and at the same time he did not fail to throw at me a mocking phrase - “if only you would bring your mittens from the village, then we would think about it”, reminding me of our fight for “mittens”.
There was no official "labor exchange" in Podil; there were separate points known as gathering places for the unemployed and their hiring. One of the central such points in Podil was the building of the Contract Fair near the flea market. That's where I headed, along with a group of other young men. It's difficult today to convey our state of mind at that time, waiting to find some kind of work. Like all the unemployed who gathered there, we felt oppressed above all by hunger, the pitiful state of waiting, like alms, for a lucky chance to get a job; we were ragged, for all the best clothes had already been sold at the flea market.

From time to time, the work was hard and unsightly. Most of it involved carrying heavy objects: furniture, sacks, and boxes of food and goods. Around the Contract Fair, there were many wholesale stores—goods, delicatessens, and hardware stores. So, customers, mostly from the provinces, hired us to carry sacks, bales, and boxes over fairly long distances; it was cheaper than hiring a cab. Human labor was cheaper than horse labor, and we were grateful for this rare income, which we calculated in pennies to last us a week, or even a month.
I personally endured these ordeals with fortitude, but compared to others, I still had a hidden sadness in my soul and, so to speak, resentment towards fate, which had trampled on my dream of studying.
I had no training, other than a basic apprenticeship as a blacksmith and a worker in a scrap yard. But the natural qualities of a healthy, precocious young man enabled me to perform any physical labor, and nature had not deprived me of the ability to master any specialty. With this in mind, I set about searching for work even more energetically. However, there were few "buyers" for my labor force.
The rafting of timber and firewood down the Pripyat-Dnieper River to Kiev had begun. I'd known this business since childhood, when I worked with my father and brothers on the riverbank. Usha was the one who prepared the rafts for the trip. Having teamed up with three strong men I knew from our former flophouse, we headed to the banks of the Dnieper near Kiev, where the rafts landed, and there we managed to find temporary work. The work was physically demanding, and we were paid 80 kopecks a day for 12-14 hours of work. We set up a hut on the bank where we slept, bought food, and after working for 15 days, we had saved up some money for a more "quiet" wait for the next job.
Although we were thoroughly tired, working in the fresh air and living in the hut strengthened our bodies after the days and weeks of hunger; our mood here, in the "poetic" atmosphere of the Dnieper, noticeably improved. The contractor who hired us, apparently pleased that we had hauled the timber and firewood ashore ahead of schedule, told us to check back when the next rafts would arrive, and he would give us more work.
We were very happy about this, without thinking about the fact that the owner made a good profit from our completing this work ahead of schedule.

And indeed, at the appointed time we showed up and received the same work, but, having grown bolder, we asked to be paid a ruble a day; having agreed on 90 kopecks, we were satisfied - still one grivennik more than before.
Another result of this second round was that we established contact with the sawmill that supplied the timber and the firewood yards where it was delivered. At the sawmill on the banks of the Dnieper in the city, not far from Nizhny Val, two of us—Gritsko and I—got temporary work, and the other two found temporary jobs at the firewood yards.
The sawmill had no mechanization other than the saw frame. Work had to be done manually; the work was hard and extremely dangerous from a safety standpoint. I remember how one worker's leg was broken by a rolling log, and he remained disabled for life, receiving no compensation or pension. But there was no way out; the strikes were untimely. There were many unemployed on the embankment, easily prepared to resort to strikebreaking, and there was no union, so there was no one to protect the strikers. But this sawmill, too, soon closed, and we were once again left without work.
During the period of grain deliveries down the Dnieper to the Kiev mills, I managed, with great difficulty, to secure a job as a loader at a large mill owned by the millionaire Brodsky. I successfully hauled sacks weighing five poods, just like the older loaders. The working conditions were harsh: the dust was incredible, no protective clothing was provided, of course, the sacks had to be carried upwards, the planks on the bridges were precarious, breaking constantly, and workers fell and were injured. The quotas were high; for meeting them completely, a loader received 75 kopecks a day for a 12-hour workday. The treatment from the overseers was unbearable, sometimes even beatings. The overseers were somewhat afraid of the seasoned old loaders, and they even cursed them out with all the usual obscenities. But we, the newcomers and young ones, tolerated it at first. Gradually, we began to grumble, which culminated in our organized protest before the highest administration. A representative of this top administration came to us and told us, "You're not even fully qualified loaders yet. We hired you, expecting you to be an example and a model of discipline, but look at you! You dare file a protest, and do you know what will happen if we call the police? To teach others a lesson, we're simply firing you." And about ten young loaders were thrown out into the street.

Some of the older people wanted to protest, but the majority did not support them: they, the young people, they said, would survive and find work, but we, the family ones, would have a harder time; the owner would easily find workers instead of us, but it would be harder for us to find work.
Since I was the main instigator of the young loaders' revolt, the workers expressed every sympathy for me, jokingly saying, "You see, Brodsky's boss is called Lazar, and your name is Lazar. You should go to him and say, 'How could you, Lazar, fire Lazar? It's not right,' they say. Look, he'd be ashamed and reinstate you, with a raise, too.' Everyone laughed and said, 'Expect mercy from a bloodsucker,' and one loader added, 'He, Brodsky, is a Jew, and he's even more angry at the Jewish worker who doesn't bow to him, but wages war against him.'"
Later, when I was already a member of the party, I used this conflict in the fight against the Zionists, whose patron was this millionaire Lazar Brodsky.
So, my job as a loader at the mill was over, and I was left without work again.
I had a hard time enduring this new unemployment and permanent hunger strike. Hunger is always hard to endure, but it's one thing to endure it in the context of revolutionary struggle and war, and quite another to endure it under capitalism as an unemployed person, starving while others—your own capitalist oppressors and their lackeys—live as comfortably as hogs.
There's a saying: "Man does not live by bread alone." This is, of course, a noble thought, meaning that, in addition to bread, a person needs culture, spiritual life, an ideological and political content in life, and so on. All this is true, but only when a person has "this one bread."

I remember that during these periods of my unemployment, sitting on the boulevards, walking along the streets, squares and parks, observing the dandies, aristocrats, rich people strolling along Khreshchatyk, along Bibikovsky Boulevard, their exquisite clothes, their arrogant behavior in contrast to the workers, working people, walking sloppily in work clothes, and the unemployed in tattered clothes - I became more and more embittered and imbued with a keen sense of class hatred for parasites, bloodsuckers and, at the same time, a feeling of deep solidarity, love and respect for my brothers in class, in need, suffering just like myself.
It is wrong, of course, that some quasi-humanists, including

Even modern ones confuse this hatred with hatred in general, supposedly directed at people in general, and appeal to an abstract "general good." Under the capitalist exploitative system that still exists in most countries of the world, we approached and continue to perceive and understand good and evil, sympathies and hatreds, from a proletarian-class perspective. Proletarian good is universal and truly humanistic goodness and love for people. This is precisely how we, the working-class "Pravda" youth and the truly revolutionary non-working youth who embraced Marxist-Leninist ideas and principles, understood our hatred for the existing landlord, capitalist reality.
Of course, the internal life of our homeland has changed radically; we no longer have exploitative classes, but overall, on a global scale, so to speak, this class approach remains in full force, because the active imperialist "beast" and its vanguard force—fascism and racism—remain.
Of course, hatred, even class-conscious hatred, is not in itself a saving, creative factor. In order to develop into a great, creative, positive revolutionary force, class hatred must be combined with ideological love, with active sympathy for suffering and needy people, for oppressed humanity, and above all, for its advanced vanguard—the proletariat. It must be combined with great revolutionary ideas of liberating it from exploitation, the complete and final overthrow of the existing capitalist system, oppression, and violence, and with organized revolutionary action that ensures victory over those whom you hate with class hatred, against whom you wage a fierce struggle until their complete annihilation.
My observations and sensations strengthened in me the feelings of precisely this class hatred and pushed me along the path of transforming it into a creative force of conscious revolutionary proletarian action.
My observations of the petty bourgeois middle class repulsed me from the petty bourgeois narrow-mindedness of people from the petty bourgeois classes, always in a hurry somewhere, caught up in petty affairs, always in fear - how not to be late, how not to lose something - profit, career, more earnings or respect from those in power and rich acquaintances, especially if they

connected by some mutual interests or profitable business transactions and deals.
It was clear these people had no other goals, much less greater social ones. They gave the impression of being afraid, above all, of losing or never finding their happy personal destiny, their personal well-being, which they dreamed of all their lives but which they, for the most part, never found. Ultimately, these bourgeois, seeing no connection between the personal and the social, resigned themselves to the status quo. For the most part, life was reduced to petty petty savings, at least a few trinkets and trinkets that saved them from a miserable existence.
Naturally, I saw the most working people from the poor and working class. These are the people I interacted with daily in life, at work, and on the city streets. The faces and demeanor of these working people revealed a burdensome life, an extreme preoccupation with the future—ensuring a livelihood for themselves and their families. They rush to work, and then drag themselves home with a tired, slow gait, or hang in bunches on the steps of trams. From their eyes, their pursed lips,

their figures, their entire appearance, it was clear that these workers were dissatisfied with their lives, their exploitation, their poverty.
From my contacts with workers and the unemployed, I certainly saw and knew that among the workers, alongside the conscious, there were many backward people, although they too felt a need to live better, that the rich capitalists were bandits robbing the workers. But they saw no conscious way out. Some succumbed to a sense of doom, others to rebellious sentiments, and still others took a nationalistic and chauvinistic turn.
At the same time, I saw and understood that the best people of the working class, under the leadership of the underground workers' party of the Bolsheviks, which existed in the difficult conditions of Stolypinism, must, and were, turning these backward people onto the right path with their work.
The main and most gratifying thing was that my observations and conversations with workers, including the unemployed, showed that from among those forced to temporarily submit to the prevailing conditions and the course of life after the defeat of the revolution of 1905-1907, advanced working people were emerging, boldly and proudly walking along the streets of Kiev, unconquered in their entire appearance, challenging the Stolypin reaction, as if to say: look at us

And believe - the revolution lives in the hearts of the workers, we will still rise and show our revolutionary strength, do not be discouraged, we will still defeat all the enemies of the proletariat and the revolution!
During my ordeals in Kiev, I felt and understood more acutely that in the life that most ordinary people had, there was neither purpose nor meaning; those small, temporary “joys” that ordinary poor people found for themselves only deepened their suffering, driving it inward, especially such “joys” as drinking – they give no outlet to the body, mind, or heart.
Of course, I was deeply affected by the suffering around me. With my whole young being, I felt, and most importantly, I already understood, that this could not and should not continue. I firmly understood that the necessary, great meaning of life lies in fighting in a revolutionary way for a new life, for a radical change in the existing joyless life of the working people.
Looking back on this period of my youth, I can say that even when I was unemployed or working menial jobs, I wasn't just making sense of my surroundings; I was already beginning to take action, particularly by working among the unemployed and menial laborers. This was especially true when it came to guiding their consciousness.
Capitalists, relying on the Stolypin regime and its police, which cracked down on workers' organizations, supported organized Black Hundreds organizations. In Kiev, with its multinational population, they were especially strong. Bourgeois-nationalist organizations oppressing nations also took advantage of this to obscure the class consciousness of workers and to foment nationalism among minority workers, even though the bourgeoisie of these nations itself entered into alliances with the Black Hundreds bourgeoisie. Chauvinists and Black Hundreds also sought to foment chauvinism among backward workers, especially among the unemployed. As an unemployed person, I visited their gathering points and saw how Black Hundred gangs organized fights among the unemployed. They used this as a pretext for assigning one or another unemployed person of the corresponding nationality to a job that came their way; Often, a fierce struggle ensued, threatening bloodshed.
I recall the largest conflict, which is etched in my memory, at the Contract Fair in Podil, where hundreds of unemployed people vegetated for many days and weeks waiting for work, mostly without result.
On one of those dark days, a carousel of controversy began to spin.

Between the unemployed; it started as if with half-jokes, one chuckling at the other, but ended in earnest. One of the unemployed began to sneer at another unemployed peasant in a sash and bast shoes: "What brought you to Kiev from a Ukrainian village? Your land in Ukraine is better than ours in Kaluga; it would probably feed you and your family, not like here in Kaluga. You 'hokhlik' would sit in your village and eat 'potatoes' and 'lard.'"
And this “hokhlik,” as the Kaluga resident called him, flared up and sharply reprimanded the Kaluga resident: “As if you had treated our village and how we live, you could still be stupid without saying anything; If there is no horse, no ox, what you have done with one land, and if there is no one with this land, it is always in the rich man’s pocket with all its entrails, why am I disappearing here in Kiev. If you saw our village and how we live, you wouldn't talk nonsense; when you have neither horse nor ox, what can you do with just land? Here you are, with this land, always in the rich man's pocket, all the guts, that's why I'm wasting away here in Kiev. And you tell me yourself, why did you and the other katsaps come here, to our Kiev? They should have looked for work at home, then we, the locals, would have found work sooner.
The Kaluga resident wanted to continue the argument and even managed to say that Kiev is as much yours as mine and belongs to all Russians, when someone, who didn't even look like an unemployed person, entered the fray and, as if continuing the Kaluga resident's thought, said, "Yes, they are Russians, but look, they've gotten drunk and are thin, we need to drive them out of here."
This seemingly unexpected conclusion found its way. The crowd stirred and turned toward the corner where a group of unemployed Jews stood. A small group of Black Hundred elements, apparently the ones who had spoken out, took advantage of this, and hooligan shouts and calls began—the situation threatened to degenerate into a bloody massacre.
At this point, I was standing in the center of the argument—apparently, even then, I wasn't one of those timid types. Quickly realizing where this was heading, I made up my mind and shouted in a loud, resonant voice: "Listen to what a young man, just as miserable and unemployed as you, wants to tell you. Why, for what kind of wealth are you ready to eat each other here, for a holey pocket with not a penny in it? All the wealth belongs to the capitalist owners, the landowners, the merchants, the rich men of all nations. It was with our hands, with our sweat and blood, that they acquired their capital. When it suits them, they keep us; when it doesn't, they throw us out, make us unemployed. Now, I'll tell you who is the main culprit behind my current unemployment."
And I told them the story of my work and dismissal from work at the mill of millionaire Lazar Brodsky. "My name is also Lazar, but "Fedot, but not that one." He is a millionaire, and I am hungry, unemployed. (The listeners reacted favorably to my joke.

(He laughed, and that cheered me up.) He goes to the governor's balls and hangs out with other rich people—Russians, Ukrainians, Poles; they don't fight, but clink glasses, drinking not boiling water without tea or sugar, like you and me, but cognac and champagne. And I, here, am in the same family of unemployed as you. Who is closer to me? Who is my brother? Millionaire Lazar Brodsky, who kicked me out because I, along with a group of young people, protested against bullying? Of course, millionaire Brodsky is my class enemy; he and the capitalists of all nations—Russians, Ukrainians, and Polish—are the class enemies of us all. That's why we all—workers, poor peasants, regardless of nationality—Russians, Ukrainians, Jews, Poles, Tatars, and others—we are all brothers, because we all suffer at the hands of the rich, the exploiters of all nations. And even though I'm young among you, I find it laughable to listen to your arguments, as if the culprit of unemployment is here among the hungry and downtrodden. It's not the unemployed of oppressed nations that need to be driven out, but the capitalists, landowners, and oppressors of working people of all nationalities. We must not succumb to the incitement of national hatred, to which we are being driven by the lackeys, the Black Hundred lackeys and dogs of the capitalists, landowners, merchants, and rich people of all nations.

We—the workers, the poor of both villages and cities—must be united, conscious, and fight for our rights, and above all, for the right to work. When we prevent our forces from being divided by nation, when workers of all nations are united and united as a single class, then everything will change. We, the sufferers, will cease to suffer and will become worthy and secure citizens of the state."
This was my first baptism - speaking before the masses; then I especially felt and understood the great power of the word - the right word.
I was strongly supported by a worker who spoke after me, much older than me, a worker from Moscow named Vasiliev, as he introduced himself. He spoke about the life of Moscow workers, including their struggle in 1905, how they were not succumbing to Black Hundred and nationalist agitation and incitement against other nations, and in conclusion, he called for class unity among the proletariat and a fight for their rights, and above all, for the right to work. Only such a clear class formulation of the question, even without heated political debates, which under the conditions of that time were impossible at an open meeting, especially an unorganized one,

led to the fact that the mass of unemployed, who had deviated in the wrong direction, as if ashamed of what had happened, turned towards the correct class, proletarian mood expressed in the speeches of the last two speakers.
Without any "resolutions" or shouting, they moved on to the "next" business—waiting and looking for work. Even the Black Hundreds were forced to retreat, though they certainly weren't appeased and were always ready to renew their efforts. However, some of the unemployed people there, of various nationalities, were clearly encouraged and approached me in high spirits, clapping me on the shoulder and approving of what I had said. Needless to say, this strengthened me.
When I told this to the old Bolsheviks with whom I was connected and with whom I had spoken during visits to Mikhail, they all paid special attention to this incident and said that such a reaction was significant, that it was further evidence of the expected revival. They all approved of me and said they were happy for me. Yes, indeed, they said, you really need to study, but there's nothing we can do to help.
One of them, the old Bolshevik Feld, stayed after the conversation and told Mikhail that he would try to get me a job through his brother, who worked in the transport office.
And indeed, a couple of days later, I met Feld's brother, a senior agent in the freight office, who offered me a tryout to show what I was capable of. "You," he said, "will drive with a convoy of cabbies to the railway station, deliver cargo, and at the freight office, process the documents for the delivered and received cargo, based on the documents presented, for its return journey; then, over time, we will appoint you as a junior agent in the freight office."
Of course, I happily accepted this offer and successfully carried out the assigned duties. This was the first railway "school" for the future Minister of Railways of the USSR.
There was a slight revival in industry, some previously closed businesses reopened, and I firmly decided to seek work in an industrial enterprise to escape the status of a laborer and become a skilled worker. I also hoped that, no matter what the job, whatever the specialty, I would still be able to find time for self-education.
I didn't manage to implement this plan of mine right away. I had to

I went through a number of different industries at different companies until I managed to get a job at a tannery and then at a shoe factory, where I firmly acquired the permanent qualifications of a tanner, and then a shoemaker.
First of all, after a fairly long period of unemployment and odd day jobs, I went to work at a newly opened cork factory, the demand for which had grown significantly, particularly due to the opening

of breweries. The cork factory was a stable enterprise; it was something like a joint-stock company, with facilities not only in Kiev; the owners were capitalists of various nationalities—Russians, Ukrainians, Jews, Poles. They organized the production of large corks not only for breweries but also cleverly organized the collection of old, used beer and other corks and processed them into medium and small corks, supplying them to various consumers, especially pharmacies, and, of course, making a good profit from this.

The corks were processed on special hand-operated machines, manned primarily by young people; I, like many others, was assigned to one of these machines. Each of us processed thousands of corks in a 12-hour workday, earning 50-60 kopecks a day. By the end of the day, our arms and legs ached like hell, but the work was dry and relatively clean, and after a short evening rest, we had the opportunity to read and study.

While working at the cork factory, I became friends with a group of young people. We helped each other with the work, particularly by hauling sacks of corks from the basement upstairs to the receiver. But the most important thing about our friendship was that I got them books, told them what I could about history, especially about socio-political development and the struggle of the working class, and introduced them to political issues.

Gradually, our group of young workers began to take the initiative in fighting the administration's arbitrary rule, particularly against short-changing and systematic fines for quality, lateness, supposedly insolent behavior, and so on. We managed to win some ground for the workers. Our protest for a 30-minute lunch break and higher wages was looming. But events outpaced it.

One of the owners, who was in charge of this enterprise, was especially picky about our group of young people, the influence

which was growing. One day, he accused one of our guys, Yefim Kovalchuk, of double-counting a bag of bottle caps he was handing over to the inspector. Yefim lost his temper and told him, "You're a thief and a crook, but we workers are honest people, not thieves." The boss went berserk and started shouting, "Get out of here, don't let me see your spirit again, go to the office and get your pay—you're fired."

We were all outraged and spontaneously abandoned our work. Hearing the shouts, most of the workers came running and joined us, the young ones. Work was effectively stopped.

All the workers had a grudge against the owners for their endless nitpicking, especially fines for low wages despite the obvious growth of their profits, so the protest was clearly overdue.

We didn't have a trade union, but organization emerged naturally. From spontaneous indignation and work stoppages, we quickly transitioned to an organized meeting. Although there were a few isolated voices against stopping work, the majority agreed that we had to present our demands and, if the owners rejected them, go on strike. Since our group of young workers had already been united, we naturally set the tone at the meeting. Alongside us were older workers with experience of the 1905 revolution, among whom the veteran worker Shcherbitsky stood out. The workers elected a committee to lead the organization (out of caution, they didn't call it a strike committee), tasked with formulating demands. Until these demands were presented to the owners, they decided to continue work. This was also due to the political and police reaction. The aforementioned Shcherbitsky, myself, Kaganovich, Yefim, and several other leading workers were elected to the committee.

I consulted with the old Bolsheviks with whom I was associated, and they gave me advice on how to proceed.

Demands were developed, discussed with the workers, and presented to the owners: cancel the dismissal of Efim Kovalchuk, abolish the fine system, establish a 30-minute lunch break, and increase rates by 20 percent.

Although a local police officer arrived at the plant on the second day, sniffing out what was going on, the workers remained confident and bold, and the owners were stunned by their unexpected

audacity. It was unprofitable for them to allow the plant to shut down during that period. Apparently, after consulting, the partners decided to make some concessions. After summoning us, they initially harshly criticized us.

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The workers and us, their representatives. We, for our part, responded sharply and declared that if they did not meet our demands, the workers would go on strike.

In the end, the owners: 1) rescinded Yefim's dismissal; 2) allowed a half-hour lunch; 3) partially waived some fines, though they retained a significant portion; and promised to raise wages slightly to accommodate daily wages: the daily wage increased by one hryvnia. This ended the first conflict. Although it was economic in nature, in the reactionary climate of the time, this small victory for the workers of this particular plant also acquired political significance. The mood was lifted not only among the workers at our plant but also at nearby enterprises in Podol.

After that, police agents and district police officers became frequent visitors to the plant, showing interest in our group of young people, especially Yefim and me. As hard and sad as it was, Yefim and I had to leave the plant.

However, I felt I had grown and strengthened in this struggle between workers and employers, in which I played no small role. I truly experienced the great power of conscious class organization among workers, especially the power of international solidarity, when workers—Russians, Ukrainians, Jews, Poles, and others—were united in their struggle against the capitalists of their own nations. I was glad and happy to have participated in this effort, even though unemployment and the search for work once again lay ahead.

After the cork factory, I was unemployed again for a long time, earning a living through occasional short-term jobs, like at the seltzer distillery in Shulyavka. But I didn't last long at that plant; an incident occurred that led to my being fired again. The thing is, the owner's son—a parasite and a womanizer—was harassing the young women who worked at the plant. They couldn't stand up for themselves, so a few of us, a few young guys, conspired to break this scoundrel of his habits and beat him up soundly. Not wanting a scandal involving his son, the owner didn't involve the police, but he fired us.

After that, I started working at a soap factory. The work was dirty, but the owner paid 80 kopecks a day. He was an original owner, having inherited the factory from his father. The young owner couldn't cope with it. He even said himself that he wasn't an exploiter and couldn't be one. He even confided once that in his student years he was even an "Iskrist." Perhaps that's why.

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He turned out to be a bad businessman and the Bluvshtein Soap Factory burst like a soap bubble. Finally, with the help of Boris Kogan, an old Bolshevik pastry chef, I got a job at a newly opened confectionery factory in Podil, hoping that I would finally find a permanent job there. I mastered the craft quite quickly. Within a short time, I was already assigned to an apprentice position. But the working conditions were disgusting, with no ventilation. We toiled in heat, stuffiness, and filth.

I was left with a very good feeling for the workers and women of this industry, who, in large part and under the difficult conditions of reaction, were revolutionary-minded, since they were predominantly workers who had worked in this industry for a long time and steadily, and although the years of reaction had an impact on their political activity, but as a new upsurge of the workers' revolutionary movement approached, the Kiev confectioners, among whom worked such old Bolsheviks as G. Weinberg, B. Kogan, Petrov, together with all the advanced workers of Russia, stood in the ranks of active fighters for the victory of the revolution.

I left this factory better prepared for the trade union and organizational-political work that I had already developed while working in the tannery and then in the shoe factories, where I acquired a permanent and stable profession.

I can't say I chose the tanner's profession with pleasure, but once again unemployed, I had no time to choose a desired profession. Generally speaking, while in our Soviet era, the vast majority of young people choose their profession based on their inclinations and desires, in the old, pre-revolutionary times, "we had no time for fat—we just had to survive."
For example, having started out as a blacksmith, I wanted to be a metalworker. Mikhail and his comrades, mostly metalworkers, encouraged me to pursue this career. They even tried to get me a job at the South Russian Machine-Building Plant, but unfortunately, nothing came of it. This was primarily because the limited number of Kiev machine-building plants couldn't absorb the large number of applicants.
Finding myself unemployed again, I was happy to have found a job at the tannery. I was lucky. It turned out that my friend Efim Kovalchuk, who had been forced to leave the cork factory with me,

factory, got a job at the Kobets tannery in Kurenivka. He helped me get a job at that factory.
Of all the tanneries in the Kiev region (Sokolovsky, Kovalevsky, Matveenko, Gornshteyn, and others), Vasily Konstantinovich Kobets's plant was the oldest and largest, surviving all the difficulties of the crises without closing. This plant processed large, select hides: ox hides, heifers, and, to some extent, yearling calf hides. It produced primarily soles, yuft leather, and, to some extent, shagreen and other fine footwear products. Although Kobets's plant was considered more mechanized than other factories, a closer inspection revealed that this mechanization was extremely limited, and heavy manual labor predominated. The most difficult aspect was that almost all production operations involved water, mud, lime, tannins, the risk of anthrax, and so on.
When I joined the factory, I was assigned to the first, most difficult and dirty operation—soaking, removing dirt, blood, and grease—in short, cleaning and softening the leather and preparing it for further processing. Although work in other operations—in the ash, fleshing, and tanning departments—was also difficult—and the same dampness—it was easier and at least a little more "attractive." I persistently and patiently carried out my duties, but the moment came when I appealed to the administration to be given work in other operations. They refused. They mockingly emphasized: no matter, they needed "literate people" here too. Later I learned that the word "literate" was not thrown out by chance. The fact is that surveillance at Kobets's factory was meticulous, and Kobets had strong ties to the police, so "literate people," that is, conscientious workers, did not stay with him. Besides my comrade Yefim, there were several other leading workers at the plant, including two I remember well, Solodovnikov and Elkhin, who later became Bolsheviks, like Yefim. Naturally, we not only communicated with each other but also conducted relevant work among the workers, particularly on occupational safety issues in the difficult conditions of our work, particularly in cases of workers falling into vats and sustaining injuries.
But even here, "evil fate" pursued me: apparently, the new owners, buying yuft and soles from Kobets, received a warning from him about me as "unreliable." Cancel my employment

They couldn't get me to work, but instead of the job I'd started in the main workshop, where I'd quickly mastered the craft of a shoe-beater, they assigned me to the basement, where I was supposed to sort and tar yuft leather hoods. Although, as they say, tar is very good for the lungs, I was permeated with the smell of tar, and my hands were blacker than a Negro's. It must be said, however, that my comrades didn't shun me, including the dark-browed girls. Finally, the time came when I became a shoe-beater—a "mechanic."
The mechanics' work wasn't easy either. They worked standing up, 12 hours a day, their chests pressed against iron blocks. The production quota was high—they'd knock down four pairs of shoes, eight pairs of boots, and with overtime, some reached twelve pairs. To speed up the work, so everyone wouldn't have to take from the box, they'd scoop up the iron nails (tacks) in their mouths,

then throw the rest back into the common box. Some, like me, even got their own boxes of tacks. At first, this was looked upon askance, as if it were a sign of disdainful "aristocrats." Then, when the union was restored, we introduced separate boxes of tacks for everyone, and everyone was happy with this innovation.
At the end of 1910, an opportunity arose to restore the Tanners' Union, which had been destroyed by the Stolypin reaction. The Tanners' and Shoemakers' Union, along with the separate Procurement Union, was one of the oldest trade unions in Kiev and Ukraine.

THE BEGINNING OF PARTY ACTIVITIES

The second half of 1911 was already more intensely marked by class struggle in the economic and political spheres. Workers' strikes, which began in the central industrial regions and in glorious revolutionary St. Petersburg, quickly spread to the industrial centers of Ukraine and to the capital, Kiev. Although not considered industrial, it was, firstly, one of the largest political, economic, and revolutionary centers of the country, and, secondly, Kiev had a large labor force, including railway workers. Podil, for example, was not considered an industrial region, but it had many reputable enterprises in the food, clothing, leather and footwear, haberdashery, and light industry.

The woodworking industry; there were also such large enterprises for the time as the South Russian Plant. Ship repairmen and river workers from the Dnieper, as well as workers in small workshops—the most disadvantaged—were revolutionary.
In 1911, and already in 1910, the Kiev party organization issued a number of important documents and leaflets.
I was incredibly happy when, with the blessing of the Podolsk District Committee, I began to be increasingly involved in practical work. This greatly pleased and energized me. I remember how delighted I was when I and my other comrades, young workers, were assigned to distribute leaflets from the Kiev organization for May 1, 1910.
I gathered our youth circle, read them the leaflet, and then we each distributed our portions throughout Podol, simultaneously reading it to the workers. Although there were no demonstrations, the publication of this leaflet during a period of prevailing reaction was in itself a joyous event for the workers, raising their revolutionary spirit.
I remember when, some time later, the distinguished old Bolsheviks Comrade Andronnikov and later Comrade Stanislav Kosior came to visit us in Kiev. They expressed to me, with pleasant surprise and satisfaction, their assessment that in Kiev, particularly in the Podolsk region, there was a larger group of theoretically trained young party workers than in other organizations they had encountered, and that this had a beneficial effect on the stability of Lenin's position in the Kiev organization. This was true, and I dare say that the work of our youth workers' circle, which in 1911-1912 became a prominent force among the Podolsk workers, also contributed to this.
In our youth circle, a firm desire and readiness to join the Party had long been brewing since 1911. My young comrades authorized me to report this declaration to a group of Old Bolsheviks and to seek their assistance at the District Party Committee. During my very first visit to the group of Old Bolsheviks, I reported the youth circle members' request, including, of course, my personal request, for assistance in joining the Party. All the comrades warmly welcomed me and said that it was time for me to join the Party and that they would all be happy to give me a recommendation. At the same time, they told me that it was impossible to accept all the members of the circle at once. First, the District Party Committee would accept you, Lazar Kaganovich.

the head of the circle, and then they will personally review each person’s application individually. Soon, in August 1911, I was accepted without delay by the Podolsk District Party Committee into the ranks of the Kiev organization of the Russian Social Democratic Party - now the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Although I had already been connected to the Party organization before being accepted into the Party, when it finally happened and I was officially accepted into the Party, I felt a major, decisive step in my life had been taken, that I had entered the Great University of Revolution, the university of a great Party—the University of Lenin! I understood well that I was joining the ranks of a Party fighting tooth and nail against a powerful enemy, against the experienced, old, exploitative world. I truly felt a colossal change in my life, psychology, and behavior. Above all, this was the manifestation of a profound sense and awareness of responsibility for myself, for my concepts and actions, responsibility for that entire great collective—the Party—in whose ranks I had been accepted. If I had previously understood that to liberate the proletariat, it was necessary to unite the labor movement with socialism, the economic struggle with the political class struggle on a national and international scale, now it was no longer enough to understand. A Party member must act, and not merely preach socialism. After all, the utopians also preached socialism, and even the Mensheviks and liquidators falsely swore by the word "socialism." A Bolshevik-Leninist must fight for these ideas daily in a revolutionary manner. A member of the Communist Party must always remember that the realization of socialist ideas is impossible without a proletarian revolution, the conquest of power by the proletariat and the establishment, first, of a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, and then of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Having joined the party, I felt and realized with all my strength and acuteness that an underground party requires the strictest secrecy - less talk, more action.

When I joined the party, I clearly understood that although the party is not an army, it is a fighting party, and in its battle march, each of its members must walk, feeling the elbow of the fighter of the great party walking next to him, march in step, observe and preserve the discipline of the great revolutionary collective called the party.

Bolsheviks. This discipline is spiritually, ideologically superior, and organizationally stronger than the discipline of any army or any other party. This ideological-Bolshevik and organizational-Bolshevik discipline is based, first and foremost, on fidelity to the great ideas of scientific socialism-communism, their assimilation, and an effective practical struggle for their implementation—that is, the correct application of the Marxist program and Leninist strategy and tactics of revolution in practice.

Thus, each of us who had newly joined the party perceived party discipline not as an external, mechanical, administrative force, but as a deeply conscious, internal, ideological discipline, which means the voluntary subordination of one’s individual freedom (especially individualistic antics) to the united collective freedom of the party, remembering that “freedom is a conscious necessity” (Engels) and that understanding this necessity is the decisive condition for the true freedom of the entire collective and of each individual.

The workers of the Podolsk district were one of the revolutionary detachments of the Kiev proletariat. Although Mensheviks and Bundists, Socialist-Zionists and Liquidators were active there and at times wielded some influence, the Bolsheviks, in a successful struggle against them, won a leading position among the workers of Podolsk and Kiev, defeating their opponents. Without exaggeration and without the bias of an old Podolsk resident and Kievian, I can say that the Podolsk underground organization of our party during the years of its new upsurge was one of the strongest in the Kiev organization.

It was in this glorious Podolsk party organization that I began my party life as an ordinary party member and then as a member of the district party committee and a member of the Kiev party committee.

My work began and developed as an integral part of the overall work of the party organization. Considering my cultural level as a worker, my involvement in the workers' struggle against the employers, my involvement in trade union work, and my experience organizing self-education in a workers' youth circle, coupled with my oratorical skills as an agitator and propagandist among workers, the district committee instructed me, together with other party members, to organize a party group or faction in the tanners' union, activating the union's work as a whole and seeking its legalization. At the same time, the district committee instructed me to maintain contact with other trade unions, including me on a commission organized by the district committee.

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on trade union affairs; he included me in a group of comrades who were checking the organization of party studies in circles in connection with their upcoming reorganization, and loaded me with agitational and propaganda speeches among the workers, especially young workers.

Without exaggerating my youthful strength as an ordinary party member, and modestly assessing my capabilities, I still did not belong to the timid and sluggish dozen, and with all my youthful energy and courage I took on the work assigned to me by the district committee.

A study was organized and conducted of a number of Comrade Lenin's articles on the Third State Duma, the election campaign and platform, as well as the article "Stolypin and the Revolution." This article by Comrade Lenin was of great and significant political significance, especially for us Kievites, given Stolypin's assassination in 1911, right there in Kiev.

For the Kiev Party Organization, this event became a significant political turning point and a test of its strength, as Black Hundred organizations and other dark forces exploited Stolypin's assassination in Kiev to persecute revolutionaries, students, and Jews. The Black Hundreds' organ, "Dvuglavy Oryol," directly called for a pogrom. The Party Organization had to, firstly, prepare to repel the Black Hundreds should this occur, to calm the panic that had erupted among Jewish workers, and, secondly, to launch a major propaganda campaign among workers and toilers of all nationalities. Regarding the first task, we, the grassroots Party members, including myself, of course, and the non-Party advanced workers, were indeed preparing for self-defense; our weapons, of course, were weak.

I remember the steel knuckle duster that Vasya the metalworker made for me. "You have a strong hand," he said, "and it will suit you." It came in handy one evening when, laden with leaflets, Naum Golod and I were walking down Andreevsky Descent, where there were almost no people, and a spy was following us relentlessly. Naum Golod, who had experience, said to me, "You know what to do in such cases?" And he immediately replied, "Try to drive him away by intimidating him, and if that doesn't work, beat him so badly he can't get up for several hours." Finding my knuckle duster, I said, "Go ahead."

We turned sharply back and quickly approached the spy. "What do you want from us?" Golod asked. He started threatening us with a large knife—he had no firearm—and cursing.

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We had him firmly in our grasp. He was screaming, but there was no one around. We quickly descended and arrived safely, delivering our precious cargo—the leaflets—to our destination.

We did, however, have a certain degree of organization and, so to speak, some combat training. But apparently the tsarist authorities and the police changed their minds, and the Black Hundreds, in keeping with their police discipline, retreated—there was no pogrom.

We, party members, greeted the New Year of 1912 in a good, cheerful, and upbeat mood. The Kiev Party Committee issued a special leaflet in connection with the New Year, summing up the results of 1911 and calling on workers to launch a new offensive against the autocracy and the capitalists in 1912 with even greater revolutionary force.

The leading workers celebrated the New Year of 1912 not with a glass of vodka, but at illegal meetings, which provided a powerful, militant revolutionary preparation for 1912. We, who delivered reports at these meetings, discussed the negative and positive aspects of the past year, 1911, and the tasks ahead for the working class and its party in the coming year, 1912.
For me, this was my first political report after joining the party.
I personally was still preoccupied with the issue of the applications of youth circle members and other comrades with whom I was associated through the trade union for party membership. The district party committee carefully considered each one individually and accepted comrades Samuil Guberman, Kolya the Metalworker, Yefim Kovalchuk, Solodovnikov, Boris Margulis, and Margolin; and somewhat later, comrades Biberman, Semyon Guberman, and others.
The district committee instructed me to organize a primary party cell from the aforementioned comrades, including in this cell a number of previously accepted experienced party members. These were comrades such as Anyuta Slutskaya, a garment worker, a party member since 1911—an accomplished and experienced party and trade union worker; Maria Privorotskaya (later Kaganovich), who became my wife, a party member since 1909, a knitwear worker, politically developed, and an experienced party and trade union worker; Zhenya, a laundress, an energetic activist; Sadovsky, a party member since 1911, a tanner and harness maker, a militant and experienced revolutionary trade union worker; Semyon Kostyuk, a shoemaker and a good worker agitator.

Then, others like the party-loyal Kolya the intellectual, Lev Sheinin, who had three other Bolshevik brothers, Yampolskaya, a worker in the confectionery industry and an active, developed worker, and others, also joined the cell.
Without further ado, the cell began practical work. Specifically, two working committees were organized: one for agitation and propaganda, and another for professional economics. I was elected to both committees.
By 1912, there were only two legal trade unions in Kiev: pharmacists' and waiters'; in early 1912, the shop assistants' union was also legalized. In the spring and summer, Kiev workers secured the legalization of the metalworkers' union, the "Igla" tailors' union, the woodworkers' union, the laundries' union, the printers' union, and the semi-legal existence of the shoemakers' and tanners' union. I say "semi-legal" because from 1912 until early 1913, a struggle with the authorities for its legalization raged. The governor exercised particular strictness and "vigilance" toward the shoemakers' and tanners' union, probably because it had already proven itself as a militant union back in 1905.
In 1911 and 1912, under the leadership of an illegal party cell, this small, semi-legal trade union organization was connected with the workers and organized workers' conflicts and strikes, and at the beginning of 1913, the shoemakers and tanners' union was finally officially registered.
But the party group also had to participate more directly in the actions of the trade union during periods of acute conflict between workers and employers, and especially during strikes.
The strikers' fight against strikebreaking often became heated, even leading to spontaneous physical clashes, especially in the small workshops that were numerous in Podil. The fights were usually started by the owners themselves and their heirs, but our workers weren't idle either, and fought back with vengeance. They later recounted with pleasure how they had beaten the owners themselves. It's also interesting to note that Jewish owners speculated and slandered that the Black Hundreds had beaten them, while Russian-Ukrainian owners slandered that it was the Jews who had beaten them.
We tried to select the anti-strikebreaking groups in a differentiated manner. For the most part, these were mixed-ethnic groups. But for the best possible exposure

We often tailored the speculations of the owners in such a way that it was primarily our Jewish comrades who were sent to Jewish owners, while our Russian and Ukrainian comrades were sent to workshops run by Russian-Ukrainian owners. And both were sent to large enterprises. In both cases, it was an international class struggle of the proletarians of all nations against the capitalist owners of all nations.

During strikes at large enterprises, we created strike committees that took our party directives and advice into account in directly leading the strikes. Of course, things didn't always go smoothly or favorably; strikebreaking was the main scourge of strikes, with police intervention, of course, on the employers' side. But nothing could deter the workers from class struggle—neither threats from employers, nor lockouts, nor police intervention, nor the corrupting work of the liquidators, who shamelessly accused us Bolsheviks of "strike fever." In this way, they alienated even the most backward workers and drove them toward us, the Bolsheviks.

A major role in our social democratic Bolshevik work and struggle was played by our skillful use of legal clubs and societies that existed in Kiev at different times under different names: the Society for the Dissemination of Education among the People, the Scientific and Technical Club, and others. There was always a struggle for leadership within them. We tried to maintain a majority on the boards of these clubs, paying particular attention to the composition of such committees as excursions, lectures, technical and economic, and others. In addition to ensuring the proper content of their work, we aimed to use their legal "form" for illegal work. For example, I was elected head of the samovar commission to maintain samovars and provide tea to club members. I appointed assistants and used this "samovar commission" for illegal meetings of our cell, the conflict-economic commission, trade union meetings, and other illegal events on behalf of the Kiev committee and the district party committee. I often provided this "samovar commission firm" to comrades for illegal activities. Sometimes, catching wind of our maneuvers, the liquidators and their allies protested, but this did not help them. We made good use of these legal opportunities in the insurance campaign and during elections.

to the Fourth State Duma, and so on. Although we didn't have any of our own candidates for the State Duma in Kiev, we waged an intense and energetic propaganda campaign against the Black Hundred and bourgeois candidate, and these clubs provided significant assistance in this regard. In the most legal activities of these clubs, especially lectures, we promoted our ideas, making full use of so-called "Aesopian language," that is, a disguised, allegorical way of expressing our thoughts (which, according to legend, was used by the ancient Greek fabulist Aesop).

Such lectures sometimes turned to questionnaires, from questionnaires to debates, including, for example, on such a question as the national question, which, as I already noted above, was particularly acute in Kiev due to the multinational nature of its population.

NATIONAL QUESTION

In 1912-1913, the national question again became acute. The growth of the workers' revolutionary movement prompted the tsarist government and all the Black Hundred forces—its mainstays—to sharply intensify their tactics of pitting one nation against another and to unleash Black Hundred nationalism and chauvinism, encompassing even the petty bourgeoisie.

At the same time, nationalism grew stronger among the upper strata of the oppressed nationalities, among whom the national bourgeoisie fanned nationalist passions, infecting the petty bourgeoisie and even some of the backward workers through, first of all, bourgeois nationalists, Russian, Ukrainian, Jewish-Zionist, Polish, as well as social-nationalists, Zionist-socialists, Bundists, Spilkovites, PP-Sovietists and the like. |

In the above-mentioned clubs and at specially organized discussion meetings, we Bolsheviks, together with the best Menshevik party members, had to fight sharply and bitterly for the Marxist-Leninist line on the national question, for proletarian internationalism.
I would like to tell you, in particular, about two events that had a particularly acute and major significance in Kiev: 1) the Beilis affair, which received

then great fame, as they say, on a national and global scale, and 2) a major issue - the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the birth of the great Ukrainian poet, revolutionary democrat Taras Grigorievich Shevchenko.
The accusation against Beilis, a resident of Kiev, arose in 1911; the "investigation" lasted for more than two years, and for more than two years the population of Kiev, especially the Jewish and working class population, was terrorized by this case and lived in great tension of the Black Hundreds bacchanalia and the threat of pogrom.
Although a section of the police (Bailiff Krasovsky) was on the right track from the very beginning to the murder of the boy Andrei Yushchinsky, killed by a gang of thieves from Vera Cheberyak's brothel, the Black Hundreds of Kiev and St. Petersburg secured Krasovsky's arrest and directed the entire case against brick factory worker Mendel Beilis, who allegedly committed the murder for religious and ritualistic reasons. The Ministry of Justice, with the encouragement of the leading Black Hundreds member himself, Tsar-Emperor Nicholas II, took charge of this case, which had been artificially concocted in the interests of the counterrevolution.
The new stage of capitalism—imperialism—has witnessed such cases as the Dreyfus affair in France. But the Dreyfus accusation, although anti-Semitic in nature, was not a blanket accusation against Jews, as espionage could be attributed to anyone of any nationality. Here, in the Beilis affair, the accusation immediately assumed the character of an accusation against Jewish nationality. Such wild, fantastical, superstitious slanders against Jews, claiming they consumed Christian blood, had occurred before, even in the Middle Ages, and each time they had failed. But never had they assumed the broad scope of national policy and leadership as they did in the Beilis affair. This is explained by the fact that the threat of a new revolution and the danger of the overthrow of Tsarism pushed Tsarism to repeat these wild slanders against Jews, in order to incite ignorant people against the Jews and divert the blow of the brewing revolution from Tsarism, beginning with Jewish pogroms and ending with the destruction of workers', democratic, and student organizations, and the workers' revolutionary movement.
Regarding the Beilis affair, the Bolshevik journal Prosveshchenie wrote: “There is general excitement, colossal interest in this case from absolutely all strata of society and people, not only here in Russia, but throughout the world. We can joyfully realize that our

Culture and our social development have advanced so far that such methods of inciting racial, national, and religious discord and hatred can no longer go unpunished for those who seek and find their ultimate refuge and strength in their creation. The resistance that the entire cultural world, all the forces of science and knowledge, are currently offering to this most brutal slander is an unprecedented phenomenon in modern human history.
And this circumstance alone can make everyone happy: a serious obstacle is being put in the way of the rampant dark forces in the world.”
Our workers' Bolshevik newspaper, "For Truth," wrote: "It is perfectly understandable why this trial attracted so much attention: they put the most ordinary worker in the dock and said: after all, he is a cannibal and a bloodsucker, because his religion prescribes him to drink the blood of infants... It (the Beilis case) was met with an explosion of indignation throughout the civilized world, and the

proletariat of Russia was in the forefront of those who raised their voices in defense of the trampled honor of the Russian people."
A significant factor in the history of the Russian labor movement is that not only in the South and Western regions, but also in St. Petersburg, Moscow, and other Russian labor centers, workers protested, even going as far as to strike, against this shameful process. Kiev, of course, was the scene of a relentless struggle by workers, rallies, and strikes against Beilis's barbaric, savagely fabricated accusation.
The atmosphere created in Kiev by one of the most powerful Black Hundred organizations in Russia, the Union of Michael the Archangel, with its filthy but powerful and widely published newspaper, The Double-Headed Eagle, was pogrom-like; hundreds of thousands of leaflets calling for pogroms were scattered throughout the city. The student Golubev, who led the Black Hundreds, was connected to the highest court circles of St. Petersburg and wielded enormous influence over the entire policy and conduct of the governor-general and the Kiev police. It must be said that not only workers and toilers, but also most other strata of the population, were outraged by this process. Even the editor of the monarchist newspaper, Kievlyanin, the well-known Shulgin, was against this affair and against pogroms. But at the same time, there was a significant number of looters and scum among the landowning bourgeoisie and among the merchants, the so-called lumpen proletarians, who

They were Golubev's main pogrom force. He was counting on them.
Beyond their general counterrevolutionary goals, the St. Petersburg Black Hundreds' plan was designed for a specific "victory," the extermination and partial expulsion of the "Yids" "to Kolyma," as Purishkevich, leader of the Union of Archangel Michael, constantly shouted in the State Duma. Under these circumstances, the Kiev Bolsheviks were faced with the task of, firstly, preparing workers and party members for possible Black Hundred attacks, and secondly, in all their explanatory agitation and propaganda work, maintaining a revolutionary class position—not a tearfully pitiful, petty-bourgeois, or bourgeois-liberal one, but a militant, offensive one, linking this vile Beilis affair with the Stolypin tsarist regime and with our fundamental tasks of the revolutionary overthrow of the tsarist system. This is precisely how the Kiev Committee posed the issue in its leaflet calling for a one-day strike in protest against the trial of Beilis, who was falsely accused of ritual murder. "Comrades!" wrote the Kiev Committee. "The Beilis case has captured the attention of the entire world. The entire world is against the ritual accusations of cannibalism against the Jewish people—accusations based solely on malicious self-interest, exploiting crude superstition."
Kyiv workers responded unanimously—many businesses went on strike that day, October 4th. I can say for Podil that most businesses and workshops went on strike. There were no marches or demonstrations; this was decided to avoid provocation by pogromists. We held closed rallies and meetings.
Protest strikes were not only in St. Petersburg, whose workers were always at the forefront; protest strikes were also in many other cities.
The case was so vilely fabricated that even a carefully selected jury could not help but acquit Beilis.
The Beilis case is of more than just historical interest. Imperialism created the conditions for the flourishing of racism, chauvinism, and misanthropy. Indeed, Russian tsarism, to a certain extent, served as a mentor to German Hitlerism and the racism and chauvinism now flourishing in the United States and other imperialist countries. In the Black trials, we see echoes of tsarist rule.

The secret police and justice departments who concocted the Beilis case. The revolution of the colonial peoples dealt a blow to racism and imperialist misanthropy, but one should not think that

they are finished. On the contrary, the closer imperialism's grave approaches, the more acutely it will resort to racist tactics and cruelties. This must be remembered, especially by revolutionaries and communists.
They say, "Kick nature out the door, and it will fly in through the window." Paradoxically, the fact is that the nature of imperialism, which breeds racism, has flown today through "Zionism," under the influence of American imperialism, through the window of the State of Israel, which pursues racist policies and acts of robbery and plunder against the Arab population and neighboring Arab states. Encouraged by the generous aid and leadership of US imperialism, Israeli Zionists have waged a war of conquest and imperialism against Arab states, occupying their lands and employing racist, misanthropic violence. At first glance, it may seem strange that racism in its vile form has found a home in Israel, whose population previously suffered from racism. But such is the nature of imperialism, and the Zionists—not the people of Israel—are imperialist racists. We must always remember that the fight against racism is a fight against imperialism.
The ban on Shevchenko's commemoration was such a superb, magnificent, and exceptionally fortunate measure in terms of agitation against the government that it's impossible to imagine a better agitation. I believe that all our best Social Democratic agitators against the government would never have achieved such dizzying success in such a short time as this measure achieved in the anti-government sense.
Following this measure, millions upon millions of ordinary people began to transform into conscientious citizens and became convinced of the truth of Lenin's dictum that Russia was a "prison of nations." And so it was. Millions of workers and toilers in Kiev, other cities, and progressive villages across Ukraine broke through the Black Hundreds' front, broke down the bars of the "prison of nations," and celebrated Shevchenko's 100th birthday. Meetings and rallies of workers, toilers, and students dedicated to Shevchenko were a response to the government's ban. Our Pravda published a special article in which

Shevchenko was highly praised as a great people's poet; it called on workers to protest the ban on the anniversary. The Kiev Party Committee issued a special leaflet linking Shevchenko's anniversary to politics and the revolutionary struggle.
The fact that our party took an active part in the celebration of Shevchenko's anniversary and gave the correct, principled direction to this celebration raised the authority of our party in the eyes of those workers and toilers, and even part of the intelligentsia, who took national moments in the life of Ukraine to heart, and rallied around the party an even greater number of advanced workers and toilers.

DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR

The year 1914 was a year of particularly great revolutionary hopes for the victorious struggle for liberation from the yoke of tsarism, and then capitalism.
Unfortunately, July 1914 also proved to be the last month of this historic era, the renewed upsurge of the workers' revolutionary movement of 1911-1914. The declaration of war abruptly halted this movement, which was in full swing. The heroic vanguard of the St. Petersburg proletariat demonstrated its protest even on the day of the declaration of war.
In Kiev, the announcement of mobilization found workers on strike—demonstrating their proletarian solidarity with the St. Petersburg proletariat. The war, in Kiev as in other cities across the country, interrupted this movement in full swing. Continuing strikes and demonstrations after the official declaration of war was impossible. But the workers remained unsettled, anti-war, and dissatisfied with the mobilization. This found active expression at mobilization assembly points in the city of Kiev and several volosts and districts of the Kiev province. Peasants, mobilized

conscripts, sacked and burned landowners' estates, seized grain and other property, and resisted mobilization, including in my Radomysl district, where resistance engulfed ten volosts.
Of course, with the departure of 20-30% of the indigenous workers due to mobilization, with the arrival of a large number of new ones at the enterprises

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Among the masses, including kulaks, merchants, and all sorts of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements, pro-defensist sentiment increased, even though these elements had flocked to the factories to escape defense, to escape the front. But they shouted like jingoistic patriots, as "ideological" supporters of nationalism and chauvinism and its exponents—the liquidators and Socialist Revolutionaries. Later, as the war progressed and the situation worsened, the best of these working elements turned toward strikes and anti-defensist sentiment. We Bolsheviks were not indifferent to them; rather, having paid attention to the best, we worked with them, and it must be said that many of them joined the ranks of the fighters against tsarism.
In Kiev, as throughout the country, the labor movement was weakened in the first months after the outbreak of the First World War, with almost no strikes until the end of 1914. The tsarist government's terror and repression intensified even more than before the war. Most trade unions were destroyed. Those that remained operated effectively illegally, and only by 1915 did many of them recover somewhat from the blow.
By late 1914 and into 1915, the Kiev organization had strengthened organizationally, and a systematic Kiev-wide party leadership—the Kiev Party Committee—was reestablished. This was further facilitated by the arrival of Stanislav Kosior in Kiev from Poltava in October 1914. He was a seasoned Bolshevik who had previously worked in the Donbass; he had extensive experience in party work, was a skilled organizer, and significantly contributed to the establishment and expansion of the Kiev Committee's work, becoming its recognized leader.
The Kiev Committee then consisted of the following members: Stanislav Kosior, Gavriil Weinberg, Degtyarenko, Lazar Kaganovich, Major (Mayorov), Dora Itkina and others.
Stanislav, like a true Bolshevik, quickly integrated into the work of the Kiev organization. It must be emphasized that he conducted his work skillfully, particularly covertly, and I learned a great deal from him, including about this secrecy. Stanislav rarely showed up at meetings and maintained leadership ties through trusted representatives of the district committee.
In the first half of 1915, our work developed intensively, but, unfortunately, in March, a group of activists was arrested, including two members of the Kiev Committee, comrades Degtyarenko,

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Weinberg and other activists. This affected the work not only because of the loss of these comrades, but also because those of us who remained had to go even more undercover and conduct our work in isolation.
Due to these arrests and the looming threat to other comrades, Stanislav Kosior was forced to leave Kiev. This was a great loss. Several other comrades followed suit. This naturally weakened the work, but not for long.
At the end of April, a conference was held in Podol, on Konstantinovskaya Street, between Yaroslavskaya and Nizhny Val Streets. I remember it was a two-story building with a store on the ground floor. The conference elected the Kiev committee by secret ballot, which included Lastovsky, Lazar Kaganovich, and others.
We all felt more invigorated. The party activists and members expanded their work more broadly and boldly; their courage was also expressed in the farewell to our comrades Viktor Kapranov, Weinberg, Vera Sapozhnikova, and others, who had been exiled and previously arrested. A group of comrades went to the train station to see them off. Comrades Margulis, Sadovsky, and Mishka Rotleyder (we called him "Banker" because he worked in a bank) came to see me at the factory and

invited me to go with them to the train station. At first, I told them that this might be a breach of confidentiality, but they were so insistent that I went with them. Besides the youthful enthusiasm of participating in such a farewell, I wanted to say goodbye to my friends, at least from afar. Quite a few people had gathered at the station to see them off. Naturally, we, along with others, waved our hands at them, approaching them closely; the gendarmes noticed the demonstrative nature of this farewell and, in a whole crowd, pounced on us, dispersing and beating us, ending their “operation” with the arrest of several people, including me.
The interrogations were brutal; burly gendarmes repeatedly beat us until we bled, but the interrogations yielded nothing, they couldn't get anything out of them. I was poorly dressed and pretended to be a country boy who had come to Kiev to look for work. "Why were you waving your hand, and your cap, no less?" they demanded, not believing my assertions. To which I replied in my country lilt, "They waved, and I waved, too, thinking they were mobilized and being sent to the front."
After a week of ordeals and equally brutal interrogations, having achieved nothing, they released most of them, including the “Banker,” and sent me and Yefim Kovalchuk out of Kiev to the village.

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En route, in the town of Ivankovo, with the help of Mikhail's old friends, I was released from further transport and, instead of returning to the village, illegally returned to Kiev. My comrades, and especially my young wife, Maria Privorotskaya-Kaganovich, greeted me with joy, and I once again immersed myself in party and trade union work.
At one of the meetings of the Kiev Committee, reviewing the situation and work, we praised the work at the enterprises. At the same time, we, including myself, self-critically determined that almost no work was being done in the army, that there were no connections with the soldiers, except for individual Party members who had become soldiers. I was tasked with establishing more systematic organizational ties with them and, together with them, working among the soldiers. I eagerly took on this task, especially since, in assigning me this assignment, my comrades rightly pointed out that I knew the countryside better than anyone, and the army had the largest number of peasants.
In early July, I began personally interviewing soldiers in small groups, meeting them in the area of the Pechersk Lavra. This was convenient because there were always a lot of people there, including soldiers. During one of the conversations, I asked them to describe the soldiers' moods. They all responded, "But in their hearts, they're mostly in the same mood as us, but they don't dare say it, only when you talk to them, you find quite a few brave ones."
I reported the results of our work to the Kiev Committee. The Committee approved the work and instructed us to continue it intensively. I also reported that I had met a former student in military uniform on Khreshchatyk, attending ensign school at the Cadet Corps. I had known this student before the war as a sympathizer. When we met, he agreed to meet, saying that when I came to see him at the Cadet Corps, he would be summoned and we would "go for a walk." I asked the Committee members what they thought about my meeting with him. At first, opinions were divided: some considered joining the Cadet Corps a risk, while others believed that it was crucial for us to establish connections with former students serving in the army and therefore should take the risk. The Committee made the latter decision, and I, dressed respectably, went to see him. To my surprise, the duty officer didn't detain me for long and summoned my "student," Nazarenko, who immediately came out with me for a "walk."
The conversation didn't go very well at first, apparently we were both waiting,

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but then, naturally, I took the initiative into my own hands, but, of course, with caution.

From the conversation, even from its general part, I saw that this man was at odds with himself, that he was a kind of "Hamlet" in the current conditions of acute crisis, but still a "Hamlet" leaning toward the people, toward discontent and even resentment toward the ruling classes and especially the tsarist regime. Then I moved on to specific questions. I apologized in advance for asking questions that might be difficult to answer, but I wouldn't be offended if he didn't answer. "You probably have quite a few former students at the ensign school. Are they all 'for the tsar and the fatherland'?" He answered me: "Not everyone is for the tsar, but everyone is for the fatherland." "But what about this contradiction? If not 'for the tsar,' then," I asked, "does that mean we need a different leader of the war, that means we need a different system?" "Yes," he said, "that's how it turns out." Many people think that it would be good if there was a different management, but how to do this, especially during a war, none of us can figure it out or know how."

I, for my part, advised him to more actively explain to the best, most loyal of the former radical students that revolution is inevitable, but that it does not come by itself; it needs to be PREPARED. He assured me that he would act in this direction and that my advice would be useful to him.

Much to our regret, this second meeting was our last. The next time, as I approached the cadet corps, I spotted two spies from a distance. I passed them by, but they gave chase. I knew the area well, all the back alleys and alleys, and I began to chase them down. Although I didn't run, they couldn't keep up with me. I moved toward Bessarabsky Market, and then onto Zhylianska Street. There was a seltzer distillery there, where I once worked during my years of unemployment.

I ran into the yard, and there was a van with finished goods. I jumped on the van and drove out of the yard. But they couldn't catch up with me there; it was difficult for them.

At the end of October, we gathered to leave for Yuzovka (after the revolution, Stalino, now Donetsk), the capital of Donbas. My passport, in the name of Goldenberg, was a fake—a counterfeit. An opportunity presented itself to acquire a passport, as they called it, an "iron one," in the name of Boris Kosherovich, a burgher from Šiauliai.

Comrades Vitkhin and Barshevich were especially eager to acquire it, so they could better provide for me. But it turned out that it contained the owner's photograph; it was necessary to replace it with mine. Dealing with the wax seal, which had broken, was a challenging and nerve-wracking task. Nevertheless, with great difficulty, we managed to repair it, and with a passport in the name of Boris Kosherovich, Maria and I departed for Donbas.

On March 3, the streets of Yuzovka were overflowing; despite the impassable mud, everyone was heading to the factory for the rally held in the rolling mill of the metallurgical plant. Not only were workers from factories, workshops, and mines marching, but also working citizens, including young men, and, most importantly, peasants from the villages surrounding Yuzovka. There were almost no soldiers in Yuzovka.

It is impossible for me today to tell about the excitement I felt then, in March 1917, before my first public speech at such a rally of thousands.

A historic event of the greatest significance has occurred, the dream of many generations of martyrs—revolutionary fighters and suffering people—has been realized: the tsarist regime has been overthrown. There is great joy and triumph, but at the same time, the people's grave suffering, especially the deadly war, remains. The Bolshevik Party offers its answer to this question, albeit incomplete until Lenin's arrival.

But how can I present this clearly to thousands of people, many of whom, perhaps even most, are only now becoming involved in political life? I spent the entire night preparing, thinking, and in the morning consulted with my comrades, mapped out a plan, and wrote a draft resolution and a short address to the workers.

I went to the rally, accompanied by two comrades, although excited, but in a cheerful and uplifted state.

Oddly enough, one small incident along the way initially left me confused, then energized and even happy. As I passed through the factory gates, I overheard a conversation between several people. One said, "It seems a Jew is speaking." Another worker angrily replied, "You're a fool, even if you're a Jew, you're one of us." I won't hide the fact that the very mention of "Jew" instinctively upset me, but the other worker's response—"Even if you're a Jew, you're one of us"—made me happy, uplifted, and encouraged me—for this simple, short response expressed an instinctive, international, proletarian class feeling.

and consciousness: the working man of any nation is our proletarian brother and friend!
I won't describe the generally upbeat mood that reigned at the rally, something we've never seen before. The workers who spoke supported the speaker and called for a struggle for the complete victory of the revolution and against any counterrevolutionary machinations aimed at restoring the monarchy.
At the very first meeting of the Yuzovsky Soviet, an Executive Committee was elected, in which the Bolsheviks, along with their sympathizers, held a majority. The struggle with the Menshevik-defencists erupted over the Bolsheviks' proposal to elect a deputy chairman at the Soviet plenary session, a proposal the Mensheviks opposed. By an overwhelming majority of deputies, the Soviet elected the Bolshevik B. Kosherovich (L.M. Kaganovich) as deputy chairman. This was a political victory for our party organization.
Recalling my work in Yuzovka, I am glad and happy that I had the opportunity to live, work, and fight in Yuzovka-Donetsk with my unforgettable friend, the old Bolshevik Maria Markovna. I am grateful to the Donetsk workers, metallurgists, miners, and other toilers, including my fellow cobblers, Bolsheviks, and non-party members, for the proletarian school I received from them. I learned much from them, devoting all my youthful energies to the cause of the victory of Lenin's Bolshevik Party.

Chapter 3

1917

IN THE SARATOV GARRISON

It can be said without exaggeration that 1917 was an exceptional, greatest year in the history of Russia and other countries of the world.
Human history has known many great dates and individual years filled with momentous events. But what happened in Russia in 1917 surpassed all previous events in its grandeur, scale, and qualitative content. The events of 1917 fundamentally changed the entire course of historical development not only in Russia but also throughout the world. In 1917, the February-March Revolution overthrew and destroyed the Romanov monarchy—the pillar of Russian and global reaction. And, most importantly, in an unprecedentedly short time, in the same year of 1917, the October Socialist Revolution, having completely uprooted the feudal system, overthrew the rule of capitalism and destroyed its foundation—private ownership of land, factories, plants, banks, and the bourgeois state that protected this private property and the exploitation of workers and laborers by capitalists and landowners. A dictatorship of the proletariat was established, protecting socialist property and all the gains of the proletariat.
In April 1917, I returned to my party homeland—to the Kiev Bolshevik Party organization from the Yuziv-Donetsk Bolshevik organization.

There was a high spirit of fighting in Kiev. My underground comrades greeted me joyfully and immediately assigned me to party work. Knowing and taking into account my underground experience working among soldiers, the Kiev Party Committee assigned me to work in the army.

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To facilitate and enhance the success of this work, we decided to create a legal basis by instructing the Bolshevik faction of the Soviet's soldiers' section to secure my appointment as a member of the cultural commission or simply as a cultural worker among the soldiers. We received a good legal basis for expanding our party work. But this work didn't last long. As soon as I transitioned from the seemingly inconspicuous organizational work of the party to openly speaking at soldiers' meetings and rallies, the Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders of the soldiers' section realized what a "cultural worker" they had let into their fold.

The Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders were particularly enraged after my speech, commissioned by the Kiev Committee, at a thousands-strong pre-May rally on the grounds of the former exhibition grounds. In my speech, I spoke of the new tasks of the revolution, based on the great program set forth by the proletarian leader of the revolution and the party, the great Lenin, in the April Theses, which set the goal of rebuilding Russia into a Soviet republic.

These and my other speeches aroused sympathy among the soldiers for our Bolshevik Party, while simultaneously angering the Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders of the Soviet's soldiers' section. These treacherous would-be democrats promptly expelled me from the soldiers' section, arranging through the appropriate military authorities for me to be sent (effectively exiled) from my beloved Kiev to Saratov.

Saratov turned out to be no longer the “backwoods” that Famusov, the hero of Griboyedov’s immortal work “Woe from Wit,” spoke of, but a major industrial proletarian center, with a large military garrison and a close-knit Bolshevik organization.

And I am grateful to fate that I found myself in this revolutionary center during the turbulent months of 1917, where I applied my efforts to the struggle waged by the party and its military organization to win over the soldier masses to the side of our Leninist party.

During the First Imperialist War, Saratov became a major center for the concentration of military units, primarily reserve regiments, where soldiers were trained before being sent to the front.

In 1917, the Saratov garrison consisted of approximately 50,000 soldiers and officers. The proportion of soldiers in the city of Saratov, with a population of 200,000, including 30,000 workers, was

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It's quite large and indicates the urgency and seriousness of the tasks of party and political work in the garrison. I must emphasize here that some mistakenly underestimate the importance of party and political work in such rear-area garrisons. Such comrades forget that these garrisons had little in the way of logistics, as they were rapidly forming marching companies and sending them to the front. Consequently, the way we politically prepared a soldier and the political baggage he brought to the front largely determined not only his personal behavior but also his influence on the front-line soldiers in the trenches. Through them, we Bolsheviks extended our influence at the front, and even to the villages where the soldiers traveled.

It must be said that the constant influx of new recruits certainly made our work more difficult and complex. We needed to quickly navigate people, establish new connections, and, most importantly, maintain the same pace of Bolshevik indoctrination that was used to accelerate the training and formation of marching companies and their dispatch to the front.

The weakness of the military organization in the first two months after the February-March Revolution is explained not only by the inadequacy of forces, but primarily by the fact that the garrison Bolsheviks' uncertainty and hesitation regarding their principled position on the path and

prospects of the revolution lasted somewhat longer than did the Bolsheviks of the general Party organization. Even after Lenin's theses and the April Conference, until the first half of May, part of the military organization failed to adopt a sufficiently clear and firm fighting position—and this is the main factor determining all practical organizational work.

In May, significant changes occurred in the composition of the party membership in the Saratov military organization. The garrison was reinforced by new forces arriving from other parts of the country, including many politically and party-trained and well-versed Bolsheviks. This, naturally, immediately intensified the struggle for the Leninist party line and improved the overall work of the military party organization. In the second ten days of May, a general meeting of the military organization's party members (over a hundred of them) was convened, at which the first question was a report on the April Party Conference. I was the one to deliver this report. This was the first major assignment of the city party committee in the first weeks.

my arrival in Saratov. I remember how the secretary of the city committee, Emma Reinovna Peterson, told me: "Don't count on us; organize the meeting yourself and make the report yourself." I had only just arrived in Saratov and was still relatively unaware of the mood of the party members, but I was aided by my study of the situation in the Saratov general party organization and the content of Comrade Milyutin's report. Although he was an old Bolshevik and a highly erudite leader, his report was unsatisfactory in terms of defending Lenin's position at the April Conference and reflected some of Kamenev and Rykov's non-Leninist positions. Therefore, in my report, I essentially polemicized with Milyutin, which was particularly appropriate, since there were many comrades in the military organization who were uncertain and hesitant.

The second issue of the meeting was organizational—the election of the Committee. This meeting and its decisions were reported to the Saratov Committee, which approved the decisions and the composition of the Committee elected by the general meeting, including Comrade Kaganovich as a member of the Saratov Party Committee.

From that moment on, our organization was called the Military Organization of the Saratov Party Organization of the RSDLP (Bolsheviks). It operated under the direction of the city and provincial party committees, reporting to them. Its leader, or, as he was called upon his election, the chairman, Comrade L.M. Kaganovich, was a member of the city and provincial committees.

The victory of the Leninist line in the party organization, the general growth of the influence and authority of our party among the masses and the change in their mood, the improvement of the general objective political situation for our party led to a practical improvement in the work and military organization already in May.

In a short period of time, the existing cells became unrecognizable—they became the true fighting organs of the party.

A process of recruiting soldiers, trained for this purpose within a month, was organized, and in the first half of June we tripled the number of party members. By June 10, we already had 400 party members out of a total of 2,500 in the Saratov organization—and this was despite a strict approach and selection process. In May and June, as a result of the extensive Bolshevik propaganda in the garrison, more than a thousand soldiers, mainly workers and poor peasants, declared themselves sympathizers of our party; they came

They attended party meetings and carried out our instructions. By June, our organization already had more than 50 primary cells.

We sought to have Bolsheviks elected to regimental and company soldiers' committees. The Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks stubbornly resisted this, as they held a near-monopoly on these committees. They created such a climate in the barracks that the Bolsheviks were driven into a

corner and hounded; it even led to beatings by specially incited hooligans. We, first and foremost, waged a campaign to fundamentally change this situation. Agitation was insufficient; we had to establish authority. We began raising issues of soldiers' needs and everyday misery with the regimental and company committees, forcing them to either meet these needs or turn against the soldiers, thereby exposing themselves.

It could be said that May and especially June were turning points in the soldiers' mood. Our party's influence was steadily growing. Conversations with soldiers who had previously supported the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks revealed disillusionment in their romantic dream that now, after the Tsar, everything would unfold naturally, in a new, good way, without fighting and struggle, and peace would come, as the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks had verbally promised, and there would be complete freedom—in short, the dream of "land and freedom" would come true. Well, many of the soldiers grumbled and even angrily, it had been almost three months since the Tsar was assassinated, and so far there was little progress: the war continued, with no end in sight, and everyone was shouting, "Continue it to the bitter end." It seemed we would fight to the Dardanelles. And yet the devastation continued to mount. They're writing from the villages that there's nothing to eat, children are dying, the cattle are starving, there are fewer and fewer horses, it's gotten to the point where the peasants are crying, especially the women are bawling. And the landowner is still a bloodsucker, and the kulak is no fool—he's tsarless, and he's even profiting off the people's misery. And what about our defenders—the Socialist Revolutionaries? They promised land and freedom, but in reality, they're just feeding us peasants "cheap lunches," and even then, to put it bluntly, they're leading us around like fools and cheating us. They're writing from the villages that the "worried" landowners have started locking up our fellow peasants—and that's their freedom.

It is impossible, however, to imagine that this process of ideological and political conquest of the majority of the soldier masses to the side of Bolshevism was an easy matter, especially considering the dual social nature of the then middle and especially wealthy

Peasantry. From the standpoint of a strictly scientific, objective definition, the peasant is, on the one hand, a working man and akin to the proletariat; on the other, he is a private owner and akin to the wealthy private owner. This dichotomy—this second side—was the focus of the bourgeois-landowner parties, and especially the petty-bourgeois Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, who based their tactics on this principle on an alliance of peasants with the bourgeoisie, rather than the alliance with the proletariat advocated by the Bolsheviks.

We, the soldier-deputies, took a militant part in this struggle. The Socialist Revolutionaries sensed in advance that the election of a significant group of Bolshevik soldiers to the Council would be a serious blow to their monopoly in the garrison, so they fought fiercely for their seats—to maintain their exclusive representation of the army on the Council. They were especially furious because, by this time, the Saratov Bolsheviks had succeeded in pushing through a resolution to dissolve the Military Executive Committee, which had existed independently of the Council of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and had been created at the beginning of the February Revolution. This was abnormal, harmful, and dangerous for the cause of the revolution. The Socialist Revolutionaries resisted the Council's decision to dissolve the committee, but were forced to capitulate under pressure from the Bolsheviks.

The struggle in the barracks during the Soviet elections took on a particularly intense character and form. For example, the Socialist Revolutionary leaders, with the help of their non-commissioned officers, sent the most active Bolsheviks and the soldiers who supported them on extra-curricular guard duty, even jailing them for some trumped-up offense, just to deprive them of the opportunity to attend the election meeting. This is precisely what they did to me, despite our organization - having officially announced my candidacy for the Soviet in advance. The company commander arrested me on a false pretext, holding me in the guardhouse for two days. He was forced to release

me, but he had achieved his Socialist Revolutionary goal—I was unable to speak at the election meeting and was not elected.
However, the next day, in another company of our regiment, when our Bolsheviks spoke out and told the soldiers how, using the old-fashioned methods, the Socialist Revolutionaries had managed to deflect my candidacy and install an Socialist Revolutionary, the soldiers almost unanimously elected me as a deputy of the Saratov City Council. This victory of ours made a great impression throughout the 92nd Regiment and even beyond.

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— in the garrison. In short, the Council elections cemented the turning point that had clearly begun to emerge in the garrison.
Our strength also lay in the fact that our connection with the masses, of course, was not limited to meetings, rallies, or even conversations. We organized soldier communities, assigned organizers to each community (by province), elected a bureau of community communities, and drew into this organization broad masses of active soldiers sympathetic to us, the Bolsheviks. At first, the Socialist Revolutionaries tried to hinder us. When this failed, they tried to infiltrate these communities, but we had already established such a solid foundation that their attempts to disrupt it were ultimately unsuccessful.
Things reached the point where even some soldiers who called themselves Socialist Revolutionaries expressed approval of the activities of the regional associations and the Bolsheviks who organized them. Soldiers approached the regional associations with questions arising not only from their own experience but also from letters received from the villages, asking for clarification and assistance. With the help of our Bolshevik lawyers and under the guidance of one of the leading figures of the Saratov organization, Comrade Petr Aleksandrovich Lebedev (an attorney), we organized a legal consultation center at the Mayak Club, which became the center of the soldiers' regional associations. There, soldiers received clarification, consultations, and answers to their questions and inquiries from their fellow villagers. Particularly numerous inquiries related to disputes with local authorities and aggravated conflicts with landowners, peasant seizures of hayfields, vacant land, uncultivated and unharvested crops, and so on. Peasants were arrested by decree of the Provisional, pseudo-revolutionary coalition government and its commissars, and soldiers came to their fellow countrymen for help, advice, and to request written responses from their fellow countrymen. This bonded the soldiers so strongly to their fellow countrymen and, naturally, to the Bolsheviks who led them, that the fellow countrymen became the most popular organization for the soldiers, enjoying love and respect. They considered it a kind of protective trade union (incidentally, our experience in trade union work played a role here to some extent), and when kulak and hooligan elements were incited against the fellow countrymen, the soldiers, far from being Bolsheviks, rose to their defense, and it often came to blows.
These communities have proven to be a wonderful connecting link.

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Our military party organization interacted with the broad non-party soldier masses. We held political discussions in our fellow countrymen, and our influence grew and was institutionalized within them. Through our fellow countrymen, we, military Bolsheviks, connected with the villages, and through the soldiers, using their correspondence and leave visits, we effectively carried out work among the peasants, especially the poor. Furthermore, through the soldiers, we received such a rich collection of letters from the villages that this gave our propaganda great power. For example, when I went to a soldier's meeting, I always carried with me a selection of the most typical and important letters about the situation in the villages, the class struggle, peasant uprisings, and the woeful, difficult situation of the families of poor soldiers, written about by wives and parents and which touched both us and especially the soldiers. Naturally, our other comrades often read such

letters at soldier's meetings. The Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks could not oppose them in any way - it was life itself, calling for struggle, for the development of the revolution, for the salvation of workers, peasants, and soldiers from death, and the soldiers were imbued with trust and respect for the proletariat and its Leninist party.

The Socialist Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, Bundists, and others intensified their persecution of us Bolsheviks, both from below and above. In my company, for example, a special "shock" group of Socialist Revolutionary hooligans was formed, consisting of non-commissioned officers and soldiers like Ryabov, Shubin, Bykov, and others, who sought my arrest and trial. This, of course, was the work of the Socialist Revolutionary elite—Pontryagin, Didenko, and others, with whom I most often crossed swords at soldiers' meetings and rallies and in the military section of the Soviet Executive Committee.

Life itself, political discussions, and debates pushed us, simple lads, to study. The extent to which this was a natural need is evident from the fact that the Bolshevik soldiers in 1917 experienced the same need, the same need that we, pre-revolutionary Bolshevik workers, experienced when we had to engage in battle with the liquidators and the Mensheviks.

I remember how some hot, wonderful, natural agitator-soldier of ours would run to a military organization after a meeting, excited by a certain success, but at the same time complaining: “You see,” he says, “I feel that I have captured the souls of the soldiers with a hot, heartfelt word about our Bolshevik truth, and yet I have some kind of residue that I was not able to

"I have to convince them completely, to completely destroy this Socialist Revolutionary, because he lacks knowledge. A fellow Socialist Revolutionary officer spoke before me, and he kept spinning the wheels about how we, the Socialist Revolutionaries, have long been a peasant party, while the Bolsheviks themselves write that they are a workers' party, so they don't defend the peasants, but put the workers first, put them above the peasants and soldiers. The workers, in their view, should be some kind of hegemon, and then they'll establish some kind of dictatorship of the proletariat over the peasants. I," our agitator continued, "as simply as I could, unravelled him, told the soldiers how the Socialist Revolutionary Party had betrayed its old banner of "Land and Freedom," how they now defend the landowners and protect their land from the peasants, how they throw peasants in jail for shaking down the landowner. So they gave "land and freedom" not to the peasants, but to the masters. You said one thing, but it turned out differently. In short, as the saying goes, you're weak behind the scenes and don't keep your word. But the Bolsheviks stand for the working people. And aren't we, the peasants, the same working people, and isn't the worker descended from the peasantry? So they, the Bolsheviks, don't try to talk sense into things, but rather, in a working-class way, tell the peasant: don't trust promises, you'll be deceived again, as has happened so many times. You've overthrown the Tsar, overthrow his supporters—the landowners—take his land immediately, without further ado, and that's the end of it.

I spoke passionately about our Bolshevik Party as the sole defender of the workers, peasants, and soldiers. The soldiers responded favorably to my speech, especially our poorer section, but I feel I failed to defeat that officer's claim to hegemony and dictatorship of the proletariat—I lacked the "powder," even though I spoke forcefully about the working class, which was the first to fight, and continues to fight, the main enemy of the people—the capitalists and landowners. And when I said that the proletariat is ourselves, the soldiers, the poor peasants, and the farm laborers, a decent portion of the assembly supported me and applauded warmly. "In short," he concluded, "if only we could gain a little political education, then none of our opponents, let alone that Socialist Revolutionary officer, would be able to stand up to me."

We had many such natural-born agitators in our military organization—spiritual, militant, devoted to the party, the revolution, and Lenin. We needed to raise their level as quickly as possible, enriching their natural intelligence with a minimum of knowledge. First and foremost, we quickly organized a club.

It had a reading room and a library. The club was small, the premises cramped, but it played a major role. It was a gathering point for soldiers—party members and sympathizers; we organized interviews and question-and-answer sessions, lectures, and reports on current political issues. But this, of course, couldn't solve the fundamental problem of raising the level of our cadres. Therefore, with all our might and energy, we threw ourselves (and I mean threw ourselves) into organizing courses, and with the decisive assistance and guidance of the City Party Committee, we organized courses for soldier agitators.

Our experience with the courses was well appreciated in Petrograd, where I, as a delegate to the All-Russian Conference of Military Organizations under the Central Committee of the Party, was asked to give a report on our experience at a specially convened meeting on party-political training in military party organizations.

ALL-RUSSIAN CONFERENCE OF MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS

Most of us, delegates to the All-Russian Conference of Military Organizations, were visiting and seeing Petrograd for the first time. But each of us, especially the old Bolsheviks, loved and revered Petrograd as the great center of the revolution, as the cradle of the Russian Revolution.

We walked the streets of the working-class districts, especially in the Vyborg district, and everywhere we felt not only the history of the great struggle of the advanced revolutionary people of St. Petersburg for the cause of the liberation of the working class, but also the seething revolutionary determination of modern fighters, ready to give their lives for the victory of the socialist proletarian revolution, for the conquest of the power of the proletariat.

Like everyone else—both Petersburgers and visitors to the city—we were captivated by the enchanting, astonishing natural phenomenon of Petrograd's June "white nights." Many wonderful lines of poetry have been written about them. But even here, our souls were captured not so much by the poetic and romantic side of nature, although we were not at all alien to poetry and romance, but by how the "white nights" themselves became an arena for intense class political struggle, an instrument of revolutionary romance.

Having absorbed the poetic "classless dispassion." All the squares, especially near theaters, circuses, palaces, and public buildings, the boulevards, and streets were filled with people and endless rallies. A fierce political struggle was underway here between various parties, groups, and simply individuals, who leaped out with their "original" statements and shouts, often ending in a "synthesis" of moral and political content with physical violence.

We, the delegates, attended these "white-collar" rallies, participated in them, and spoke at them, naturally refraining from "physical" participation. Although sometimes, when the scoundrels and scoundrels were particularly unruly, we were on the verge of participating, but our position obliged us to restrain ourselves. For example, while traveling from Saratov to Moscow, I also observed and participated in such a night rally, but in Petrograd they were more heated, and this reflected the full intensity of the heated political atmosphere in Petrograd.

"Belonochka" rallies were a unique, fascinating phenomenon. In some places, they took the form of unorganized conversations—arguments, shirt-grabbing; in others, they were rallies with speakers taking turns speaking without a written record, and sometimes without a turn, with elbow-pushing forwards replacing the chairman, who, as a rule, was absent. They were stormy and passionate, their membership changing but never diminishing—some left, others arrived. Some berated the Provisional Government, the Cadets, the Mensheviks, the Socialist Revolutionaries; others berated

the Bolsheviks; still others spoke of difficulties in general; still others berated speculators. But most often, the issue of the war came into focus, especially when soldiers spoke, especially the wounded, who hurled abuse at the "rear" speakers with all the obscenities they had mastered to perfection. The organizing spirit, and with a certain passion, was provided by the Bolsheviks who attended these rallies. It cannot be said that their activities always proceeded smoothly. Sometimes they ended in rather tragic beatings, especially when the Bolsheviks were few in number.

The conference delegates spoke in almost every regiment and military unit in Petrograd. I personally spoke in several units, including the Machine Gun Regiment, the Moscow Regiment, and the Volyn Regiment. It's not as if the mood in all of these regiments was the same. If the mood in the Machine Gun Regiment

was so militant that we even had to maintain a restraining tone to a certain extent, then in the Volyn Regiment the Socialist Revolutionary influence was still strong, especially because the regimental committee was dominated by active Socialist Revolutionaries.

The conference delegates awaited Comrade Lenin's report with great anticipation. They clearly understood that the party leader's report was the central, central issue of the conference, determining all the directions of its decisions and the entire future work of the party's military organization. But beyond the importance of the report, the delegates were overwhelmed by indescribable feelings of touching love and devotion to their teacher, who was being subjected to the savage, vicious persecution of the enemies of the revolution and the people.

It is difficult to convey in words the mood that prevailed in the relatively small hall when the delegates saw and heard Lenin for the first time, when Lenin appeared at the presidium table, on the podium.

The delegates' enthusiastic response, the prolonged applause, and the cries of praise for Lenin and the Party reflected not only the delegates' personal sentiments but also the feelings and sentiments of millions of revolutionary soldiers, primarily the Bolsheviks who had sent them to the conference.

As soon as Lenin began his report, everyone was transfixed, captivated by its iron logic, depth, and persuasiveness; no one moved. Thanks to the small size of the hall, we all sat as if right next to Lenin, around him, like attentive and faithful students around their teacher. Comrade Lenin's report was primarily an explanatory and persuasive discourse, while at the same time angrily exposing the enemies and calling for a struggle against them.

It's fair to say that, although some delegates, prior to the report, believed immediate action was necessary to seize power, the report prompted a "reassessment of values." I sat among the delegates and heard many of them directly declare: yes, they'll have to reconsider their views. Ilyich spoke very convincingly; his report warns us not to "make a mess" in big politics, and that's more serious than simply making a mess in a small matter.

Most of the speakers supported the position defended by Comrade Lenin in his report. I was among those speakers who defended the Central Committee's position—Comrade Lenin's position.

Of course, I prepared for this speech with great excitement, even though I hadn't written it. Back then, few people delivered speeches from written material, and perhaps even now I find it difficult to read my own speech. But I thought through every point, drew up an outline of the speech, and so on. I think that even in today's conditions, when almost everyone can deliver speeches, I will be understood and not considered false modesty when I say that, despite the fact that I already knew how to deliver a speech, I was terribly nervous on this occasion. It's no joke to speak on Comrade Lenin's report, on such a pressing issue, at such a pressing moment, for the first time on the all-Russian party platform. My excitement was particularly heightened when Comrade Podvoisky called me in and said, "You know, Comrade Kaganovich, we have here numerous statements from

pre-revolutionary party members—delegates to the conference—in order to greet Comrade Lenin on their behalf and express their solidarity with the points he set forth in his report. We believe this will be useful for all the other delegates. We think you'll be able to realize this idea in your speech." I told Podvoisky that there were comrades for this, both older and more senior than me in the Party. Comrade Podvoisky, seeing my nervousness, consoled me, encouraged me, and said, "I'm sure you'll speak briefly and effectively." I said it was a great honor for me and I would do my best to fulfill the comrades' instructions.

"This greeting," I said, "is our oath of allegiance to Lenin's leadership, his revolutionary Marxist principles, the theory, strategy, and tactics of class struggle for the victory of the socialist revolution. We, the delegates—pre-revolutionary Bolsheviks—do not separate ourselves from all the delegates and are confident that, together with us, all the delegates at the conference greet Comrade Lenin and will remain loyal to the Leninist leadership of our party."

The entire conference, in a single impulse, stood and gave Comrade Lenin a long, stormy applause. Having shared the experience of the Saratov military organization in providing assistance to workers, especially railway workers, in organizing the Red Guard and equipping it with military knowledge and weapons, in raising the revolutionary activity of soldiers and preparing key personnel for possible events in response to counter-revolutionary actions, I concluded my speech with a proposal to recognize as correct all the provisions put forward by Comrade Lenin in the report and to develop accordingly

a conference resolution that will show all military organizations the Leninist path of work and struggle.

Despite the heated debate over Comrade Lenin's report, the conference delegates, even those who displayed extremist sentiments, understood that the time for armed action and the seizure of power had not yet arrived, and that Comrade Lenin had accurately presented the situation and set our objectives. Therefore, the resolution, drafted in accordance with Comrade Lenin's report, was adopted unanimously.

Lenin spoke at the conference twice. His second report was devoted to the agrarian question.

First of all, I must say that some comrades have doubts as to whether this report was presented at the conference. Such doubts, I have been told, were expressed back in 1936 at a meeting at the Communist Academy. It was said that no traces remained. But, unfortunately, no significant documentary evidence remains for the first report either. As a conference delegate who heard Lenin's reports, I declare that Comrade Lenin delivered a report on the agrarian question at the conference following the first report.

It happened like this. After the first report, a short break was announced. During this break, a group of us delegates approached Comrade Lenin specifically regarding the agrarian question. We told him how the Socialist Revolutionaries were speculating with their program for the socialization of the land, and therefore asked him to cover this issue in his report on the agrarian question and, as we said, "coach" us on this issue. A brief conversation with Comrade Lenin ensued, in which I was fortunate enough to participate. Comrade Lenin asked us a few questions and, I remember, half-jokingly said, "Apparently the Socialist Revolutionaries are still trying to scare you. Very well," he said at the end of the conversation, "I will speak about this briefly in my report." Comrade Lenin then turned to the members of the conference presidium who had approached—Comrades Podvoisky, Krylenko, and others—and said, "You know, comrades, it would be more convenient for me not to postpone the report on the agrarian question." I am prepared for it, since I gave this report at the April Conference, and it would be good if I could give this report briefly right now." Everyone happily agreed to this, and after the break, Comrade Lenin gave a report on the agrarian question.

Comrade Stalin's report on the national movement and national

on the shelves in importance comes after the reports of Comrade Lenin.
We felt the urgency of this issue locally. For example, at a meeting of the Council of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies in Saratov, the demand by Ukrainian soldiers to be assigned to a separate regiment was hotly debated. The speaker at the Council reported that the disputes were reaching the kulaks. "We," they said, "want to defend Ukraine." At the meeting of the Saratov Council, even some rather responsible Bolsheviks spoke out against this. "Now," said Vasilyev-Yuzhin, for example, "no one will engage in Russification. We ourselves have recognized national self-determination. But in Ukraine, besides the Little Russians, there are Jews, Poles, and others. We do not accept the separation of nationalities, like goats from sheep. We believe this is the work of dark forces. We proclaim unity, not disunity. It's ridiculous and undemocratic, and in the spirit of the old order, to single out Great Russian, Jewish, Latvian, and Polish battalions." We didn't agree with all of these arguments, but others also saw this as an attempt to incite ethnic hatred.
There were also individual speeches in which doubts were expressed about the correctness of the very principle of the right of nations to secede, and especially about the right to form national military units.
Ukraine was at the center of the specific debates over the formation of national regiments not only because there were many Ukrainians in the army, but also because Ukrainians were the most active. By June, they had convened several military congresses, created not only the Central Rada but also separate Radas within the armies, and had practically begun to form Ukrainian military units. Therefore, the debate saw the most heated expressions against the formation of Ukrainian units. Some comrades, however, pointed out that this was a demand not of the Ukrainian people, but of Ukrainian landowners and officers, and therefore they were fundamentally opposed to the nationalization of the army.
The debates at the military conference reflected the disagreements that had taken place at the April Conference.
In his second speech, Comrade Stalin once again explained the fundamental position of the party, emphasizing that the recognition of the right to secession and the right to form national regiments

This will strengthen trust between the peoples of Russia and pave the way for voluntary unification into a single state. Comrade Stalin said that it is necessary to indicate in the resolutions that the Conference considers the right to form national units correct, although it is convinced that this is not in the interests of the workers. Therefore, the Conference is confident that the proletariat of Ukraine and other peoples of Russia will fight to replace the standing army with a people's militia of the workers.
After the closing remarks, the resolution drafted by the commission was adopted unanimously. It is no exaggeration to say that the discussion of this issue at the military conference and the resulting resolution were of paramount practical and fundamental historical significance for the entire party.
I cannot help but say that my personal participation in the work of the commission drafting the resolution brought me enormous benefit in my development and great, lifelong satisfaction from my personal, direct acquaintance with Comrade Stalin and from communicating with him during the process of drafting the resolution, where he showed great tact in relation to objecting comrades, great attention to the amendments being introduced and an understanding of the wishes of each delegate, not to mention his deep knowledge of the national question in Lenin’s understanding of it.
As a result of discussion of candidates and voting, the conference elected the following composition of the All-Russian Bureau: N.I. Podvoisky, V.I. Nevsky, N.V. Krylenko, E.F. Rozmirovich, K.A. Mekhonoshin, M.S. Kedrov, N.K. Belyakov, S.A. Cherpanov, L.M. Kaganovich, P.V. Dashkevich, A.Ya. Arosev, F.P. Khaustov, I.L. Dzevyaltovsky and Gintovt.

With this, the conference concluded its fruitful and important work for the party and the revolution on June 23, 1917.
The first meeting of the All-Russian Bureau did not last long because we, the delegates, were in a hurry to leave.
At the first meeting of the Bureau, Comrade Podvoisky raised the question of me. “The people of St. Petersburg,” he said, “are raising the question of leaving Comrade Kaganovich to work in Petrograd. The Central Committee is asking for this, and I support them; the Bureau is also interested in this—he will be able to carry out organizational work here. What will Comrade Kaganovich himself say?” I was stunned by this unexpected proposal and couldn’t even immediately respond. Coming to my senses, I said: “I am very grateful for this proposal and for the trust of the St. Petersburg organization.”

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"We respect and value it very much, but I'll say this: there are many workers in St. Petersburg, and few in the provinces. They're waiting for me in Saratov, there's a lot to do there too, and then there's the Volga region, where there's plenty of work too. And I should also say that I've received reports that the situation there is tense, like here in the Machine Gun Regiment. The Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks are slandering me there, and there's a campaign going on demanding my arrest. If I leave there now, it will undermine the authority of our party organization. Considering all this, it's best for me to go there now, and then we can talk more." Then Comrade Podvoisky said: "Let's not decide now; I'll report to Comrade Sverdlov, and then we'll decide." When the Bureau meeting ended, Comrade Podvoisky told me to come see him in about three hours, and in the meantime, I went to a meeting on agitation and agitation courses, which had already begun. Interesting reports were presented at the meeting. I also gave a report on the experience of the Saratov organization—our courses. Since I had gone to see Podvoisky before the meeting ended, the meeting chair later told me that our experience had been well-received and approved. When I arrived at Comrade Podvoisky's, he said to me, "Let's go see Comrade Sverdlov; he wants to talk to you." I was delighted to be personally acquainted with such an outstanding organizer in the Party.
Comrade Sverdlov greeted me warmly and began by saying, "You know, of course, that matters such as employment are not a personal matter, but are decided by the Central Committee." I replied that I knew this well, but a Party member could express his opinion on the matter. He laughingly agreed. After this introduction, Comrade Sverdlov said, "The people of St. Petersburg are very keen to keep you here; they apparently like you. Indeed, they would find you useful and necessary. Furthermore, Comrade Podvoisky also wants to use you for organizational work in the Bureau of Military Organizations. All this would be very good, but you are probably right that there are not enough people locally, including in the Volga region. But you will have to expand your work to other centers in the Volga region, traveling there whenever possible—as a member of the All-Russian Bureau of Military Organizations, you have the right to do so. The main thing is that the Central Committee entrusts you with this and hopes that you will carry it out well." I replied to Comrade Sverdlov that I accept this assignment with great pleasure and party satisfaction and will try to carry it out as required by the interests of the party and its military organization.

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But he also reported that all sorts of changes weren't ruled out, and in fact were even likely: right now, in Saratov, Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik organizations have launched a campaign against us, and me in particular, demanding my arrest and trial. If that doesn't work, they could arrange for me to be sent to the front with a special company. Then my activities in the Volga region would be thwarted, and I wouldn't be able to carry out the Central Committee's orders.

Yakov Mikhailovich thought for a moment and said, "That's certainly possible, and it's good you told me so. Then let's figure out what to do if that happens. We're in a bad spot in a very important area. This area is part of the Western Front, but the key is that it's a special center, home to nothing less than the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's Headquarters—Mogilev. There are what they consider reliable military units stationed in and around it. And there's no Bolshevik organization there, not even a general party organization. There are Bolsheviks, but they're part of a unified organization with the Mensheviks and even the defencists. In nearby Gomel, there's a good old Bolshevik organization, but it's still too weak to extend its influence, impact, and leadership to Mogilev. You understand, comrades, how important it is for us to have a serious, strong worker there." Therefore, if you are expelled from Saratov, do everything possible to get to the Western Front, more precisely, to the Mogilev or Gomel area. We will give instructions to Minsk for assistance, and you, Comrade Podvoisky, take all possible measures, as this is one of the most important points of military organization. If it proves difficult to establish a legal military organization in Mogilev, an illegal one will have to be created. The same applies to Comrade Kaganovich: if it proves difficult to establish him there legally, he will have to go underground or settle in Gomel and carry on his work from there in Mogilev. We are not giving you any mandates. You are now a member of the All-Russian Bureau of Military Organizations under the Central Committee and must act in its name, maintaining contact with it."

I thanked them for their trust and said that I understood the importance of the Central Committee's order and would do everything to fulfill it. Just then, someone came to see Comrade Sverdlov and informed him that a large and stormy meeting was taking place in the Machine Gun Regiment, demanding a representative of the Central Committee or the "Voenka." Yakov Mikhailovich, without hesitation, said, turning to Comrade Podvoisky and me: "Both of you..."

"And head there, it would be good to grab some more of your comrades. "You see," he said to me, laughing, "you're lucky; before you leave, you'll perform for the people of St. Petersburg once more," and he said a warm farewell to me. We also grabbed Comrade Arosev and headed off to the regiment.

We found the Machine Gun Regiment in a turbulent and heated atmosphere caused by the offensive at the front. The soldiers were particularly irritated by the endless, ongoing harassment of the regiment and the threats they received to disband it or send it back to the front entirely.

We arrived just as a speaker was delivering his speech, angrily vilifying the Provisional Government and demanding immediate action against it, armed and armed. Comrade Podvoisky spoke first, then, after some time, we all took the floor. The mood was such that we were bombarded with questions and comments during our speech, and the noise was considerable. We managed, however, to contain the mood, steer it back to a more or less calmer course, and, using many of the same arguments Comrade Lenin had presented at the conference, we secured a decision not to speak for the time being.

Impressed by this meeting, I left Petrograd for Saratov. I felt with particular force how correct the line developed by the conference of military organizations—the line established by Lenin—was, and how much work was needed to implement it.

BACK IN SARATOV

After the criminal shooting of the July demonstration of the St. Petersburg proletariat and revolutionary soldiers and sailors, the situation of our party and the revolutionary proletariat was extremely difficult and dangerous.

Counterrevolutionary forces reared their heads, smashed our newspapers and organizations, hounded our leaders, headed by Comrade Lenin, and orchestrated vile slanders against the Party,

accusing it and our Central Committee, despite the fact that the Party, the Central Committee, and Lenin had conspired and were allegedly preparing an armed uprising in July to overthrow the government. Meanwhile, both the government and its vile lackeys—the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries—were well aware

that this movement was spontaneous, that the masses, driven to despair by the treacherous imperialist policy of the government of the bourgeoisie and landowners, the adventurist offensive at the front, which destroyed many tens of thousands of soldiers' lives, took to the streets of Petrograd to induce the Socialist Revolutionary-Menshevik majority of the Soviets to take power into the hands of the Soviets and radically change the entire policy.

Our Party's Central Committee, headed by Lenin, argued to the masses the futility and untimeliness of this uprising, but when the masses spontaneously took to the streets, our Central Committee, the Communist Party Committee, and the entire St. Petersburg organization, as a truly revolutionary party, went with the masses, remained with them to the end, and brought organization to their ranks, diverting the movement and demonstration to peaceful lines. Had the Party and the Bolshevik Central Committee not taken this spontaneous movement into their own hands, the bloodshed and the torrent of bloodshed at the hands of government executioners would have been many times greater than it actually was, as the provocateurs of the bourgeoisie, its government, and especially the counterrevolutionary generals and officers so desired.

From St. Petersburg, the counter-revolutionary “thunder” rolled to our places, including Saratov. The bourgeoisie, the Black Hundreds, and the Cadets, with the help of their Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary supporters, organized a savage campaign of persecution against us Bolsheviks in the squares and streets, especially near the Covered Market and the People's House. Where revolutionary rallies had been held, they now gathered to vilify the Bolsheviks, calling us spies, traitors, and so on. We went there in groups, spoke, and got into arguments that often ended in brutal beatings of us Bolsheviks. To the credit of the Saratov organization, including its military organization, it must be said that despite the persecution and attempts to use repression, especially against us soldiers, the Saratov Bolsheviks, during this difficult period for the party, further intensified their struggle for the ideas, policies, and line of our party against the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries. This affected the behavior and strong political sentiments of the Saratov workers and soldiers.

In general, despite the reaction following the July events in Petrograd, throughout July, a fierce political struggle against the government continued unabated in the garrison, particularly against the Kerensky government's orders to send entire regiments, rather than marching companies, to the front and to grant leave for agricultural work. Naturally, these issues, which stirred up the soldiers,

Our organizations in the units communicated with the political situation in the country and with the general anti-people policy of the Provisional Government.

In mid- or late July, Comrade Kuibyshev came to visit us in Saratov. Not only did I meet him, but I also enjoyed organizing and attending his lecture at the Mayak Hotel, "Revolution and Counterrevolution," which focused on the July events. But beyond the lecture, he, of course, had a more businesslike, serious discussion about party affairs at the city and provincial party committees. It was then that I first met my future close friend, Valerian Kuibyshev.

The Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks began to act with repressions against military Bolsheviks, and first of all they took on my person.

Long before this, they had launched a campaign of persecution against Kaganovich from below. What the leaders themselves found inconvenient, they delegated to their "lower ranks." Even before my departure for the conference in Petrograd, they had launched a campaign accusing Kaganovich

of defying government orders and putting him on trial. This campaign, zealously led by the Socialist Revolutionaries, non-commissioned officers Bykov, Shubin, Ryabov, and others from my 92nd Regiment, intensified during my stay in Petrograd. When I returned from Petrograd, an attempt was made to carry out their plan: on the day of my arrival, I was arrested by order of the regimental command. In response to my protest, they charged me with leaving for Petrograd without permission. But nothing came of this charge, as I had permission from the military section of the Soviet, which I presented to the company commander before leaving. Attempts to discredit this document by claiming it was signed not by the chairman but by bureau member Sokolov (a Bolshevik) had no legal basis, as a bureau member had the right to issue such a document. Under pressure from the Bolshevik members of the Executive Committee of the Soviet, they were forced to release me.

However, even after this, they continued their campaign against me, but it was difficult for them to achieve their goal without violating basic norms, since I was a member of the Executive Committee of the Soviet. Furthermore, they had to take into account the fact that I was a member of the provincial bureau of the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies, which was connected with the peasantry. In this bureau, we Bolsheviks enjoyed considerable influence. Secretary

His was the Bolshevik Kulikov, a member of our military organization and its committee.

After rallies in the machine-gun regiments and the 92nd Regiment, and my participation in a demonstration, I was arrested again. A Bolshevik protest at the Executive Committee and unrest in the garrison forced the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to change the measures taken to curb my activities in the garrison, and the regimental command urgently added me to the "out of turn" list of a marching company being formed and sent to the front. These were already the last days of my stay in Saratov.

The day of departure arrived. Many garrison soldiers had gathered in the square in front of the station—our Bolshevik cells, in agreement with the Committee, had decided to turn this "extraordinary" dispatch of the marching company into a political action and organized a large rally in the station square. Not only Bolsheviks came, but also sympathizers and many non-party soldiers. Some workers were also present, primarily railroad workers, with whom I had a special connection, although I didn't think I'd become a railroad worker back then. A military band was also present, and as the marching company approached the square, it began playing "La Marseillaise." Our Military Organization Committee was present in full force and proposed opening the rally. Comrade Sokolov, a member of the Military Organization Committee, opened the rally. In a brief speech, he pointed out the special nature of this rally and spoke about my work in connection with our party's struggle for the cause of workers and soldiers. Several more soldiers spoke, angrily criticizing the bourgeoisie, the landowners, and the Provisional Government, and also talking about my work and struggle in the Saratov military organization. After them, I spoke.

The atmosphere was tense, and I was, of course, nervous. I remember speaking passionately, talking about the Saratov garrison, the Saratov working class, the military organization, and the Saratov All-Party Organization, thanking them for their help, support, and the school of shared struggle. He concentrated his fire especially on the Socialist Revolutionaries, the Mensheviks, and the entire bourgeois counterrevolution that had reared its head after the July events in Petrograd and thought it was already winning. "But," I said, "no matter what support they might have in the current government, they won't see victory—the workers and soldiers don't support them."

The rally ended cheerfully and militantly; the people didn't disperse, but it was time for us to get into the freight cars. I immediately took a photo with my wife, Maria Markovna, who had arrived with the trade union workers. Along with members of the Military Organization Committee, I

headed for the station. Suddenly, the marching company commander approached me and said, "You must go to the station commandant's office." There, I found a man introducing himself as a representative of the military investigative authorities and a representative of our regiment, who told me, "By order of the relevant authorities, you are under arrest. We cannot send you in a general carriage with the soldiers. You will be sent as an arrested person in a separate freight car on this train." In response to my protests and demands for an explanation and the relevant documents, these gentlemen offered no explanation, repeating the same phrase like parrots.
The company commander offered to escort me to the prison car himself, so as not to cause a ruckus at the station. My comrades from the Military Committee, waiting on the platform, upon learning of my arrest, wanted to immediately raise a fuss, protest, and stage some kind of demonstration. Comrades Rossomakhin and Sokolov were especially worried, but I told them that this shouldn't be done. Firstly, because it would be interpreted as resistance to military authority and a new case would be tacked on, and at the present moment, after the July events, this would be detrimental to the Party organization. Secondly, essentially, nothing would come of it; I wouldn't be released anyway and would be transferred to the "special" car reserved for me. When they said, "We'll go straight to the Executive Committee, to the military section, file a protest, and raise hell," I told them that was the right thing to do; a protest must be filed, and the reasons for the arrest must be clarified. The garrison needs to know this, too—it could prove a good pretext for political agitation. But my situation won't change in essence, since the Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik chameleons have seen this and have been planning it for a long time. Having failed to imprison me in Saratov, although they tried, they organized this arrest on the extraterritorial territory of the railroad. Now, they'll tell you, we can't do anything; our authority doesn't extend there. I also asked the committee members and Comrade Maltsev personally to immediately report my arrest and dispatch with a marching company to Petrograd to the All-Russian Bureau of the Central Committee and Comrade Podvoisky personally.
With the “kind” permission of my escort, the marching commander

I said a warm farewell to my comrades and to my wife, Maria, who, although she had seen things as an old Bolshevik, was, of course, very upset by this outcome. I reassured her as best I could, and we said goodbye as people who loved each other and as comrades in the struggle.
So, in a prison car, I left my beloved Saratov, which had enriched me with new experience in the struggle for the victory of my native party, to which I, for my part, devoted all my youthful, seething energy.
Here, in concluding this section, I want to emphasize with particular force that one should not think that all this came easily, that the soldiers spontaneously came to the Bolsheviks. Never has a spontaneous mood and movement, no matter how positive, nor have favorable objective conditions, led to victory without the conscious, organizing ideological and political force of a party—and our heroic Bolshevik Party was precisely such an effective, proactive force, built on the foundation of the great theory of Marxism-Leninism.
The bourgeois distorters of the history of the October Revolution, hostile to its history, will never understand the main strength of our party, which, in the struggle for the Russian army, managed to defeat all the Cadet, Socialist Revolutionary, and Menshevik claimants to dominant influence in the army, and not only those who claimed it, but who had this dominance almost monopolistically, especially in the first months of the revolution.
Even more so, the current international distorters of Soviet history—the lackeys of imperialism, hiding behind the false cloak of scholarship, who fraudulently and unscientifically invent "theories" that declare the October Revolution a "soldiers' revolt"—cannot understand this. But these gentlemen have never been able to answer the question of why all the political parties in Russia, fighting for leadership of the army, failed to retain these masses, while the Bolshevik Party, driven underground, accused after the July events of every grave sin that provocateurs and dirty slanderers

could devise, managed in a short time to lead millions of soldiers and sailors to storm capitalism, to the socialist revolution. Despite their qualified education, these gentlemen have not given, do not give, and cannot give a clear and correct answer, not only because their burning class hatred of the revolution has blinded them.

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them, but also because, due to the social nature of their bourgeois and petty-bourgeois worldview and, as a consequence of this, their narrow outlook, they are unable to understand and comprehend the objective historical laws that determined the victory of the socialist revolution in Russia and their relationship with the subjective factor of proletarian organization and the strength of the Bolshevik Leninist Workers' Party, its theory, policy, strategy, tactics and practical organization of the masses, including the soldiers.
A correct answer to the above "why?" can only be provided by an objective understanding of all the historical conditions, the turbulent class struggle and revolutionary movement, the alignment and correlation of driving class forces, their policies stemming from their class interests, and the tasks of the revolution, determined by the natural socio-economic interests of the proletariat and peasantry, primarily its poorest section and, correspondingly, soldiers and sailors. These socio-economic class interests found their concrete expression primarily in such pressing issues of concern to the masses as war and peace, land for the peasants, control over production, overcoming economic ruin, ensuring bread, curbing the capitalists, and then replacing the exploitative system of capitalism with a new system of liberated labor—socialism—by resolving the main question of the revolution—the conquest of power by the proletariat and the poorest peasantry.

FRONTLINE STRIP OF THE WESTERN FRONT

During the journey of our echelon, the commander of the marching company kept me under strict control, not letting me out even for a walk, not allowing anyone from the marching company to see me, especially the communists.
Many Bolsheviks, more than 20 people, were included in the marching company, hastily formed in Saratov, “in a rush.”
Naturally, they, the soldiers, were concerned about my situation; they repeatedly lodged protests with the commander, but nothing came of it. On the contrary, after each protest, he worsened my conditions even more.
If in the first days they gave me newspapers, then later they stopped; books

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They didn't give me any. In the freight car, converted into a mobile guardhouse where they put the guilty, there was a separate "compartment" separated by planks for especially important "criminals"—and it was in this small "compartment," which I called the "wooden bag," in association with the "stone bag" of my accursed memory, that I rode to Gomel. The food was poor, even worse than that of all the soldiers; there wasn't enough boiling water or water, and even less sugar. There were no candles or lamps in my "compartment," and the natural light that reached the car, especially my "bag," was very meager, so even if they had given me books, it would have been impossible to read them. Although all this spoiled my mood, I felt cheerful, and most importantly, optimistically confident. Naturally, I have been thinking a lot these days, mentally reviewing all the events, especially those of the last month, and have come to an even greater confidence in the great power of the ideas and policies of our party—the mighty Leninist searchlight illuminating for millions the true path of struggle for the victory of the revolution and socialism.

Even in my isolated position, I had the opportunity to communicate with one person and test my thoughts on the power of Lenin's ideas and political line. This person turned out to be none other than the company commander's assistant, NCO Arkhipov, who, while fulfilling his official duties, was visiting me. He was one of those Socialist Revolutionaries who veered "left" and readily agreed to conversation. At first, he even asked. "You," he said, "seem well acquainted with peasant life and the needs of the village, and these needs are very great right now. Please don't refuse to talk to me." That was the beginning, and from there, trouble begins. Having had experience talking with soldiers, I calmly and leisurely began with history, of which he, of course, knew little, and brought him up to the current situation. Taking advantage of his position, he became a frequent guest at my place, and I felt that this Socialist Revolutionary non-commissioned officer could be turned into, if not a Bolshevik, then at least a sympathizer.

Our train was moving at a snail's pace—the railway collapse was taking its toll. There was plenty of time, and I made good use of it by spreading propaganda to Arkhipov, who, as we approached Gomel, said to me: “I see that your Bolshevik truth is also the peasant truth, that the Socialist Revolutionaries have truly abandoned their ‘Land and Freedom’ program. I will move toward you, the Bolsheviks, and I think I will reach you faster than our train is moving.” As a “down payment,” he confided to me: “There is a commotion in our company: firstly, they sent

"Our company was taken away in some kind of particularly urgent manner, so much so that they haven't even changed our underwear, our uniforms are old and torn, there's poor food on the train, there's not even boiling water at the stations, and there's nowhere to put the sick; secondly, the soldiers are worried about you, demanding a change in the regime and that you be allowed in for a talk with them, making demands of the commander, and he, this little nobleman, is putting on a brave face, trying to impose strictness, but nothing is working. I, as his assistant, advised him to change his attitude towards you, and in response, you know what he said to me: 'He, Kaganovich, is a member of the All-Russian Bureau of Military Bolsheviks, who hatch conspiracies, I'm transporting him "in a special package" as a state criminal, and then they'll figure out how to decide his fate.' I learned," Arkhipov said, "that he said the same thing not only to me, but to several others as well. The soldiers found out about this, and it added even more fuel to the fire." I thanked him for the information and asked him to let Bulkin, Petrov, or one of them see me; he promised and kept his promise.

Comrades Bulkin and Petrov were very pleased to see me and reported to me in detail on everything that had happened on the train during this time, as well as the general news from the newspapers. The situation in the company, they said, was tense; everyone was expecting some kind of change, eager for action. I advised them: restrain the most zealous, prevent spontaneous, random uprisings, remembering the instructions of the All-Russian Military Conference, and avoid giving grounds for provocation. It's also important to remember that Gomel is already within Kornilov's headquarters zone, which is why the commander is acting so brazenly. This doesn't mean we should refuse to make demands for food, uniforms, medical care, and the like. While we continue to conduct our political propaganda and explanatory work with all urgency, we must not give in to provocation. I also said, "Don't bring me up; the commander won't change anything about my regime, which was apparently prescribed to him in Saratov and made even worse by the conditions of the Headquarters zone." Comrades Petrov and Bulkin agreed with my advice and promised to take all necessary measures through the cell. I asked Petrov to immediately go to the Polesie Committee upon arriving in Gomel and inform the leading comrades about me.

When the train arrived at Gomel station, the atmosphere there was extremely tense. The station was packed with numerous trains and individual soldiers, there was no food, not even enough boiling water; the soldiers were raging, and endless

Violent rallies. Several officers who spoke in a Kornilov-like manner and threatened to kill the soldiers as rebels were beaten by the soldiers.
The soldiers on our train also took part in the events at the station, although under Bolshevik influence they avoided physical combat. When soldiers from other trains learned about me from our soldiers, they approached our train and demanded the commander allow me to speak at the rally. When I refused, they themselves pushed aside the guards and let me out. After addressing the soldiers, I explained what the Bolsheviks and their leader, Lenin, were trying to achieve, but before I could finish my speech, the garrison commander's punitive shock detachment, which had just arrived at the station, descended on us and began "pacifying the rioters."
A hand-to-hand fight ensued, with sabers and gunfire. The soldiers in our echelon surrounded me tightly and, with the help of the railroad workers, pulled me out of the melee and toward the depot, where, with the help of the remarkable Bolshevik Comrade Yakubov, I was given shelter and protected from the Cossacks and officers. At my request, Comrade Yakubov contacted the Polesie Party Committee, which immediately sent Comrades Lobankov and Lapik—two soldier activists—to fetch me, and they safely delivered me to the Polesie Committee. There, Comrades Agranov and Khataevich greeted me warmly, joyfully, and in a friendly manner.
It turned out that even before my arrival in Gomel, the Polesie Committee had been warned by Comrade Myasnikov, the leader of the Minsk Bolsheviks. The Central Committee of the Party, having learned from Petrograd of my arrest and dispatch with a marching company to the Western Front, had instructed him to establish my whereabouts and take all possible and necessary measures to secure my release and settlement (legally or illegally) in Mogilev or Gomel. Comrades Khataevich and Agranov told me they were very glad of my arrival, that they were in great need, and that it would be better for Mogilev if I worked "for Mogilev" from Gomel. Naturally, I would have to go underground for a while (how long remains to be seen). But they would do everything possible to eliminate the accusations against the soldiers and me, and they would succeed in overcoming the difficulties and legalizing me through the military section of the Council.
I told them that I agreed with this, but first of all I was concerned about the question of what was happening to the Bolshevik soldiers of my company.

It turned out that, although, as I've already said, our marching company had behaved more restrainedly than the others, it, having arrived from Saratov "marked" as Bolshevik, was placed under special "fire." It ended with it being disbanded, most of it sent to the notorious Gomel Distribution Point, and some of the Bolshevik soldiers arrested. They searched for me, of course, but couldn't find me: I was housed in the secure apartment of a shoemaker, Comrade Kaminsky—we had learned the art of secrecy even before Kerensky, under the Tsar.
Comrades Agranov, Khataevich, and Lobankov, who worked in the soldiers' section of the Soviet, energetically and resourcefully sought ways to legitimize me from the Polesie Committee. They organized grassroots pressure on the Soviet soldiers' section and persistently sought the cooperation of the most loyal members of the Soviet soldiers' section. To be fair, P.A. Bogdanov provided us with some assistance in this matter. Although he was one of the leaders of the so-called united organization of the Mensheviks and the Bund, he had previously been a Bolshevik and apparently retained some Bolshevik affinity. (He later, after the October Revolution, rejoined our party and, with the party's trust, served as Chairman of the Supreme Council of the National Economy of the RSFSR.) In the end, the charges against me for direct involvement in the events at Gomel station were dropped. As for the arrest in Saratov, there were no specific indictments, and my arrest in Saratov was simply an act of political reprisal. The arrested soldiers were released.
Arriving at the Distribution Point, I was enthusiastically greeted by the soldiers of our company. During the elections to the Council of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, I was elected to the Gomel Soviet and received the legal opportunity to begin fulfilling the assignment given to me by

Comrades Sverdlov and Podvoisky in a conversation following the military conference—the actual work on the front line of the Western Front, and most importantly, in Mogilev and Gomel. Hundreds of our speakers, ordinary workers and soldiers, were dispatched to units, nearby villages, factories, from large to small, as well as to the streets and squares for discussions, debates, and, if necessary, to speak at impromptu rallies. The Distribution Point, the place where the largest concentration of soldiers, and of a diverse nature,

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We dispatched a specially selected group of trained agitators and propagandists to deal with the increasingly vocal and critically minded. It's fair to say that within a few days, our people literally swarmed the city, factories, and military units. The Mensheviks, accustomed to, so to speak, "parliamentary order," weren't prepared for such a Bolshevik agitational "intervention" and couldn't keep up with us. Where swords were crossed at meetings and rallies, our simple soldier and worker agitators, not with their superficial oratorical flourishes but with heartfelt words, put the Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary golden-tongued rabble to the ground.

Incidentally, this experiment proved very effective. The Bundists organized a series of meetings specifically for Jewish workers. Not all Jewish Bolsheviks spoke Hebrew, so we selected in advance a group of Jewish Bolsheviks who could speak Hebrew and sent them to these meetings, where they spoke with great success. At some of these meetings, where Bundist leaders spoke, a Bolshevik would suddenly speak in Hebrew and rebuke the Bundist leader with all the sharp words that abound in Hebrew jargon. To understand the effect this had, it's important to know that the Bundists had been spreading slander, claiming that the Bolsheviks were generally against the Hebrew language, and then suddenly an official Bolshevik speaker was cursing them in Hebrew. The workers liked it and responded well to it.

We, however, fully understood and recognized that this was not yet the Bolshevization of the Soviet that the St. Petersburg Bolsheviks had accomplished with the adoption by the Petrograd Soviet on August 31 of a resolution on the struggle for the transfer of power to the Soviets. We were clearly aware that the Gomel Soviet was not yet the body needed for a revolutionary offensive, especially given the particularly complex situation in Gomel and Mogilev, as zones of the Western Front and the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's Headquarters. But we saw that the ice had broken and that now, especially energetic work among the masses was required to win a solid majority in the Soviet.

Here it's necessary to briefly discuss the Distribution Point in Gomel, which had its own revolutionary traditions. I've already mentioned the uprising at the Distribution Point (which is the same as "transit") in 1916. This same Distribution Point later, in 1917, caused considerable trouble.

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Kerensky's authorities and the Social Compromisers. As early as August, soldiers from the Distribution Point began to rebel against the authorities, not only because of their poor organization but also against the general orders to send them, as they claimed, to continue and prolong the imperialist war. The Seversky Regiment of the 5th Caucasian Division was sent to Gomel for "pacification." But this regiment itself proved less reliable support for Kerensky. It took no "pacifying" measures. Some of the Seversky Regiment's soldiers sympathized with the Distribution Point soldiers, and if they had not been sent from Gomel, they might have joined the Distribution Point "mutineers." During the Kornilov Revolt, the Distribution Point occupied revolutionary positions; some soldiers defected to the Red Guard, and non-commissioned officers willingly helped us train workers in military drill.

In early September, at a general meeting at the Distribution Point, the soldiers adopted a resolution demanding the immediate court-martial of General Kornilov and his execution. The resolution demanded that the Provisional Government be accountable to the Soviets. It also demanded the preservation of the armed workers' squads (Red Guards) that had been created. We had a party cell

at this Distribution Point, but it must be admitted that it was weak to lead such a large mass of soldiers, especially those who were, one might say, disorganized, among whom, alongside the revolutionary elements, were active elements who were far from revolutionary, even adventurist, anarchist, and Black Hundred. Nevertheless, throughout September, we managed to steer their movement in the right political direction.
However, at the Distribution Point, a "riot," as the boys initially called it, broke out again. But this "riot" was serious, dangerous, and orchestrated by provocateurs from two sides: on the one hand, the military authorities, or more precisely the Kornilovites, who relied on Black Hundred elements; on the other, the anarchists who emerged and became active among the Distribution Point soldiers themselves. Judging by their behavior, they were connected to the original provocateurs, the military authorities, who sought to provoke a "rebellion" and gain grounds for its actual suppression. And not only to suppress the mutinous soldiers, but also to gain a pretext for the destruction of the Polesie Bolshevik organization and the Council, which had adopted the Bolshevik resolution on war and peace.

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In a provocative move, the Kornilovites in the military command resorted to the counterrevolutionary measure of establishing "order" at the Distribution Point by armed force: on September 21, the Distribution Point was surrounded by armed forces, including Cossacks. This, naturally, provoked the already agitated soldiers of the Distribution Point to further action. A group of Black Hundreds operating at the point, led by a certain Chumakov, as well as a group declaring themselves anarchists, called on the soldiers of the point to demonstrate with black anarchist flags (which immediately appeared from somewhere, meaning they had been prepared in advance) and immediately began to shout, "And then we'll smash them—the city, the authorities, and the Soviet." We Bolsheviks resolutely protested the provocation of surrounding the checkpoint with armed force. Our party organization launched a campaign among the soldiers at the checkpoint, calling on them to be organized and restrained, but the situation was such that dark elements were in charge, initially leaving the Bolsheviks alone, but then beginning to speak out against them. The Soviet sent its representatives to the rally: Chervonenko, the head of the military section (a Menshevik); Tsvetayev, a military doctor and one of the leaders of the Right Socialist Revolutionaries in the Soviet; Vetchinkin, a Menshevik officer; as well as the Bolshevik Gindin and others.
The meeting was extremely stormy and lasted almost the entire day. All the "new" leaders spoke (incidentally, all of them, including the Black Hundreds, called themselves anarchists). The Soviet representatives were not allowed to speak. Chervonenko was forcibly dragged from the podium and beaten, and Vetchinkin didn't even attempt to speak. Tsvetaev, who possessed an ingratiating, "gentle," thin voice, managed to speak briefly—the provocateurs let him finish. He fraudulently portrayed the Bolsheviks as being to blame for prolonging the war; if not for their "corrupting" work, "our" Russian army would have long ago defeated the Germans, and the war would have ended. When Comrade Gindin, speaking, attempted to refute Tsvetaev's assertions, he was not allowed to speak. The Black Hundreds leaders even gave the order to arrest him, and their henchmen began shouting, "Shoot him!" The same group did not allow anyone else who tried to speak, including the Bolsheviks, to speak, beating them.
The Council and we at the Polesie Committee received frequent reports "from the front." When preparations began at the point

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Before we could march into the city under black banners, as they said, to "feel it out," that is, to smash it, frightened members of the Council's presidium came running to the Polesie Committee with a request that Kaganovich go to the checkpoint. After consulting with my comrades, we at the Polesie Committee decided that I should go. Comrades Lange and Lobankov, who were also

present, expressed a desire to go with me—to assist and, as they themselves said, to ensure my safety. Soon we arrived at the checkpoint in the Council's carriage.
We already knew from information that, while the bulk of the soldiers were outraged by their plight and sincerely protesting it, a small group of bandits and agents of counterrevolutionary headquarters were instigating a "riot" and pogrom in Gomel, in order to take advantage of this to destroy the restless revolutionary Distribution Point and generally "restore order" in Gomel. First and foremost, to crush the Polesie Bolshevik organization. I had already witnessed many mass protests by soldiers, for example, in the Saratov machine-gun regiments, and the Petrograd machine-gun regiment was also in full swing. There were no provocations there, but rather normal, genuinely revolutionary demonstrations, albeit with elevated temperatures. Here in Gomel, the revolutionary-minded Distribution Point was brought to a state of extreme indignation by a provocation involving the dispatch of armed soldiers who surrounded the Distribution Point, a situation which was exploited by pre-prepared groups of provocateurs. The Black Hundreds and a group calling themselves anarchists were attempting to lead the masses into an isolated rebellion and pogrom. Knowing what had been said at the rally, I was, of course, very nervous, but most importantly, I was searching for the right approach in my upcoming speech, one that would capture their attention from the very first minute, ensure their listening, and dissuade them from a step harmful to the revolution and disastrous to them—a march under black banners, a move that the provocateurs—the Kornilovites at Headquarters—were dragging them into.
Making my way to the center, where a large barrel served as a platform, I seized the first moment it became free and quickly leaped onto it. Without giving anyone a break, I shouted at the top of my voice, "Do you know who is speaking before you?" I waited a moment until the familiar lull had settled. "A representative of Lenin's party is speaking before you—a member of the All-Russian Bureau of Military Bolsheviks." After a brief pause, I sensed that this excited audience of thousands would listen to me.

I remember that at first I didn't develop the usual themes of political speeches, but began with their plight. "Most of you," I said, "have already endured the hard lot of a soldier in the trenches, where a soldier is driven to the utmost extremes of an inhuman life. Exhausted by three years of war, lice-ridden, hungry, barefoot, poorly armed, crippled physically and mentally, grieving for your suffering families, you must now, on the orders of the capitalist and landowner gentlemen Ryabushinsky, Rodzianko, Purishkevich, and their defenders—the Socialist Revolutionary Kerensky and the Menshevik Tsereteli—go on the offensive again and spend your fourth winter in the trenches. And for whom? For the imperialists of Russia, England, France, and America—they are against peace. The Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries help them. They lie when they speak of peace; they have betrayed the people, the peasants, the soldiers, and the workers. They demonstrated this today when they agreed to the vile, provocative deployment of armed soldiers here. Only Lenin, only the Bolsheviks, tell you the truth; they point out the only correct way out of the war—not through the speeches of chatterboxes, not through the scattered actions of individual units at the behest of random individuals and "subjects" and "sub-subjects," but through united, organized political action. By winning the power of the workers, soldiers, and peasants—the power of the Soviets—we can win peace, end the war, and build a new life. Self-interested individuals, for some unknown purpose, want to exploit your legitimate, justified indignation as a people who have suffered greatly and lure you, not under the red banners of revolution, but under some black banners, down the wrong path of a random, disorganized uprising, a lone wolf, a separate detachment, to crush your uprising against the Kornilovites. Don't give in to these dubious promptings! Remember, this gives the Kornilovites a pretext for bloody reprisals, to the detriment of the revolution. You want a demonstration. But only the Bolshevik Party can lead a demonstration, if it is revolutionary. You have no other party than the party of Lenin, which fights for the immediate transfer of land to the peasants, for an immediate end to the war, and for Soviet

power. Do you trust this Bolshevik Party? A thunderous "We trust" rolled through the 20,000-strong mass of soldiers. The anarchists and Black Hundreds, who had initially wanted to do the same to me as to the others, quieted down, gave in, and retreated.
I promised that the Polesie Committee of the Bolsheviks would take all measures through the Council of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies to improve

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the situation at the Distribution Point itself with food, uniforms, medical care and, first of all, the armed soldiers sent here supposedly for pacification will be immediately removed.
I ended my speech not by introducing a draft resolution, but by proposing that a delegation of 50 soldiers be selected and sent to Petrograd to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of Soviets and the Bolshevik Central Committee, demanding that the government disclose all secret treaties and propose that all governments and peoples end the war and conclude peace. Report to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee that the soldiers do not trust the current Provisional Government, as a landowner-bourgeois government, and demand the immediate transfer of power to the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. In essence, it was a good, short resolution.
A turning point had been reached, leadership had passed into our hands, and the proposal had been accepted. Difficulties arose with the election of the delegation to Petrograd, given that several hundred people had been named. It was then decided that all those named should gather and elect 50 from among themselves, but then the soldiers themselves proposed that a chairman of the delegation be elected right then and there, at the rally. The only candidate named was L.M. Kaganovich, a member of the All-Russian Bureau of Bolshevik Military Organizations, who had spoken, and he was elected.
Thus, a dangerous event that could have had dire consequences was averted—the soldiers remained loyal to the revolution and our party's leadership. This was a significant victory for us, the Bolsheviks. The armed forces sent by the provocateurs were removed literally within an hour. The Polesie Committee actively promoted through the Council all measures to improve the situation at the Distribution Point, including improvements to the barracks, medical care, food, and uniforms. The military authorities, with the participation of the Bolsheviks, reviewed all individual complaints, applications, and requests from the soldiers. It must be said that the influence and authority of the Polesie Committee increased dramatically, and even the compromisers in the Council did everything necessary to fulfill our promises.
As for the delegation to Petrograd, Chairman L.M. Kaganovich was unable to travel at the time due to the difficult situation in Gomel itself. At a meeting of the soldiers named at the rally, 50 delegates, the most authoritative soldiers, were selected to travel to Petrograd to report to the Central Committee of our Party and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets.

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We reported these events to the main cells, especially in the military units. They assigned their comrades to maintain constant contact with the Distribution Point and exercise a kind of "patronage" (to use a later term that didn't exist at the time). The workers and residents of Gomel expressed their satisfaction with the role of the Polesie Bolshevik Committee in this matter. It can be assumed that this had some influence during the elections to the Constituent Assembly. The Polesie Committee discussed the results of this "saga" and drew appropriate self-critical conclusions for future work.
The Polesie Committee, unlike the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, did not view these events as anti-revolutionary. Even in the distorted form they manifested, they expressed revolutionary protest and the soldiers' indignation against the ruling tyranny of the imperialists and their lackeys. Particularly telling was the crucial fact that the soldiers, even in a state of agitation

fueled by anti-revolutionary elements, followed the Bolsheviks and expressed confidence in our Party, in our Lenin!
Although throughout the Gomel garrison there still remained military units on which the Social Compromisers had counted, in October the main units, for the most part, followed us—the Bolsheviks. The military units we relied on were joined by weapons workshops, which had previously held vacillating positions; our position in the Pskov Dragoon Regiment was strengthened; on the issue of the Council's peace resolution, the Social Compromisers suffered a defeat in the aeronautics park, where they had previously "swum like fish in water," and so on. From all the information we were then receiving from Minsk about the Western Front, it was clear that this process of Bolshevization of the army had captured the broadest masses of soldiers along the entire Western Front. The refusal of soldiers from entire military units to go to the front, and at the front, to go on the offensive, became a mass phenomenon.
By early October, the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries had been expelled from the soldiers' committees of many military units, although they had held on to this "fortress" for quite some time, not allowing new elections even when the soldiers adopted Bolshevik resolutions. In Gomel, the Bolsheviks and their sympathizers held a majority in most military units. After the expanded plenum of the Polesie Committee and the measures taken following the events in the Distribution

At this point, our primary organizations grew even stronger and successfully took control of the leadership of the political movement—the revolutionary upsurge of the soldier masses, directing their efforts not only to agitation and propaganda, but also to preparing them for a decisive struggle, as we legally put it, but in essence—for an armed uprising.
At the same time, day-to-day work was carried out, especially with soldiers assisting the Polesie Committee for Work in the Village. For this purpose, they assigned us soldier agitators, whom we sent into the villages. There, they not only agitated but also organized the poorest peasants, ignited the agrarian movement, and brought us invaluable information about the situation in the villages and the connections they had established. The work of regional associations among the garrison soldiers expanded on a broad front. The army became increasingly Bolshevized, preparing for revolutionary battle.
In conclusion, I want to speak specifically about the Gomel tanners' and shoemakers' strike. Not, of course, because I had any special feelings for them as a member of that union, but because, firstly, it occurred just before the October Revolution and assumed the character of a general strike; secondly, it was connected with the famous Moscow tanners' and shoemakers' strike; and thirdly, it was inextricably linked with our ideological, party-political struggle against the Bund and Social Zionism.
Thus, throughout September, scattered strikes by tanners and shoemakers initially raged, culminating in a general strike of workers and shoemakers in Gomel in mid-October. The heroic general strike of Moscow tanners, shoemakers, and other workers, which involved over one hundred thousand workers, had a decisive influence on this movement. The Moscow strike was acutely economic and political in nature and lasted over two months, from August 16 to October 22, 1917, almost until the October Revolution.
Our Gomel Tanners and Shoemakers' Union was closely connected with the Muscovites, providing them with moral, political, and material support, and receiving from the glorious Moscow revolutionary tanners a reciprocal revolutionary influence and impact on the masses of Gomel tanners, whose working conditions and wages were such that the appeals and example of the Muscovites fell on fertile ground and galvanized the masses of workers themselves. No matter how hard the Mensheviks and especially the Bundists tried,

and other national-socialist parties to thwart this militant spirit, the tanners and shoemakers fought as a united front of proletarians of all nations. This was a manifestation and a practical victory of Bolshevik internationalism over the Bundist, Social-Zionist, Great Russian, Belarusian, Polish, and other nationalisms. The extensive work and energetic struggle against the Bund and Social-Zionism waged by the Polesie Party Committee was evident here. Even the arrival of their golden-tongued leader, Lieber, in Gomel did not help the Bundists. This episode deserves to be recounted.

The Social Compromisers gave him a lavish reception—a gala meeting at the theater. Furthermore, to demonstrate his connection with the masses, they organized a large gathering of Jewish workers, for which the Bundists tried to muster their Bundist ranks. But we literally stormed the gathering, bringing Bolshevik workers and sympathizers with us. The Polesie Committee decided to give the Bund leader Lieber a Bolshevik reception and wage an ideological and political battle against the Bund and the Social Compromisers in general. We nominated Comrades Leplevsky and Privorotsky to speak at the gala meeting at the theater, and Comrades L.M. Kaganovich and Yakubov to the workers' meeting. This was not simply a traditionally polemical gathering—it was, like a Gomel miniature, a summing up of the long-standing struggle between Bolshevism-Leninism and Bundism-Menshevism. In my speech, which was a response to Lieber, I sought to historically, drawing on Lenin's works, reveal and expose to the workers the conservative, reactionary essence of Bundism and the fact that it was no accident that the Bund found itself in the social-reactionary camp of accomplices of the counterrevolutionary bourgeoisie after the overthrow of Tsarism. I gave the same harsh assessment to all social-Zionist groups in the Jewish labor movement among Jews.

I began my speech by saying that "such a major center of Jewish workers and, it must be admitted, Bundism, as Gomel, had the right to receive from such a prominent leader as Lieber a report: 'How does the Bund, which called itself a "workers' party," defend the class interests of the workers?' But you did not receive such an answer, because citizen Lieber spoke here not as a representative of a party calling itself "workers," but as a representative of the Socialist Revolutionary-Menshevik bloc supporting the reactionary Kerensky government—a government of the bourgeoisie. Some Bundists are even proud

The idea that our leaders, the Liberians, supposedly play a "major role" in determining the policies of the Provisional Government. But the class-conscious workers laugh at their pathetic role as lackeys and have nicknamed them "Liberdans" (here, of course, the Bundists raised a great fuss, but after making a fuss, they were forced to shut up). This is the same kind of pride as that of the heroes so skillfully satirized by the Jewish national writer Sholem Aleichem, when a petty bourgeois is proud of his relationship with a rich man who bullies him like a lackey and oppresses and exploits his family even more than before, while he, the bourgeois, still continues to be "proud" that, look where I go, who I deal with! The Bundists and their leaders, including Lieber, intermarried with the biggest sharks and dirty scum of the bourgeois rich society, and to top it all off with the Black Hundred landowners, and are trying with all their might to prove that they are worthy of their relatives.

The Bundists and their leaders have sunk to the point of participating in the fabrication of accusations against the Bolsheviks, like those of the Black Hundreds, Beilis, and Dreyfus. They, along with the filthy slanderers, raised their hands against the Bolshevik leaders of the proletariat; they supported (or at best, some silently accepted) the vile slanderous libels of the Black Hundreds and pogromists. Aren't you, all of you present, familiar with all these methods of slander and libel? How did you, citizen Lieber, and your party end up like this? You have sunk to this point because for over 20 years now you have been marching alongside the economists and the Mensheviks, hitching your chariot to the bourgeois horse, which is in harness with the landowners' Black Hundred horse. If, at the dawn of its origins, in the late 19th century, the Bund still hinted at the struggle against bourgeois Zionism and played a certain role in the initial organization of Jewish

workers to fight the capitalists of that period, especially in Poland and Lithuania, then later, especially from the beginning of the 20th century, the Bund became an obstacle to the growth and development of a genuine revolutionary workers' movement. With its entire non-Marxist program and petty-bourgeois political line, the Bund prevented the Bolsheviks from elevating Jewish workers, who by their social and class nature were internationalist, to the level of an international workers' movement, while trying to degrade some backward workers to the level of petty-bourgeois and philistine nationalism. Instead of implementing the great slogan of the great Marx, "Workers of the world, unite," the Bund

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The Bund pursued a policy of dividing workers of different nations even within a single country—Russia—while precisely in Russia, where the task of overthrowing such a powerful enemy as Tsarism was at stake, this unity of workers of all nations was especially needed. The Bund directed its efforts toward separating Jewish workers from Russians and others, just as Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, and other social nationalists, also calling themselves "socialists," opposed themselves to the proletarians and socialists of other nations in Russia.

Before the 1917 Revolution, the Bund was in the same camp as the Liquidators, denying the possibility and necessity of a second revolution to overthrow Tsarism. Even then, the shameful, capitulatory line of alliance with the bourgeoisie had already been laid, a line that the Bund, as part of the Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik bloc, pursued after the overthrow of Tsarism. This bloc betrayed the interests of the workers, soldiers, and peasants of all Russian nations to the benefit of imperialism, capitalism, and the landowners. What do you bring to the workers today? What political capital, acquired since the Revolution? You have no political capital; you are bankrupt, although those who once had capital are called bankrupt, whereas you never had any.

You, as part of the Socialist Revolutionary-Menshevik bloc, led to the shameful June military offensive, which brought hundreds of thousands more dead, millions of orphans, widows, and cripples. You—the Socialist Revolutionary-Menshevik-Bund bloc—"helped" bring the country to economic catastrophe and have no way out. You support the bourgeoisie and landowners, who are now shooting soldiers at the front. Unemployment and hunger are consuming workers in the cities—you, along with the Socialist Revolutionaries, betrayed the peasantry by denying them land. And what about the national question? Where are your promises being fulfilled? The oppressed nations of Finland, Ukraine, Turkestan, and others continue to be deprived of the right to self-determination, and the Kerensky government, with your Socialist Revolutionary-Menshevik-Bund consent, takes decisive counterrevolutionary measures at the slightest provocation. And on the Jewish question, you don't even mention your idealized, all-saving national-cultural autonomy. This essentially bourgeois-Zionist program of yours, apparently, was needed to dismember the working class. You failed to achieve this separation of Jewish workers from Russian and other workers, because the Bolsheviks and Lenin constantly fought for the international unity of workers of all nations, led by the most organized and powerful detachment of Russian workers—from St. Petersburg, Moscow, and elsewhere.

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Now every Jewish worker sees that without the international unity of workers for which the Bolsheviks fought, Tsarism would never have been overthrown. Would the Jewish worker have liberated himself from the Black Hundreds-pogromist Tsarist regime if the glorious, heroic workers and soldiers of St. Petersburg and Moscow had not overthrown the Tsarist autocracy? It was not the reformist, liquidationist path of the Bund, not the "cultural-national Jewish autonomy" and isolation of Jewish workers, but only the united revolutionary workers' movement of the all-Russian proletariat of all nations that ensured victory in the Civil War against Tsarism and overthrew it.

Now we must overthrow capitalism and the landowners, and here again the social compromisers, including the Bund, are interfering. Bund leader Lieber was wrong when he said that Lenin and the Bolsheviks were causing civil war—it was the Russian bourgeoisie, supported by them, like the French Cavaignacs in 1848, that carried out the bloody suppression of the July demonstration of St. Petersburg workers and soldiers. It was the bourgeoisie, supported by the Socialist Revolutionary-Menshevik-Bund bloc, that started the civil war with the Kornilov rebellion. They are the ones shooting soldiers. And the Bolsheviks, with their leader Lenin, until the very end proposed a compromise based on a peaceful transfer of power to the Soviets and the implementation of the revolution's most important tasks. It was the Socialist Revolutionary-Menshevik, including Bund, leaders who rejected Lenin's proposal and again entered into a coalition, an alliance with the counterrevolutionary bourgeoisie, thereby causing civil war.
Let citizen Lieber not look at Gomel's Jewish workers through the old Bundist glasses. They—these Gomel workers, including the Jewish ones—have grown during the seven months of the revolution, they have risen to new heights, and life itself teaches us—"Gore nauchit kalachi isti" (Woe, teach them to eat kalachi—editor's note). Ask Jewish shoemakers and tanners, and they will tell you how Jewish workers are now striking in a revolutionary manner, fighting alongside all Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, and other workers for the right to work, for a new life, against the capitalists and landowners, for bread, peace, land, and freedom—social and national. The Gomel workers, soldiers and peasants, regardless of nationality, will march as a united front against the bourgeoisie, against you, social compromisers, for the power of the Soviets, for socialism - they will march together with all the workers, soldiers and peasants of all long-suffering Russia, under the leadership of the Bolsheviks and Lenin, forward to victory!

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No resolutions were passed at the meeting, but from everything—from the speeches, from the applause midway through and at the end of my speech, and from the subsequent comments—it was clear that we Bolsheviks had won a major moral and political victory. Lieber left Gomel like Malbrook leaving a campaign...
But his arrival provided us with a certain amount of "help," in that, as the struggle against the Bund intensified, some of the Jewish workers who still followed the Bund began to abandon them more rapidly, especially among the striking workers, especially the tanners and shoemakers. Lieber did not calm the Gomel Jewish workers, much less lead them to the compromise bloc. On the contrary, after his arrival, the united, cohesive struggle of workers of all nations intensified even more.

OCTOBER IN GOMEL AND MOGILEV

Early in the morning of October 16, we arrived in Minsk for the regional conference of Soviets. The train journey was, of course, far from comfortable, owing to the devastation of rail transport, especially in the frontline areas. However, although tired, we were energized and confident. We arrived promptly at the Minsk Soviet to meet Comrade Krasnov, who was on the organizational mandate committee of the regional conference of Soviets and generally played a rather active role in the conduct of the conference of Soviets. The overwhelming majority at the conference belonged to the Bolsheviks. However, the Mensheviks, Socialist Revolutionaries, and Bundists were very active in the struggle against the convening of the Second Congress of Soviets.
At the beginning of the conference, the first question addressed was reports from the local authorities. The majority of Soviet representatives spoke in favor of convening the congress in October. The speeches of the Social Compromisers were directed against the entire Bolshevik line, which they claimed was leading to a split in revolutionary democracy and civil war. The Congress of Soviets, they argued, would be convened hastily and would not be legally competent. Representatives of frontline military units spoke at the conference of Soviets, attacking the

Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, who were attempting to thwart the decision to convene the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. It can be said that the Menshevik-Socialist Revolutionary bloc had been crushed not only numerically but also morally and politically.

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at the conference of the Soviets, despite the fact that they put forward their outstanding speakers, among whom was the Gomel Bundist golden-mouthed Gazarkh.

After him, L.M. Kaganovich was given the floor as the representative of the Gomel Soviet. Having recounted how the Socialist Compromisers had gone bankrupt in Gomel, especially at the Soviet's final session, just as these treacherous parties had gone bankrupt on a national scale, Kaganovich focused on the main issue of convening the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. "We Bolsheviks," I said, "are not simply for convening a second Congress of Soviets; we are for this Congress of Soviets to become the sovereign master of the Russian land and establish Soviet Power throughout the country."

The resolution proposed by the Bolshevik faction, calling for the convening of the Second Congress of Soviets on October 25, 1917, and for Soviet power, was adopted by an overwhelming majority. This concluded the work of the regional conference of Soviets.

Minsk impressed me as a fighting, frontline, revolutionary center. The streets were filled with soldiers; alongside the revolutionary units, there were a considerable number of anti-revolutionary and even counterrevolutionary ones. There was a palpable tension between the revolutionary part of the garrison, which was under Bolshevik leadership and ready to respond to their call to fight for Soviet power, and, on the other hand, the units under the control of the counterrevolutionary command of the Western Front and, as Comrade Myasnikov told me, preparing for a repeat of the Kornilov Revolt.

After the conference, I spoke with Comrade Myasnikov, the head of the regional party committee. He told me in detail about the concentration of troops in and around Minsk and, at the same time, about the Bolshevik preparations of our revolutionary army to repel a possible counterrevolutionary offensive. "We," said Comrade Myasnikov, "are ready for revolutionary action on the orders of the Central Committee." He introduced me to the second, closed section of Lenin's article, "The Crisis Has Risen," in which Lenin specifically raises the question of an uprising and the seizure of power by the Soviets.

Having stipulated that he did not yet have precise documentary data on the Plenum of the Central Committee that took place on October 10, Comrade Myasnikov told me that, according to the data that he had, Lenin spoke at the Plenum with a report “On the Current Situation,” that at the Plenum there were speeches by members of the Central Committee (Kamenev and Zinoviev) against

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Lenin's proposals for an uprising, but that the Plenum of the Central Committee supported Lenin and accepted his proposal that an armed uprising was fully ripe, and proposed that all organizations be guided by this in their line and in all practical work.

For my part, I reported in detail to Comrade Myasnikov about our work, the state of affairs, our readiness to fight for Soviet power, our military-revolutionary measures, and our plan for further action. Comrade Myasnikov approvingly assessed our work and plans, saying, "You must act in complete coordination with us. "They told me," he said, "in the Central Committee that you are a very energetic and passionate worker. We must coordinate our energy and passion." I told him that I fully agreed with him and would ensure that his passion did not disrupt our coordination.

Comrade Myasnikov impressed me very highly as a prominent, confident, and mature party and political leader of the Leninist type. I reported specifically to Comrade Myasnikov on the situation in Mogilev, our efforts to revolutionize and Bolshevize the soldiers, and, most importantly, to liquidate the "united" organization and fully and completely establish a Bolshevik organization.

Comrade Myasnikov emphasized the particular importance of Mogilev as a center of counterrevolution, which we must crush. "After all," he said, "Mogilev falls within the sphere of activity of the Polesie Committee, and we hope that the Polesie Committee, and you personally, through your visits as a member of the All-Russian Bureau of Military Organizations, will successfully complete the process of completely Bolshevizing the Mogilev organization and creating a Bolshevik military organization. I know," he said, "from the experience of Minsk how difficult this task is, which we finally accomplished only in July. Now we must successfully conduct the election campaign for the Constituent Assembly. We do not idolize this Constituent Assembly; it will not decide the fate of the revolution, but the election process itself and the votes of the masses are of great importance, so we pay serious attention to this.
"You, I hope," he said at the end of the conversation, "have no objection to our conference nominating you as a candidate for the Constituent Assembly." "No, of course not," I replied, "I see this as a vote of confidence in the Party."
I will not recount all aspects of our conversation; it touched upon many practical issues of the upcoming struggle and preparation for it.

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Having said a warm, brotherly farewell to Comrade Myasnikov, I hurried to Gomel that same day without delay, in order to quickly implement the new measures arising from the new things I had learned.
In the second half of September and especially in October, the Polesie Party Committee focused on strengthening the preparation of the revolution's military material force. This was directly supervised by the Military Commission of the Polesie Committee, formed by the Polesie Committee and consisting of L.M. Kaganovich (chairman), Lobankov, and Yakubov. This preparation proceeded along two lines: organizing Red Guard detachments and training military units.
After the victory over Kornilov, Kerensky, fulfilling the will of the imperialists, issued a stern order: an immediate end to the unauthorized formation of any armed combat units created under the pretext of fighting the counterrevolution, because the counterrevolution had been defeated. Kerensky demanded the disbandment and disarmament of the units. But he was unsuccessful; the Bolsheviks, on orders from their Central Committee, prevented the disbandment of the units. The garrison soldiers, at the suggestion of the Bolsheviks, opposed the disbandment of the Red Guard units, and they not only persisted but grew stronger, receiving military training. In October, already in the first half of the month, a new influx of Red Guards began, and new units were formed. We organized reinforcements, strengthening the Red Guard workers' units and forming new units, including soldiers from the Transit Point.
The Polesie Committee conducted a campaign among soldiers demanding the Gomel Soviet release from the Gomel prison of front-line soldiers arrested for refusing to advance in June 1917. Some of them were falsely accused of murdering a brigade commander who had ordered the soldiers to be shot. After a persistent struggle between the Bolsheviks in the Soviet and the military authorities, these soldiers were released from prison, and some of them joined the Gomel Red Guard. In the second half of October, new Red Guard units were formed.
Providing the Red Guard with weapons was a major concern for us. Since Gomel was the closest supply and repair base to the front, we naturally took advantage of these opportunities and drew weapons and ammunition from the reserves of the Gomel garrison's military units. We received particularly great assistance from

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Weapons workshops. Soldiers who worked as artisans repaired any defective weapons we obtained free of charge. We also sent representatives to Minsk. They brought us back serviceable rifles and

even several machine guns and a considerable quantity of ammunition. We also sent select, persistent young men to Tula with my letter to Comrade Kaminsky, and they brought back a certain number of revolvers and ammunition. Furthermore, our railway workers reported to us about cars loaded with weapons and ammunition stranded on the tracks and handed them over to us as "abandoned property" for the Red Guard. A significant source of weapons and ammunition immediately after the October Revolution were soldiers returning from the front, who willingly, and sometimes reluctantly, handed over their rifles and ammunition to us. Thus, we can say that we have decently armed our Red Guard units, which during the October Revolution had more than 800 fighting Red Guards in their ranks, not counting the less trained armed workers' squads.

The Plenum instructed the Polesie Committee Bureau to establish forms and methods for more broadly orienting advanced workers and soldiers, primarily party members, and to highlight the combat tasks facing the working class and soldiers in the struggle for Soviet power. This task was not easy. It was not without reason that Lenin spoke of the need to find forms and words to express the task of armed uprising at mass meetings without necessarily using these very words legally. This was especially important given the unique circumstances of Gomel, which was not only a frontline center but also under the constant surveillance of the Mogilev Headquarters of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, with all the strictures and surveillance imposed by military law. But the time had come to more fully outline the tasks facing the party organization.

After the Plenum, the Bureau of the Polesie Committee decided to gather a broader group of party activists, instructing Comrade L.M. Kaganovich to deliver the report. For cover, we decided to use the format of the soldier agitation courses, where I had previously delivered a series of lectures "On the History of Popular Uprisings and Revolutions." My report on the decisions of the Central Committee Plenum, the Polesie Committee, Lenin's letters and articles, the Party's combat missions, and armed uprising was officially and legally designated as the final lecture in the series. It must be said that this conspiracy

It was a success. Although Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary spies suspected something and questioned the soldiers about the lecture, asking them what it was that so many people had gathered, they learned nothing of substance—our soldiers replied that Kaganovich's lectures were always well attended, especially by railroad workers. Essentially, I was reporting on the immediate tasks of preparing for an armed uprising.

On October 22 and 23, meetings of all party members, organized by cell, were held—both closed and open—with speakers including members of the Polesie and district party committees and activists who had attended the active meeting. At all meetings, grassroots party members spoke with fervent support for the decisions of the Central Committee and the Polesie Committee and vowed to respond to the Central Committee's first call for the conquest of Soviet power. Following these meetings, factory and plant trade union committees, together with the bureaus of party cells, established permanent day and night guard posts. In addition to the Red Guard combat detachments, combat squads of workers were organized almost everywhere, acquiring, wherever possible, at least rifles and sabres, and some squads even began manufacturing their own bladed weapons. Many turned to the Polesie Committee for assistance, which, through its military commission and military weapons workshops, provided weapons to the workers.

Those October days and nights were filled with the frenetic, feverish work of the Polesie Committee, the district committees, the entire Gomel Party organization, and every single Bolshevik. Today, I can see before me the image of a seething cauldron within the Polesie Committee, where we were seething, yet never seemed overcooked, feeling strong, focused, and joyfully invigorated, despite the sleepless nights. From early morning until late at night, the doors of the Polesie Committee never closed. Workers, soldiers, party members and non-party members came every minute and always received clear answers to their political and practical questions,

many of which concerned arming the organization of combat workers' squads and enrolling in the Red Guard.
A 24-hour watch was established in the Polesie Committee.
Along with the tasks of preparing and successfully mobilizing the internal revolutionary forces of Gomel for the conquest and establishment

The Soviet authorities, the Gomel Bolsheviks and their Polesie Committee, faced the acute, difficult historical task of fighting, so to speak, an external enemy – the punitive troops sent by the counter-revolutionary Headquarters from the Western Front to “pacify” and suppress the heroic St. Petersburg and Moscow workers and soldiers.
Many thousands of heavily armed Cossacks and soldiers were diverted by counterrevolutionary patriots from the counterrevolutionary General Headquarters from the front lines of the war against the Kaiser's German troops to fight the revolutionary people overthrowing the rule of capitalists and landowners. These troops advanced primarily through the Gomel railway junction.
The Polesie Bolshevik Committee set a combat mission for all Bolsheviks, workers, soldiers, and railway workers of Gomel and all of Polesie: to delay the advance of these punitive troops, prevent these counterrevolutionary troops from reaching Petrograd and Moscow, and detain them in Gomel and on the approaches to it. We considered this our primary revolutionary, sacred duty to the heroic proletariat of St. Petersburg and Moscow, to the Socialist Revolution, to our Central Committee, and to our leader, Comrade Lenin. And the Bolsheviks, workers, and soldiers of Gomel heroically fulfilled this task.
We knew and understood that the concentration of a large number of heavily armed Cossack and other counterrevolutionary, or even some simply non-revolutionary, units in Gomel and on its outskirts threatened us, the people of Gomel, with grave complications and altered the balance of power within Gomel. But our general revolutionary duty dictated that we complete this task at all costs.
It's difficult to list and recount all the measures taken to stop the trains. I'd only like to emphasize that many, including some historians, who speak briefly about this, and sometimes even casually, fail to realize the difficulties of the enormous effort and struggle, much of it quite risky, that the party organization and the Polesie Committee had to undertake to accomplish this task.
First of all, it was necessary to organize and implement this task technically on the railway. After all, the senior command staff and even some railway agents did not want to detain

These troops were not intended to pass through, but rather to facilitate their passage. We had to mobilize the forces of low-level railway agents, primarily locomotive operators, station workers, including switchmen, trackmen, and carriage workers, to use every means possible to delay the advance of the trains, despite threats from military command personnel and even privates, especially the Cossacks. What was lost on the approaches to Gomel had to be made up for at the Gomel junction itself. The Red Guard, especially from among the railway workers, provided us with invaluable assistance in this task.
But the task was not only the technical side of delaying the advance of the echelons, but also the political indoctrination of the detained soldiers and even Cossacks, in order to neutralize or at least reduce their anti-revolutionary militancy in general, and in particular towards the Gomel workers and soldiers.
The Polesie Committee allocated about a hundred select propagandists and agitators to dispatch to the troop trains. Among them were female workers, including some intellectuals; we gave them all special instructions. We told them how Lenin had criticized the shortcomings of our Bolshevik work during the 1905 Revolution, when our Bolsheviks and workers had weakly launched a political

offensive against the wavering troops. Lenin pointed out the necessity of the workers winning the soldiers over to the side of the revolution, especially now that seven months had passed since the overthrow of the tsar. We reiterated and armed them with Lenin's pronouncements on the peasant question, the Cossack question, and so on. We all faced the task: not only to prevent the troops from reaching St. Petersburg and Moscow, but also to politically de-magnetize them and win the best of them over to the side of the revolution, to the side of the Bolsheviks.
I remember the first group of comrades returning literally physically beaten by the Cossacks from the detained trains at Gomel station. We decided to achieve a breakthrough at this very spot, no matter what, and sent another group of older men, including railway workers, soldiers, and peasants from roadside villages. The results of the discussions were better—they weren't beaten—but politically unsatisfactory. The Cossacks, especially the officers, demanded their advancement; otherwise, they said, we'd all go to the city and destroy it and all of you Bolsheviks. After their return and report to the Polesie Committee bureau, I suggested that the members of the military commission go. Some comrades,

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The committee members objected, arguing that it was risky, but I believed this was the first battle and it was crucial to win. "Great," I said, "is the power of a Bolshevik's truthful word." My comrades finally agreed, and we set off. When we arrived, a group of Cossack officers appeared, and the conversation immediately took a high tone—about traitors, about treason and Bolshevik espionage, and so on and so forth.
When I began the conversation, pointing out that they were being transported as punitive forces, one of the officers jumped up to me and shouted, "Why are you listening to him? Who do you think he is, not a spy, this Jew?" Then I calmly turned to the Cossacks and began to respond, "Allow me to answer, comrade Cossacks: I am a Bolshevik, a supporter of Lenin, and on his side are millions of Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians, Jews, and all the nations of our country and the world. In a word, all those who want the war that has exhausted everyone to end as quickly as possible, who want a better life for the poor and working people and land for the peasants and Cossacks. So His Excellency's play on "Jewishness" has nothing to do with it—that's old hat. That game existed under the Tsar, when the Cossacks, by their class nature not pogromists, were sent to do vile deeds. But now the Cossacks are different—the revolution has taught them to seek and understand the truth against the oppression of the poor by the rich, and of ordinary Cossacks by generals and officers."
Here again the officer could not stand it and began to shout hysterically: “Why are you listening to him? He should be killed, shot!” He raised his revolver, but an old Cossack standing nearby grabbed his hand and said: “No, your honor, this will not do – this is lynching.”
An incredible uproar arose, and a group of frenzied officers, sergeants, and some rank-and-file Cossacks formed around the officer, continuing to shout and threaten. Most of the Cossacks remained dejectedly silent, while a few, a smaller number, clearly and almost openly took an oppositional stance toward the officer. I then spoke louder: "Let me finish my speech, and let His Excellency answer. In short, conduct the meeting as befits all decent soldiers and Cossacks." After that, I managed to tell them how Lenin viewed the war, who benefited from it, the transfer of landowners' land to the peasants and Cossacks, that no lords could escape the people, that the revolution had overthrown the Tsar, that the revolution in Petrograd was already overthrowing his descendants, and that power would be of the people—the power of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Cossacks', and Peasants' Deputies.

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The same chaos repeated itself. A group of officers started shouting, "Take him to headquarters, we'll talk to him there!" They rushed up to me and began dragging me by force. Then Yakubov

showed up and shouted, "Do you know who you're abusing? Comrade Kaganovich is a candidate for the Constituent Assembly, and what are you doing?"
This made an impression. The Cossacks began to make a noise, some began to shout, "You're lying!" But Comrade Yakubov turned out to be a thrifty man; he snatched a copy of the official list of candidates for the Constituent Assembly from his pocket and said, "Here, read it." When one of them read it aloud, the tone of both the hooligans and, especially, the attitude of most of the Cossacks present changed somewhat: "Why aren't they letting us in?" I had to explain again what treacherous deed they were being taken to. "Is it really true," I said, "that the Cossacks, the working people, haven't changed and will shed the blood of their own brothers, the workers and soldiers of Petrograd and Moscow? And for whom? For the rich merchants, factory owners, and landowners, for Kerensky? Wouldn't it be better for you to quickly return to your own towns, villages, the Don and Kuban, to your families, and make a revolution there too?" The noise rose again, but more subdued. True, not a single rank-and-file Cossack spoke up, but a certain change in mood was felt among a significant number of the rank-and-file Cossacks. The officers, without repeating their shouts and threats, retreated, ostensibly to headquarters for a meeting, and the Cossacks, now more peacefully disposed, said, "We'll see about that." And they began to slowly disperse. We said to them, "Give the Cossacks the greetings of the workers and soldiers." Some greeted this with satisfied smiles, and a few, though not very loudly, even said, "Greetings from us to the workers."
We believed that in our first encounter with such well-trained foes, we had achieved a partial political victory, and we decided to continue our work in these Cossack and, especially, soldier echelons. In the end, we managed to win some of them over to our side.
We reported to the comrades at the Polesie Committee, and they assessed the results as good. We assembled our troop-delaying groups, shared our experience with them, and instructed them. Some, however, half-jokingly said, "Good for Comrade Kaganovich, he's a candidate for the Constituent Assembly, and this saved him, but what about us?" We told them that I hadn't counted on it, but I went despite the risk—the main thing is that we have the political will to persuade, and the Cossacks, and especially the soldiers, want a speedy end.

War. They also dislike landowners and generals, so despite the drill and prejudices, they will inevitably succumb to our Bolshevik truth and our Leninist agitation. Those of them who do not become our supporters, especially the soldiers, will waver and will not follow their staunchly counterrevolutionary commanders.
The subsequent course of events in Gomel demonstrated that all this dedicated work by the Gomel Bolsheviks had yielded significant results: more than 60 trains carrying troops armed to the teeth were detained at the Gomel railway junction and on the approaches to it. This was an army of thousands of soldiers and Cossacks, sent by the counterrevolutionary command to fight the workers of St. Petersburg and Moscow.
The Supreme Command Headquarters, located in Mogilev, sharply intensified its counter-revolutionary struggle and became the main center of the all-Russian struggle against the October Revolution and the workers' and peasants' government it created.
Headquarters blockaded and isolated the frontline zone, primarily Mogilev, Gomel, Orsha, and other cities and districts of the Belarusian Polesie region. By delaying the delivery of newspapers and telegraph messages about the true situation in Petrograd, Headquarters, with the help of bankrupt counterrevolutionary politicians who had flocked there, including social compromisers, organized an unprecedentedly false information campaign beginning on October 23rd.
On October 25, Headquarters reported that the Bolsheviks’ attempts to carry out a coup in Petrograd had been defeated, that the Provisional Government was firmly holding power, and this at a time when it had already been arrested.

We received the first fragmentary information about the revolution that had taken place in Petrograd through our railway workers on the night of October 25-26. That same night, the Polesie Committee met.

It's difficult today to imagine and describe the feelings of joy, elation, and, at the same time, a special tension that gripped all of us Bolsheviks upon receiving this first report of the revolution in Petrograd. We spent the entire night trying to obtain additional, more detailed information. Having received none, we decided to issue an appeal to the workers, soldiers, and working population of Gomel and Polesie. This appeal was the fruit of collective creativity—Privorotsky wrote down what...

Each of us proposed or delivered a short speech, which we then edited collectively. This was our first appeal of the first period of the October Revolution.

Since we didn't have our own printing press, we instructed Comrades Yakubov and Lobankov, members of the Military Revolutionary Center, to take a group of Red Guards, seize any printing press in the city, and ensure the urgent printing of this appeal. They, of course, carried out this task brilliantly—on October 26 and 27, workers, soldiers, and the working population of the city were already reading the appeal of the Polesie Bolshevik Committee.

This was not only a call to revolutionary action, but also a response to the dissemination of false information that continued to flow from the counterrevolutionary Mogilev Headquarters. And the lies grew worse as time went on. Right up until October 30, they reported that Kerensky and General Krasnov's troops had allegedly entered Petrograd, and so on. The enemies of the revolution, with vile glee, lavished praise on these false reports, which brought joy to the bourgeoisie and unrest to the workers and toilers.

Unfortunately, we did not receive any additional, complete information until the 29th, but we refuted all reports from Headquarters based on our initial information and acted on it.

Without waiting for the appeal to be distributed to factories and military units, the Polesie Committee again sent its representatives, for whom this appeal served as a guide to action and action, to the workers' and soldiers' rallies held everywhere. The Polesie Committee's appeal was read at these rallies, and the speeches were brief. The vast majority of workers and soldiers, with great enthusiasm, joy, and fervor, expressed their admiration for the heroism of the St. Petersburg proletarians and revolutionary soldiers, and expressed their readiness to support them with all their might.

Despite the speeches of the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, who slandered the Bolsheviks as the "instigators of the civil war," despite their repetition of false reports from Headquarters and their intimidation of workers and soldiers by claiming that the revolution in Petrograd had not triumphed and had even been crushed, the workers and soldiers followed the Bolsheviks. The vast majority of industrial enterprises, including those on the railways, adopted short resolutions welcoming the transfer of power to the Soviets and the new Soviet government headed by Lenin. The overwhelming majority of workers and soldiers of Gomel, despite their opponents,

and wavering, called for support from the St. Petersburg workers and soldiers who had carried out the workers' and peasants' revolution, and demanded the immediate seizure of power by the Gomel Soviet. Having consolidated our positions in most areas of the city, particularly along the thoroughfare from the train station to Paskevich Castle (the Palace of Soviets), the military operations commission of the Polesie Committee—the "military revolutionary center"—focused its efforts on the fortifications, the streets adjacent to the Palace of Soviets, and the square in front of it.

Here we stationed two combat workers' squads and a military detachment of technical units from Novobelitsa.
This latest event, so closely affecting the residence of the Socialist Compromise Executive Committee, alarmed them. They became especially agitated and enraged when, on the night of the 27th-28th, we unexpectedly replaced the guard detachment inside the Palace of Soviets itself. This detachment had been formed several months before the October Revolution from select soldiers and officers from the Aeronautical Park, among whom were not only Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, but even Kadet-minded elements. Our Bolsheviks had previously been working with the soldiers at the Aeronautical Park about the need to replace this guard detachment, who, as the soldiers said, had grown fat and were now opposing the revolution. There were proposals to bring Red Guard detachments through the park into the palace, but the military operations commission decided to replace the detachment through a more complex but more acceptable method—with the help of the soldiers' committee and the Party organization of the Aeronautical Park.
We instructed members of the military operations commission, Comrades Lobankov and Penevsky, authorized by the Polesie Committee, to discuss with the soldiers' committee the issue of replacing the guard detachment with a new one made up of revolutionary soldiers from the park. The soldiers' committee and the soldiers welcomed this, selected a new detachment, and received the commander's approval. Thus, by decision of the soldiers' committee and by order of the command, the previous guard detachment was recalled and replaced with a new one. On the night of the 27th-28th, a new guard detachment was brought into the Palace of Soviets, and the previous detachment, disgruntled but having obeyed the order of the commander and the soldiers' committee of the Aeronautical Park without resistance, was escorted out through the same gates.
Together with the new team to reinforce the new Bolshevik garrison of the Palace of Soviets, we have already introduced

A small detachment of workers, selected from the best Red Guards, was stationed in the park. The success of this operation was ensured by the active support of soldiers and workers, and we considered it crucial for the complete victory of the revolution in Gomel.
By October 28, the military-revolutionary center of the Polesie Committee effectively wielded power over almost the entire city of Gomel, with the exception of the aforementioned small but important area around the Savoy Hotel and the telegraph office. Therefore, it cannot be said that the workers' and soldiers' power had already been established throughout the city—the combat mission of completely destroying this nest of counterrevolutionary forces lay ahead. Enterprises and military units carried out the orders of the military-revolutionary center, but the lack of official recognition by the Council and its Executive Committee, the majority of which was antirevolutionary, weakened the cause of the revolution's complete victory. We waged a political battle for this at the Council meeting on October 28.
The tense atmosphere of the open Council meeting was given a particularly combative and intense character by the participation of activists from factory and railway workers, as well as soldiers from military units. Furthermore, thousands of workers and soldiers gathered in the square in front of the palace, shouting revolutionary Bolshevik slogans. Every half hour, a representative of our Bolshevik faction emerged from the meeting hall and briefed the assembled workers and soldiers on the progress of the Council meeting. The workers and soldiers reacted vehemently—sometimes approvingly to the Bolshevik Council's speeches, sometimes angrily, shouting "shame" at the opponents of the proletarian revolution in Petrograd.
Everyone, both in the Council chamber and on the square, recognized the particular gravity of the moment and tensely awaited the Council's upcoming decision. In the chamber, the mood of most of those present was focused, uplifted, and combative, yet also tense and anxious.

The meeting was stormy, the debates intense, passionate, and heated. The Mensheviks, Bundists, Socialist Revolutionaries, and other socialist-compromising groups vigorously and viciously repeated their well-worn slanders against our Bolshevik Party. They spoke of adventurism, of a Bolshevik conspiracy, of this not being a revolution but a soldier's mutiny, of the Bolsheviks plunging the country into civil war, and repeated the filthy bourgeois-landlord and generalist fabrications emanating from Headquarters about the situation in Petrograd.

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The solution, they argued, was to reach an agreement with the Provisional Government and all political party factions, primarily the so-called socialist ones, to form a unified coalition government. As a favor, they added, "with the participation of the Bolsheviks." They proposed that the Gomel Soviet, in place of the Soviet government, form a "Committee for the Salvation of the Motherland and the Revolution," accommodating that portion of the Soviet that sympathized with them—and that portion, unfortunately, was not small. Naturally, the Bolsheviks and sympathetic workers and soldiers greeted and saw off the Menshevik-SR orators with sharp remarks, shouts of "Slanderers, allies of the capitalists and landowners," and the like.

We Bolsheviks and our non-party sympathizers, in our speeches, first and foremost exposed the entire policy of the Socialist Revolutionary-Menshevik bloc as allies of the bourgeois-landowning classes and oppressors of the working class, peasantry, and soldiers. We demonstrated that it was they who started the civil war in the country, and that the revolutionary actions of the workers, peasants, and soldiers were countermeasures to defend the revolution from the old regime. We refuted slanderous tales of a soldiers' mutiny and conspiracy, convincingly demonstrating the stage-by-stage historical development of the entire process of the growing workers' and peasants' revolution, accomplished under the leadership of the Bolsheviks and their Great Leader Lenin, whom they persecuted, but whom the millions of workers, peasants, and soldiers loved, love, and respect. The Polesie Bolsheviks—the Bolshevik faction of the Gomel Soviet—submitted a motion to decisively reject the counterrevolutionary proposal of the Menshevik, Bund, and Socialist Revolutionary faction to form a so-called "Committee for the Salvation of the Motherland and the Revolution," which effectively amounted to an organ for saving the counterrevolution. "Whom do you want to save the revolution from," I said in my speech, "from the Petrograd workers who littered the streets of Petrograd with their corpses in 1905, in February 1917 during the overthrow of Tsarism, and in October 1917 during the overthrow of capitalism? With whom do you want to save the revolution? With the landowners Rodzianko and Purishkevich, with the capitalists Guchkov and Ryabushinsky, you want to save the revolution from us—the workers, soldiers, and peasants."

Seeing that the ground was slipping from under the feet of the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, that the Council would not accept their proposals, but would accept those submitted by the Bolshevik faction, the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, by the end of the debate,

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They dropped their false, provocative "bombshell" into the hall. They announced a new, detailed telegram they had received from Headquarters, from Mogilev, stating that Cossacks under the command of General Krasnov had entered Petrograd, that they, along with the rebellious cadets and other units, had captured Smolny, that Lenin had allegedly fled, that members of the Bolshevik government had been arrested, and so on. Tension naturally rose in the hall.

Although we Bolsheviks lacked precise information about the situation, our instincts and our knowledge of the strength of our Party, Lenin, and the heroism of the St. Petersburg workers and soldiers convinced us that this was a false fabrication originating from Headquarters, and we reacted accordingly in the meeting hall. The Socialist-Reconciliatory part of the Soviet silently stirred, turning to its wavering supporters, as if to say, "Look, be on your guard." Some of our allies

—the Left Socialist Revolutionaries and other "left" groups, who had taken the telegram seriously —were also uneasy. This was precisely what the Mensheviks, Socialist Revolutionaries, and Bundists had been counting on.
But we Bolsheviks, especially the leadership of the Polesie Committee, once again rushed to the podium to confront the provocateurs from the Socialist Compromise bloc. We branded this report the usual lies from the counterrevolutionary Headquarters and the black ravens of counterrevolution that had descended on Mogilev. "You, Gomel Mensheviks, Socialist Revolutionaries, and Bundists," we said, "are here assisting the vile provocations of the counterrevolutionary Headquarters. You want to deceive the workers and soldiers of Gomel, to intimidate the Gomel Soviet, but you will fail. In response to this insulting attitude toward the Gomel Soviet deputies, whom you consider cowards who, supposedly, will retreat from the revolution out of fear, the revolutionary, honest deputies of the Gomel Soviet will turn against you even more confidently and rally even more closely around the Bolsheviks and support them."
With our repeated actions we thwarted this provocation by the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks.
The most tense and decisive moment had arrived, with the two resolutions submitted to the vote: the Menshevik-Bund-Socialist Revolutionary bloc and the Bolshevik resolution. The Gomel Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies rejected the Menshevik-Bund-Socialist Revolutionary bloc resolution and adopted the Bolshevik resolution.
During the night from October 29 to 30, our troops infiltrated the enemy’s area, which, it must be said, did not have

stable positions. They were caught by surprise near the Savoy Hotel and the telegraph office, around which the battle unfolded.
By dawn, our troops had defeated the telegraph guards and captured this vital center. The situation near the Savoy Hotel was more difficult, but even there, our Red Guards and soldiers broke into the officers and Cossacks holed up there, routed them, and occupied it. Driven from their positions, the officers and Cossacks retreated by separate routes to their echelons, from which they had come. It's easy to imagine the impact this had on those remaining in the echelons, especially the rank and file, who had already been thoroughly indoctrinated by our glorious and selfless agitators, among whom the working women proved particularly effective.
Thus, by the morning of October 30, the counter-revolutionary hotbed of Kornilovites in the central point of the city was finally liquidated, and the entire city of Gomel became Soviet.
We no longer had to wrestle with the Social Compromise majority of the Executive Committee over the reconvening of the plenum of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. The mood of the Compromise gentlemen was no longer the same as it had been on October 27-28. Despite their political intransigence, hostility toward the Bolsheviks, and bitter dissatisfaction with our victory, which had finally destroyed their hopes of forming a "Salvation Committee," they were forced to acknowledge the Bolsheviks' contribution to crushing the drunken revolt of the Black Hundreds, while remaining silent about the rout of the Kornilovites at the Savoy Hotel and especially about our seizure of the telegraph office. In any case, they quickly agreed to our demand that the Soviet be convened that same day—October 30.
We Bolsheviks, of course, came to this meeting of the Council with our heads held high, as a revolutionary Bolshevik force that had ensured the victory of the revolution through the struggle of the masses. By this time, on the morning of October 30, we had already received joyful news of the complete victory in Petrograd over General Krasnov and Kerensky.
After the victory of the October Revolution and the Soviet power in Gomel, we were faced with the acute task of organizing the revolutionary struggle in the very lair of the beast, in Mogilev.
So, on the 31st, without delay, I left for Mogilev. Heeding the concerns expressed by some comrades about the need for greater secrecy at the moment, I dressed in a decent civilian suit and

even a shirt with a Gavrilka logo; just in case, I even took someone else's passport (under the name Zheleznoy).

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In Mogilev I saw that although the atmosphere had changed somewhat compared to my previous visits, it still remained extremely tense and reactionary, with the only difference being that the Socialist Revolutionary-Menshevik reaction had been added to the Kornilov reaction.
The plucked Socialist Revolutionary "nightingales" who had flocked to Mogilev—leaders Chernov, Gots, Avksentyev, and other black sheep of the counterrevolutionary movement—shared company with Dukhonin and other Kornilovites and negotiated the creation of their own government (even willing to call it "socialist"—don't joke!), headed by the proposed Prime Minister Chernov. Mogilev was also slated to be the capital of this government. The "noble" chameleon Chernov, speaking at a meeting of the Mogilev branch of the Socialist Revolutionary Party, self-righteously and hypocritically declared: "I personally do not seek or desire power, but if the Party places this heavy burden upon me, I will submit." (Apparently, this "brave" leader already sensed that this was not only a heavy but also a dangerous burden.) At this time, the Socialist Revolutionary Central Committee was active, sending out emissaries throughout Russia, including recruiting volunteers for the army being formed by Chernov's newly established government. Fortunately, many generals and officers, though not Socialist Revolutionary, but Black Hundred, had gathered around Headquarters. However, the "socialists" and even the "revolutionary Socialist Revolutionaries" were not above such allies. They were encouraged to do this by their imperialist allies; by this time, their foreign missions had all converged on Mogilev and were pushing the Socialist Revolutionaries and Headquarters in every way possible to launch an immediate struggle against the Soviet government, promising the Entente's full support.
The Mogilev Soviet, led by Socialist Revolutionaries and Menshevik defenders, played the role of the city's hospitable "host," not simply welcoming welcome guests—it provided its platform for counterrevolutionary speeches and passed disgraceful anti-Soviet resolutions. The last such resolution was one rejecting the newly appointed Supreme Commander-in-Chief by the Soviet government, Ensign N.V. Krylenko. When I returned to Mogilev, Comrade Maksimov (a member of the army committee of the so-called TsEKODARF) reported to me that at a specially convened meeting at Headquarters, it had been decided at all costs to preserve it in its existing composition, and to this end, transfer Headquarters to Kiev—paradoxically, but true: the Black Hundred generals, Great Russian chauvinists, were fleeing for protection.

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Ukrainian chauvinists led by Petliura decided not to allow the echelons of revolutionary sailors and soldiers heading to Mogilev with the new Soviet Supreme Commander-in-Chief, Comrade Krylenko, to reach Mogilev, but rather to detain them en route.
In response to this report from Comrade Maksimov, we assembled the Mogilev Bolshevik leadership and mobilized all Bolshevik, revolutionary soldier, and railroad worker forces to thwart the counterrevolutionary plans of Headquarters. The Mogilev railroad workers utilized the experience of the Gomel railroad workers, which I described in detail, and delayed the trains of Kornilov's evacuating Headquarters, while simultaneously giving the green light to the trains of Petrograd Red sailors and soldiers. We instructed the Bolshevik Battalion of the Knights of St. George to detain, at all costs, automobiles and all means of transport carrying Headquarters belongings and documents, and to detain and arrest the generals and their entourage who were preparing to flee to Kiev.
The entire military-Bolshevik organization of the Mogilev garrison, especially the Battalion of Knights of the Cross of St. George, successfully completed this mission. The Battalion of Knights of the Cross of St. George detained all the loaded documents, belongings, and most of the generals

who were preparing to flee. The foreign missions managed to escape, taking with them some generals, some of whom were later apprehended by Gomel Red Guard detachments. Unfortunately, General Kornilov himself, who had escaped from Bykhov the day before, along with Denikin and others imprisoned in Bykhov prison with their detachment of cutthroats, were unable to be apprehended. Our Red Guard detachments pursued them, but, having routed their supply trains, did not catch Kornilov himself and his advance guard. Commander-in-Chief Dukhonin and his main headquarters were unable to escape, encountering Kronstadt sailors along the way, who decided his fate in their own way.
After the battalion of Knights of St. George's Cross revolted against Stavka, even the "shock battalions," considered Stavka's main "support," wavered; some joined the revolutionary Knights of St. George, while others withdrew from Mogilev themselves to avoid encountering detachments of sailors arriving from Petrograd.
As for our political measures, we, having gathered the Bolsheviks of Mogilev - civilians and military, first of all set the task of raising the workers and soldiers of Mogilev, first of all the railway workers, to allocate delegations with banners that

They will attend the meeting of the Mogilev Soviet, scheduled at the request of the Bolshevik faction. The Bolshevik faction demanded that delegations and other factory and soldiers' committees be allowed to attend this meeting. The extraordinary meeting, as we called it, of the Soviet took place on November 18th with the composition we had planned. The Right-wing Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik leadership was disorganized. Although they were hooligans and shouted about the Bolsheviks as usurpers, the representatives of the workers' and soldiers' committees present did not give them free rein; they received dignified, sharp, and "weighty" responses. After several Bolshevik deputies and representatives of the workers and soldiers spoke, a resolution proposed by the Bolsheviks was read out, welcoming the October Revolution and proclaiming Soviet power in Mogilev and the surrounding province. Having adopted this resolution, the Mogilev Soviet immediately formed a military revolutionary committee.
Thus, the Mogilev Soviet, in which counter-revolutionaries operated for more than a month after the October Revolution, became revolutionary – Soviet – in the second half of November.
When our Soviet Supreme Commander-in-Chief, Comrade Krylenko, arrived in Mogilev along with the fighting revolutionary Baltic sailors and the St. Petersburg Red Guard detachments, the Soviet Supreme Commander immediately visited the Mogilev Soviet, where he met with members of the Revolutionary Committee, thereby strengthening the established Soviet power in Mogilev. A military revolutionary committee was also formed at Headquarters.
By this time, Soviet power had been vigorously introduced throughout the province, with the exception of some small towns where there was still simply anarchy, as well as some volosts and villages where there were Soviets, but they were still mainly occupied with the struggle for land, for its proper distribution and use.
After the establishment of Soviet power in Mogilev, I again visited the villages surrounding Mogilev. At meetings, I explained the significance of the October Revolution for the peasants, especially the poor, as the solution to the age-old land question, and spoke of the imminent end of the war and the achievement of peace. On these issues, even the aggressively minded Socialist Revolutionaries and the wealthy kulak peasants who supported them were forced to remain silent at the time. It was difficult for them to oppose the general militant mood of the bulk of the peasantry, especially the poor and former soldiers, who actively supported these very laws.

The village was preoccupied these days primarily with land—how to divide the landlords' land, and there was no longer any doubt that this land was already theirs, the peasants'. The peasants seized the land and equipment, and the landlords and their managers fled their estates.
The peasants felt that the confiscation of land and the elimination of landowners was the work of the Bolshevik leadership, Lenin, and therefore even those peasants who had little understanding of the historical significance of the October Revolution sided with the October Revolution and the Bolsheviks. The Socialist Revolutionaries, who considered themselves to be the village monopolists and who had entrenched themselves in all the volost and district organs, naturally still wielded considerable influence in the villages. Much depended on them in resolving specific issues and the division of land and inventory, so the middle peasants, when speaking or applauding us, still looked to them. Meanwhile, the Socialist Revolutionaries were still behaving aggressively in a number of districts, highlighting the issues of the Constituent Assembly and accusing the Bolsheviks of staging a coup on the eve of the Constituent Assembly.
It was precisely on these issues that I had to focus my speeches. I recall at one meeting, after a speech by a Socialist Revolutionary, in which he particularly extolled the Constituent Assembly, the following dialogue ensued with him. I asked, "May I ask you a few questions to clarify matters for the peasants?" He boldly replied, "Go ahead." Then I put the question to him: "Tell me, please, will there be capitalists and landowners in the Constituent Assembly—for example, Milyukov, Guchkov, Rodzianko?" "If they are elected, they will be." "And here's the second question: besides workers, soldiers, and peasants, were there, and can there be, capitalists and landowners in the Soviets and at their congresses?" "No," he replied, "they are not here and cannot be." Then I, turning to the peasants, asked: “Whom then can the peasant trust more—the Constituent Assembly, where there will be landowners and capitalists, or the Soviets, their congresses, where there are none and cannot be?” The peasants answered unanimously: “Of course, we trust the Soviets more.” Then the Socialist Revolutionary, in turn, shouted: “But they, the landowners and capitalists, will be a minority, while the representatives of the workers and peasants will be the majority in the Constituent Assembly.” I answered him in turn: “Yes, these bastards and bloodsuckers are generally a minority among the people, among humanity, an insignificant handful of them, and look there—they have been strangling the people for hundreds and thousands of years, seizing the land, forcing

The people must work for themselves. There are many of you peasants, but only a few landowners, and they oppressed you. After all, the Tsar was overthrown, they said the people would govern, but it turned out that the same capitalists and landowners ended up in power again and once again sat on the people's necks. That's why Lenin says: the peasant and worker can only truly trust the Soviets, where there are no capitalists and landowners. And in the Constituent Assembly, it's still unknown whether there will be a majority of workers and peasants; too many lying lawyers have infiltrated the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties. We must elect people to the Constituent Assembly who will stand for the Soviets and Soviet power, then there will be no counterrevolution, and the laws on land and peace adopted by the Congress of Soviets will not be repealed. The majority of the peasants understood this well.
It must be said, however, that the Socialist Revolutionaries, having suffered a political and ideological defeat, having organizationally penetrated into the villages even earlier, relying on the kulaks and the rich, were still strong there, and we, the Bolsheviks, by this time had not yet managed to oust them, despite the fact that politically the poor and even middle peasant villages were on our side.
In Mogilev, I visited the Headquarters of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, Comrade Krylenko. These were, of course, not "courtesy visits," but meetings of comrades in arms. Comrade Krylenko greeted me very warmly, like an old comrade with whom I had worked on the commissions of the All-Russian Conference of Military Organizations in Petrograd during the embattled month of June 1917. As always at such meetings, we reminisced about the recent past and spoke of the great

victories and conquests of October, which had given Ensign Krylenko, an old Bolshevik, a high post in the army. I told him about the work accomplished in Mogilev and the weaknesses that remained. He was very interested, asked questions, and then, half-jokingly, half-seriously, said, "On behalf of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, I thank you for your work." I, also half-jokingly and half-seriously, rose, took a soldier's stance, and said, "I am glad to serve the Party and the revolution." At other meetings, I raised with him a number of specific business issues concerning Gomel and the Mogilev province—improving the supply of troops stationed in Gomel and the province, especially in terms of uniforms. Reporting on what we had done ourselves, I pointed out that we were unable to meet all the needs. He summoned the appropriate

employees, primarily the head of the operations department, and gave instructions to provide the necessary assistance.

One day, after returning from Gomel, I told Comrade Krylenko about the indiscipline of some soldiers in the 60th Siberian Regiment. He promised to take immediate action but asked us to intensify political work in the regiment. I promised him this, and the Polesie Committee fulfilled it. Comrade Krylenko then told me about the situation in the army, about the task of not only demobilizing the old army but also organizing a new Soviet army. He also expressed confidence that, since I was going to Petrograd, we would meet again during the work on organizing the new army.

After conversations with Comrade Krylenko, I usually stopped by to see Comrade Myasnikov, who served as Krylenko's deputy at Headquarters. We had also gotten along well with Comrade Myasnikov, as comrades from Minsk and Gomel. As a former leader of the Northwestern Regional Party Committee, I reported to him, as usual, on all the work accomplished in Mogilev and the situation in Gomel. Comrade Myasnikov, in turn, told me about the situation in Minsk and on the Western Front. He expressed regret that I was leaving Gomel. I replied that I would certainly return, but he was skeptical, saying that back in St. Petersburg, they would immediately seize me and not let me go, something Krylenko had already hinted at.

I visited Maximov, a comrade in the Sovietization and Bolshevization of Mogilev, at the Central Committee for the Development of the Army's Soldiers' Committee (TsEKODARF). Comrade Maximov, a stocky, powerfully built soldier from the working class, made a good impression on me —a staunch Bolshevik who, despite being the only Bolshevik in the serpentine circle of Socialist Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, and Cadets in the General Army Soldiers' Committee at Headquarters, managed to preserve not only the steadfastness of a Bolshevik but also the vigor, party activism, efficiency, and cheerfulness of a Bolshevik-Leninist. I quickly became friends with him in Mogilev, and many years later I was delighted to meet him in Kharkov as a leading trade unionist. When I visited him at Headquarters, he usually told me about the mood of the soldiers, about the changing moods not only of the soldiers but even of some officers. I remember how he introduced me there to a member of the Central Executive Committee of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union, a Left Socialist Revolutionary named Mstislavsky, who introduced himself to me not only by his rank (he was an officer), but also as a writer. He then made a name for himself.

I have the impression of a noble, gentle, thoughtful person who supports us, the Bolsheviks. Without false modesty, I will say that the Mogilev Bolsheviks also gave me a warm, even ardent, send-off, having made my contribution to the victory, growth and flourishing of the new Soviet, socialist - Bolshevik Mogilev!

I spent most of November and part of December working in Mogilev, with breaks for trips to Gomel to participate in the provincial conference, meetings of the bureau of the Polesie Committee and the

Revolutionary Committee, of which I was elected a member, and speeches at election meetings for the Council and the Constituent Assembly, for which I ran as a candidate for the Bolshevik Party.
I could recount the ordeals of these journeys from Mogilev to Gomel and back, amidst the devastation of the railway system, in far from comfortable carriages, traveling far from the military speed schedule, and, most importantly, under the regime established by the counterrevolutionary Headquarters. I could also recount my largely illegal settlement in Mogilev itself; with overnight transfers from one comrade to another; with food supplied by the soldier's rations that Comrade Khokhlov brought me from my new friends in the Battalion of Knights of the Cross of St. George—all of this would be of some interest, but it would distract from the central essence of our struggle for the victory of the Great Cause of the proletarian revolution and Soviet power.
As we had predicted, the elections to the Council ended in victory for the Bolsheviks, who received an absolute majority in the new Council.
One of the first measures was the passage of a one-time tax law, which, naturally, was aimed squarely at the bourgeoisie, who immediately understood, and most importantly, experienced in practice, "where the crayfish hibernate." However, the workers and soldiers were very pleased with this tax and assisted the new Soviet government in every possible way.
Of great importance for the establishment of revolutionary order was the implementation of the bureau's decision to create a permanent, reliable support for the defense of the power of the Soviets, the reorganization of our Red Guard detachments, which had previously been temporary in nature, and the formation of a special revolutionary Red Guard regiment - this created a reliable support for the Council and the military revolutionary committee.

To ensure the fight against the counter-revolution, an extraordinary commission of the Council was established, the head of which was elected the oldest Bolshevik among us - Comrade Privorotsky, who later, with the help of the Polesie Committee, became a prominent Chekist, working under the direct leadership of Comrade Dzerzhinsky.
The election campaign for the Constituent Assembly was of great importance for the growth of our influence among the masses, for the deepening of our ties with the masses, especially with the peasants.
We saw and felt with satisfaction the success of our Bolshevik Leninist Truth. Particularly etched in my memory were the peasant rallies in the Viliyskaya volost of the Gomel district, where I traveled. The peasants—primarily the poorest and former front-line soldiers—prevented the Right Socialist Revolutionaries from speaking, which took them completely by surprise, and boisterously welcomed and saw us Bolsheviks off.
In our speeches, we explained to the peasants that now, after the October Revolution and the conquest of Soviet power, the situation was different, and that the Constituent Assembly would only be of great significance when it relied solely on the Soviets and Soviet power. They understood and responded well, but a certain inertia among a significant portion of the peasantry undoubtedly manifested itself in the Constituent Assembly elections.
And yet, despite all this, the election results were unexpected even for the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks themselves. The Socialist Revolutionaries, of course, didn't expect that in several districts, the Bolsheviks would receive 40% of the votes among the peasants. The election results in the Viliyskaya volost were particularly astonishing: 2,401 votes were cast for the Bolshevik list, while 1,129 votes were cast for the Socialist Revolutionary list. This is a very important and significant indicator—in places where the peasants had thoroughly and completely embraced Lenin's policies and the Bolshevik line, and had accepted the Bolshevik critique of the Socialist Revolutionary betrayal of the peasants that had reached them, the peasants voted overwhelmingly for the Bolsheviks.
We assessed the results of the elections to the Constituent Assembly in the entire Mogilev electoral district as satisfactory for us, the Bolsheviks, not so much because the chairman of the Polesie

Committee of the Bolsheviks, L.M. Kaganovich, was personally elected to the Constituent Assembly, which in itself meant confidence in the Polesie Bolsheviks, but how much

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The main thing is that it was a success of the entire policy of our great heroic Leninist Party, which ensured the victory of the world's first October Socialist Revolution!
Having returned from Mogilev to Gomel in the second half of December, I had to prepare for departure to Petrograd, although, I admit, I was skeptical and critical of the upcoming legislative “activity” in the Constituent Assembly.
In Gomel, at a meeting of the Polesie Committee, I reported on the recent Provincial Congress of Soviets, my visit to Headquarters, and my conversations with Comrades Krylenko and Myasnikov. The comrades praised and generally approved of the work accomplished in Mogilev. Everyone present, of course, knew of my departure for Petrograd. It was clear that some wanted to speak up, but I hinted to the leading comrades not to make any fuss, as that was not in our Bolshevik nature. Especially since I was convinced, and had told the comrades, that I would soon return, so I left, remaining the unsuccessful Chairman of the Polesie Committee.
I had only a few days left, and I had to hurry with my departure. My wife, Maria Markovna, and I easily packed our few belongings, leaving some behind in anticipation of our return, but we discovered that neither my wife nor I had any shoes—they were worn out. Truly, a shoemaker without shoes, and we were going to Petrograd! I hadn't been to my workshop for a long time. I had to go there. The workers quickly whipped up some blanks: boots for me, shoes for my wife; the "reporters" (that was their profession) cut out the soles, insoles, backs, and heels. I myself stood at the machine and, as a knocker, "knocked down" boots and shoes, and the finishers finished them so that they gleamed. The work in the workshop didn't end there. What I'd easily managed to avoid in the party environment, to avoid anything resembling a farewell, didn't work out in the workshop: my fellow shoemakers had their own traditions, and they quickly built a table right there in the workshop. They knew I wasn't a drinker, and they didn't force me, but they drank both their own and my share—they didn't get drunk (they knew that wasn't the right time), but they were tipsy and said all the best and wished me well from the bottom of their hearts. Each of them kissed me warmly, saying, "Don't forget us." I left filled with warmth from meeting the workers, and besides,

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I admit that I am pleased with my new boots and shoes for Maria Markovna.
During our six months of work in Gomel, which in such an unusual time felt like several years, we became so close to our comrades that it was difficult to leave. We learned much in Gomel, Mogilev, and throughout Polesie, Belarus, during that great, revolutionary, turbulent, and instructive period when our beloved party, led by Lenin, prepared and accomplished the Great October Socialist Revolution. In all our work and struggle in Gomel, Mogilev, Polesie, and the Polesie Committee, my underground friend, my wife, Maria Markovna, and I devoted all our organizational and agitational Bolshevik strength and abilities, all our energy, hard work, and temperament—everything we could—to the cause of victory, working alongside a remarkable collective of Bolsheviks. I received from them help, support, and enriching, instructive lessons. Remembering them, I can and want to express my deepest Bolshevik gratitude for this. The Gomel and all the Polesie Bolsheviks of Soviet Belarus, the workers, men and women, soldiers and workers, left in our souls, mine and Maria's, the deepest feelings of respect, love, and gratitude. Even today, I feel fortunate that, together with the workers, soldiers, peasants, and workers of all nations who inhabited Gomel, the Polesie region of glorious, hardworking, revolutionary Belarus, I actively participated in the Great October Socialist Revolution, in the conquest of Soviet power, and in laying the foundations of the Belarusian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Great Soviet State—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Chapter 4

REVOLUTIONARY PETROGRAD

The train I was traveling on moved so “carefully” and “swiftly” that I was late for the opening of the Constituent Assembly – it opened on January 5, and I arrived in Petrograd on January 6, 1918. After reading Pravda, I realized I had arrived not just for a "final review," but for a funeral. The report on the first and last sessions of the Constituent Assembly showed me that, as expected, the Socialist Revolutionary, Menshevik, and bourgeois majority rejected the "Declaration of the Rights of the Working and Exploited People" announced by Comrade Sverdlov, Chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, and pitted the Constituent Assembly against Soviet power. I was pleased to read Pravda's assessment of this gathering of counterrevolutionary parties crushed by the October Revolution as lackeys and servants of Russian and foreign banks and capitalists, attempting to reclaim what had been lost, restore power to the bourgeoisie and landowners, and put the noose around the neck of socialist power and the revolution. But these petty politicians were mistaken—the Bolsheviks had been prepared for such a possibility, for such a ploy.

I received with great satisfaction the declaration of the Bolshevik faction, read out at the first session of the Constituent Assembly. It followed from Lenin's theses, published in Pravda on December 26 (13), 1917, which gave the entire party the only correct line. These theses warned the Bolsheviks against a formal approach to the Constituent Assembly, much less its idealization. "Any attempt, direct or indirect, to consider the question of the Constituent Assembly from a formal-legal point of view, within the framework of the usual bourgeois

"Anything that is a form of democracy, without regard for class struggle and civil war, is a betrayal of the proletariat's cause and a shift to the bourgeoisie's point of view. It is the absolute duty of revolutionary social democracy to warn everyone against this error, which a few at the top of Bolshevism, unable to appreciate the October uprising and the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat, are committing."

The declaration of the Bolshevik faction in the Constituent Assembly stated with all decisiveness that the Constituent Assembly, elected on the basis of outdated pre-October party lists, as the debates throughout the day showed, rejected the will of the overwhelming majority of working Russia, refused to “recognize the gains of the Great October Revolution, the Soviet decrees on land, peace, workers’ control, and, above all, to recognize the power of the Soviets of Workers’, Soldiers’, and Peasants’ Deputies...”

I immediately went to the Central Committee and the Central Committee's military organization, where I met Comrade Mekhonoshin, a member of the Bureau of Military Organizations. We were both pleased to meet. He briefly described the work of the "voinka," the organization of the People's Commissariat for Military Affairs, the Constituent Assembly, and the Central Committee and Government's decision on this matter. He told me that the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars had adopted a draft decree dissolving the Constituent Assembly and that this decree would be discussed at a meeting of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee that day. "I'm just heading there," he said, "let's go together." On the way, he told me more about how the first session of the Constituent Assembly had opened. "So," he concluded, "you have no reason to regret being late—it was a pitiful sight." He told me something that was not in print: that the Central Committee was forced to remove the bureau of the Bolshevik faction in the Constituent Assembly (Rykov, Kamenev, Milyutin) for their right-wing opportunist line, which was damaging the unity of the faction.

We arrived at the All-Russian Central Executive Committee meeting just before Comrade Lenin's speech. It's hard to convey how happy I was to have the opportunity to see and listen to Lenin, my beloved leader and teacher, for the second time in my life.
Lenin began his speech on the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly with history, arguing that the clash between Soviet power and the Constituent Assembly was not a random, current phenomenon, but had been prepared by the entire history of the Russian Revolution, which had been faced with the unprecedented task of reorganizing society on a socialist basis. Having spoken about the events of 1905 and the 1917 Revolution, Lenin spoke with particular force about the Soviets, which had been born back in 1905, as something great, new, and unprecedented in the history of world revolution as a form of democracy.

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unparalleled in any country. How necessary these words were at a time when enemies are crying out about the destruction of democracy in the form of the Constituent Assembly, and when even those who are not enemies are left with a nagging doubt in the pit of their stomach.
Lenin then went on to provide a profound analysis of the very nature of the Soviets. He ridicules and refutes those who claim that the masses' indignation and the development of the revolution are caused by any single party, any single individual, or, as they cry, by the will of a dictator. "The fire of revolution was ignited solely due to Russia's incredible suffering and all the conditions created by the war, which abruptly and decisively confronted the working people with the dilemma of either taking a bold, desperate, and fearless step, or perishing—die of starvation." And then Lenin returns to the Soviets: "And the revolutionary fire was manifested in the fact that the Soviets—this pillar of the labor revolution—were created. The Russian people took a gigantic leap—the leap from tsarism to the Soviets. The Soviets, fanning the flames of revolution, imperatively dictate to the people: 'Fight, take everything into your own hands, and organize.'" Lenin said: "Whoever points out to us that we, having once defended the Constituent Assembly, are now 'dispersing' it, has not a grain of thought—only pompous, empty phrases. For at one time, compared to tsarism and the Kerensky Republic, the Constituent Assembly was better for us than their notorious organs of power, but, with the emergence of the Soviets, the latter, of course, as nationwide revolutionary organizations, became incomparably superior to all parliaments in the entire world.
The people wanted to convene a Constituent Assembly—and we convened it. But they immediately sensed what this notorious Constituent Assembly was all about. And now we have fulfilled the will of the people, a will that proclaims: all power to the Soviets. And we will crush sabotage." Lenin, with sharp, vivid sarcasm, ridiculed the deputies of this Constituent Assembly, comparing the bustling, vibrant Smolny to the Tauride Palace, where, Lenin said, "I felt as if I were among corpses and lifeless mummies... And by the will of Soviet power, the Constituent Assembly is dissolved, and the Soviet revolutionary republic will triumph at all costs." The entire hall rose, the thunderous applause turned into an ovation I had never seen before, a long, long, unceasing ovation; shouts came from all corners, and the loudest of all was: "Long live Lenin! Long live Soviet power!
I saw and heard Lenin speak for the second time. This second time, in January 1918, I immediately felt that it was our leader who was speaking, the one who had already led his Bolshevik army to the victory of the Socialist Revolution and the power of the Soviets. His voice, his gestures were the same, his entire speech as a whole was the same—integrated,

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Cast, forged from a single piece of high-quality steel. But I, like everyone else, felt and saw that with the growth of the victorious masses and their party, with the growth of the new tasks of the victorious Soviet power and the gigantic scale of the construction of a new, socialist life, the greatness and genius of our leader and teacher unfolded even more powerfully, boldly and

confidently leading the working class, its party, the poor peasantry, and the young Soviet state to new great victories.

Lenin's clear, intelligible speech provided a profoundly scholarly response to all slanderers—both past and present—who reduced the October Revolution to a Bolshevik conspiracy, a "soldiers' rebellion." In this speech, and in many subsequent works and speeches, Lenin demonstrated that these claims by the revolution's enemies were ridiculous, pathetic, unscientific, and ignorant. He demonstrated that the primary reason for the victory of the October Revolution was the objective historical necessity and inevitability of the revolution's further development. The Russian Revolution, having overthrown Tsarism, was bound to continue, not content with the triumph of the bourgeois revolution, for the war and the unprecedented hardships it brought upon the exhausted peoples laid the groundwork for the outbreak of social revolution. The Soviets stood firm as organs of revolutionary action, as organs of revolutionary power. The entire history of the revolutionary struggle, especially the eight months after the February Revolution, is filled with precisely this struggle in the Soviets, which became the center that ensured the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, the alliance of all the peoples of the former tsarist prison of oppressed peoples and nations, and a powerful organ of power - the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Historical facts have established that the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, together with the Cadets and Black Hundreds, were preparing an armed counterrevolutionary uprising to fight for a slogan—a return to the old, overthrown order. They succeeded in organizing an anti-Soviet demonstration, predominantly composed of disguised officers, some students, officials, bank employees, and other workers, with the slogan, "All power to the Constituent Assembly." In response, the Petrograd proletariat, led by its Bolshevik Party organization, took to the streets and squares of Petrograd on January 6 in a powerful demonstration of half a million people, chanting slogans such as, "Down with the counterrevolutionary Constituent Assembly!", "Long live the power of the Soviets—the dictatorship of the proletariat!", "Long live the Soviet government and the great Lenin!", and "Long live the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets!"

The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party and its leader Lenin took into account, in a sober, Marxist way, the political situation of the intensified struggle of the enemies of the Soviet system, who were going to unleash a broad civil war under the flag of the Constituent Assembly.

meetings. Therefore, the party and its Central Committee mobilized all revolutionary forces to repel the enemies of the October Revolution.

In announcing the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, the Soviet government simultaneously decreed: “The Central Executive Committee considers it necessary to use the entire organizational force of the Soviets to support the left half of the Constituent Assembly against its right, bourgeois and compromising half, and for these purposes resolves to convene the third All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies on January 8 and the third All-Russian Congress of Peasants’ Deputies on January 12.”

Life has shown how far-sighted and correct the Soviet government was in its decision to convene the Third Congress of Soviets, which opposed the false “will” of the Constituent Assembly, which expressed the interests of the bourgeoisie, landowners, kulaks and merchants, with the will of the workers, peasants and exploited workers of all nations and nationalities, a will that demanded an end to all counter-revolutionary attempts to return to the old bourgeois-landowner rule.

The Third Congress of Soviets, at which I had the honor and happiness of being a delegate, opened in the Tauride Palace on January 10, 1918.

The opening ceremony of the congress remains etched in my memory. When Comrade Sverdlov declared the congress open, several brass bands played the "Internationale" and then the "Marseillaise," after which the delegates sang the "Internationale" with great fervor. This was a congress of revolutionary victors.

Comrade Lenin began his report with a comparison to the Paris Commune, emphasizing that he was reporting on the period of two months and 15 days, which was only five days longer than the period during which the workers' power of the Parisian workers existed. Compared to the power of the Parisian proletariat, we are in a much better position. Russian soldiers, workers, and peasants created the Soviets and the Soviet government, which relied on the broadest masses, and therefore Soviet power is invincible. There were and are still people who were skeptical of Soviet power, consciously or unconsciously selling it out and betraying it, colluding with the capitalists, and clamoring that the power of the proletariat alone could not last in Russia, pretending that the Bolsheviks did not understand this. In fact, the Bolsheviks always said and remembered that only an alliance of workers and poor peasants, semi-proletarians, could unite the majority of the Russian population and ensure a stable Soviet power.
I remember with what enthusiasm and enthusiasm the congress delegates shared their impressions during the break in the corridors of the Tauride Palace, how ardently the delegates - ordinary workers and soldiers

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They entered into a dispute with the Mensheviks and cursed them with all sorts of words, far from parliamentary.
I remember a heated and heated argument with Martov, in which I too found myself involved. When I saw a large group arguing, with Martov at the center, I approached and heard Martov shouting hoarsely, fending off the soldiers and workers who were pressing him with comments and questions. Martov, beside himself, screamed, "How can you, how dare you call me a counterrevolutionary? I criticize the Bolsheviks and your Lenin for seizing power, failing to hold on to it, and ruining the entire Russian revolution." "Don't worry," I said, "we'll hold on to the power of the proletariat more firmly than your Tsereteli 'held' the power of the bourgeoisie and landowners." "I'm not defending Tsereteli!" Martov cried again. “But you,” I said, “are in the same party and the same Central Committee with him, and yet after the October Revolution you unanimously attack us Bolsheviks and drag us back to the power of the bourgeoisie. We know you as the man who, long ago, together with Lenin, created the ‘Union for the Liberation of the Working Class,’ and for this we respected you, but then you slid onto the path of opportunism; you subjectively consider yourself a revolutionary, but you have found yourself in the same company with counterrevolutionaries, and therefore the comrade delegates are right to call you a counterrevolutionary.” “I,” Martov cried out again, “consider your revolution historically illegitimate! This is not a revolution, but a seizure of power, which you will not hold on to and will destroy the Russian revolution. Since you Bolsheviks are in power, I speak out against you and your Lenin for your abuse of power, for terror; I demand a change in policy in the direction of democracy.” — “What kind of democracy,” I asked, “bourgeois or workers’ democracy?” Martov did not answer at once, but then said: “Democracy, that is, freedom, and not dictatorship.” — “But you yourself, it seems,” I asked, “participated in drawing up the program in 1903, where the dictatorship of the proletariat is mentioned?” — “Yes,” he replied, “I participated, but having in mind a historically logical revolution, and not one like yours.” — “This,” I said, “is what all the defenders of the bourgeoisie say with one voice. Tell me, please,” I asked him, “what was Marx’s attitude toward the Paris Commune?” He answered: “He considered it untimely, but did not oppose it.” Then, turning to the soldiers and worker delegates, I said: “Martov is wrong. Marx not only did not oppose the Paris Commune, but with all the force of his revolutionary passion and brilliant mind, he defended the Paris Commune and cursed its enemies. He considered the Commune the highest manifestation of the revolutionary creativity of the working class, which provided the prototype.

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"The proletarian state—the dictatorship of the proletariat, while Martov, who considers himself a 'Marxist,' spews poisonous spittle at the Russian Commune, at Soviet power, which is the dictatorship of the proletariat, and at the leader of the revolution—Lenin." To this, Martov shouted: "Marx was in exile, and I am here, and I cannot show such magnanimity." "The problem," I replied, "is not magnanimity, but your Menshevik cowardice and anti-revolutionism, your subservience to the counterrevolutionaries, your old reformist anti-Marxist position on the revolution. You say you care about the fate of the revolution. In reality, you care about the fate of the petty bourgeoisie and even the bourgeoisie, whereas you should be concerned about your own fate—that of a great man who finds himself on the other side of the revolutionary barricades alongside the counterrevolutionaries." "As for the fate of the revolution, we, especially after today's report by Comrade Lenin, which expresses the will of the proletariat, are full of confidence in the victory of socialism." This concluded the behind-the-scenes discussion between a group of workers' and soldiers' delegates and the prominent Menshevik, Martov. Overall, it must be said that this most prominent and intelligent of the Mensheviks appeared rather pitiful and petty. Apparently, it's impossible to shine with intelligence when one's policies are stupid.

Following Comrade Lenin's report, many comrades from the localities spoke, warmly approving of Comrade Lenin's report and the entire policy of the Council of People's Commissars. Martov also spoke. He reiterated the entire position of the Menshevik Party he represented, embellishing it by claiming that it did not side with the counterrevolution. He declared that the Paris Commune could not be compared with Soviet power, which, he claimed, was more brutal than the Paris Commune. He cited the fact that, although the Paris Commune executed two generals on the first day of the uprising, it also committed a number of atrocities in its final days, which the bourgeoisie subsequently cried foul about for decades. However, for 70 days, political freedom was not violated, whereas now, he claimed, we were resorting to methods that violate democratic freedoms. Martov spoke of the impossibility of realizing the ideas of a socialist system under the current conditions. When delegates from the floor raised the issue of Menshevik participation in the Salvation Committee, which organized the counterrevolutionary revolt of the cadets and supported the uprising of Kerensky and Krasnov, Martov, clearly embarrassed, said that perhaps many parties, including the Mensheviks, were entangled in this adventure. However, he denied Menshevik participation in the cadet revolt and claimed that the Mensheviks had withdrawn their representatives from the Salvation Committee. To the remark that this had happened after the victory over the cadets and Kerensky,

He didn't respond. After attacking the Soviet government for "violating democracy," Martov said that the Soviet government would ultimately have to change its policies in order to realize its slogans.

The Menshevik speaker, Sukhanov, simplified his task by declaring that the issue wasn't the dictatorship of the proletariat and democracy, but rather that Soviet power was pursuing a line of struggle against all those who spoke out against Lenin. Such tactics, he claimed, would lead to the defeat of the revolution.

In his closing remarks, Lenin decimated the speeches of Martov and Sukhanov. He ridiculed the assertions of the "right" speakers that the Bolsheviks stood for the dictatorship of democracy, for democratic rule—a preposterous, absurd, and meaningless statement. "It's the same," Lenin said, "as saying—iron snow."

Lenin continued: "Democracy is one of the forms of the bourgeois state, advocated by all the traitors to true socialism who now find themselves at the head of official socialism and who maintain that democracy contradicts the dictatorship of the proletariat. As long as the revolution remained within the framework of the bourgeois system, we stood for democracy, but as soon as we saw the first glimmers of socialism throughout the revolution, we adopted positions firmly and resolutely defending the dictatorship of the proletariat. Democracy," Lenin said, "is formal

parliamentarism, but in reality it is ceaseless, cruel mockery, the intolerable oppression of the working people by the bourgeoisie."
By this time, the Third Congress of Peasant Delegates, which had just opened, had resolved to merge with the Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. With great enthusiasm and complete unanimity (except for a small group of right-wing renegades), the congress, based on reports from Sverdlov and Lenin, adopted a resolution fully endorsing the policies and activities of the Soviet government and a resolution to remove the word "Provisional" from the government's name. Henceforth, it would be called the "Workers' and Peasants' Government of the Russian Soviet Republic." The congress adopted this resolution to thunderous applause.
The congress heard Comrade Stalin's report on the national question. Comrade Stalin began by emphasizing the importance and significance of this issue, which currently concerns Russia. "The seriousness of this issue is aggravated by the fact that Great Russians do not constitute an absolute majority of the population in Russia and are surrounded by a ring of other non-sovereign peoples inhabiting its outskirts." Comrade Stalin reported in detail on the constitutional principles of the federal structure of the Russian Federation.

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Soviet Republic. The supreme organ of the Soviet Federation is the Congress of Soviets, and between congress sessions, the Central Executive Committee. A number of speakers addressed Comrade Stalin's report. As a native of Ukraine, I paid particular attention to this and therefore remember well the speech of Comrade Zatonsky, a representative of the All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Workers', Peasants', and Soldiers' Deputies. He exposed the bourgeois-nationalist policy of the Rada, which resolves the national question against Russian workers, soldiers, and peasants, inciting nationalist passions. At the same time, the Rada supports Kaledin, a representative of the staunch Great Russian chauvinist. The Rada enjoys financial and other support from foreign imperialists. Comrade Zatonsky reported to the congress on the formation of the Soviet Republic of Ukraine, which now includes the entire Donets Basin, Yekaterinoslav, Poltava, Kharkov, and many other regions of Ukraine. The Rada is cut off from the most vital working-class and grain-producing regions of Ukraine. "The offensive on Sarny is now underway, and we hope that, despite all difficulties, we will achieve victory over the Rada." The congress greeted Comrade Zatonsky's greetings and his assurances that Ukrainian workers, soldiers, and peasants would stand with the workers and peasants of the entire Soviet Federation with rapturous applause. The right-wing opposition (Martov and others) also spoke out, criticizing the Soviet government for its brutality in the struggle against the Ukrainian Rada.
In his closing remarks, Comrade Stalin pointed out that the issue at hand was a struggle against bourgeois counterrevolution, which had cloaked itself in a national democratic guise. Comrade Stalin analyzed in detail the policies of the Rada, which, for example, had verbally declared the transfer of land to the people, but in reality, through a subsequent clarification, established the inviolability of some landowners' lands. The Rada was arresting Soviet officials, disarming Soviet troops, aiding Kaledin, and acting as the revolution's worst enemy. The Congress adopted Comrade Stalin's proposed "Draft Resolution on the Federal Institutions of the Russian Republic," which, as Stalin stated in his closing remarks, was not a law but merely outlined the general principles of the future Constitution.
On January 18, the congress adopted a crucial law—the fundamental law on land socialization. Maria Spiridonova, speaking on behalf of the Left Socialist Revolutionaries, said: "The peasant deputies came to work with you to realize their dream of land socialization, and now it has been realized—a new era of life begins."
The peasants spoke and welcomed the Government and Lenin for what they had done for the peasantry and for all the people.

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The Third Congress of Soviets concluded with elections to the Central Executive Committee. Our Bolshevik faction met beforehand to identify and discuss candidates for membership in the Central Executive Committee. The meeting was calm and businesslike. I must say that I was personally stunned when Comrade Sverdlov unexpectedly announced my name on the list of members of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. I won't hide the mixed feelings of embarrassment and gratitude for the trust placed in me by the Party and the Congress. From then on, in 1918, I was re-elected to almost every convocation of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, and then to the Supreme Soviet until 1958. Thus, for almost 40 years, I served as a deputy of the supreme bodies of the Soviet Republic.

The Central Executive Committee elected 300 Bolsheviks, 150 Left Socialist Revolutionaries, several United Internationalists, several anarchists, five Maximalist Socialist Revolutionaries, and even five each from the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionary Center. This refutes the slander of their enemies that immediately after the October Revolution, the Bolsheviks excluded all other parties from participating in the country's political life. Only during the struggle, when these parties revealed themselves to be active enemies of the Soviet state, was the dictatorship of the proletariat forced to remove them from the path to ensure the victory of the new, socialist state over its most bitter enemies—the White Guards and foreign imperialist interventionists.

Before the closing of the Congress of Soviets, our Great Leader, the head of the new Soviet government, Comrade Lenin, delivered a powerful closing speech. "Comrades," Lenin said, "before the closing of the Third Congress of Soviets, it is necessary to establish with complete impartiality the historic role this congress played in the history of the international revolution, in the history of humanity. The Third Congress of Soviets opened a new era in world history."

After the Third Congress of Soviets, after Lenin's speech, we all, the delegates to the congress, grew up, rose to a new level in our understanding of tasks—domestic and international—and with even greater readiness rushed into the struggle to overcome the obstacles that stood in the way of the final victory of socialism in Russia and throughout the world!

Chapter 5

CREATION OF THE RED ARMY

In his speech at the Third Congress of Soviets, Comrade Lenin spoke of the old tsarist army as a thing of the past—it had been historically condemned to scrap. He emphasized that Soviet power would create a new, socialist army of people guided by the ideals of fighting for the liberation of the exploited, and that when this work was completed, the Russian Soviet Republic would be invincible.

This task became the most urgent and crucial task of the Party and Soviet power. It was urgently dictated by the escalating civil war within the country between the White Guard and the workers and peasants who had won the revolution, the treacherous advance of the Kaiser's German army, and the insidious plans of intervention by the imperialist Entente powers.

From the very first days of my arrival in Petrograd, the All-Russian Bureau of Military Party Organizations under the Central Committee involved me in developing the tasks set by Lenin—the creation of a new, Soviet Army. After the All-Russian Central Executive Committee meeting on January 6, Comrades Podvoisky and Mekhonoshin summoned me to a meeting of the All-Russian Bureau, where reports were heard from comrades on the progress of drafting the decree and regulations for organizing the new army. These reports concluded that it was necessary to expedite the completion of this work, especially since, on the instructions of the Central Committee and Lenin, a military section of the congress was to be created at the Third Congress of Soviets to discuss these projects.

Comrade Podvoisky made a proposal to “include in this work Comrade Kaganovich L.M., who is a delegate to the Third Congress of Soviets and will help us in the work of the military section of the congress.” Other comrades supported this and proposed to take him on altogether.

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Permanent assignment to the newly created All-Russian Collegium for the Organization of the Red Army. I said I would be happy to take on this important combat work, but it was important to keep in mind that I was connected with the Polesie party organization and was still the chairman of the Polesie committee; that I had come to Petrograd temporarily and must return, as there was much work to do there to consolidate Soviet power. "Well," said Podvoisky, "that's a matter for the Central Committee; it has the right to recall you. We have raised this issue with the Central Committee and hope that it will accept our proposal. In the meantime, without waiting for a decision from the Central Committee, the All-Russian Bureau instructs you to immediately join the work of the temporary bureau for the organization of the new army, appointed by the demobilization congress. First of all, it is necessary to prepare a plan for the creation of an organizational and operational department of the newly created All-Russian Collegium for the Organization of the New Army." Thus, even before the Central Committee's decision, I immersed myself in practical work on this new and difficult matter.
In October, the Red Guard grew in both numbers and quality as a powerful "shock force" of the proletarian revolution. In Petrograd, it already numbered 40,000–50,000 Red Guards, and in Moscow, approximately 15,000.
Having demonstrated heroism in the fight against armed counterrevolution, incredible bravery, and combat acumen in the assault on the landowner-capitalist system, the Red Guard was nevertheless weak in military and technical terms for a war against the drilled, military-trained hordes of White officers and against foreign imperialist interventionists—both German and Entente. While we wholeheartedly admired our workers' Red Guard, we saw, and still see even more clearly, its grave military shortcomings. It was, essentially, a workers', people's militia brought into combat readiness. It was insufficiently armed and trained in combat tactics and practice, and its command was not strictly military in nature. We also saw that combat discipline often suffered, especially when Red Guard units were separated from their industrial centers and found themselves at the front. There were instances of violation of military discipline not only among individual groups of sailors, but also among individual elements of the Red Guard.
In December, in Petrograd, Moscow, Belarus, Ukraine, other centers of the country, and at the front, creative initiatives to organize a new, socialist army began to flourish. Reports, appeals, draft instructions, regulations, and so forth, reviewed in January 1918, revealed that significant preparatory work had already been completed by January.
In December, the “Instructions for the Formation of Revolutionary

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"Battalions of the People's Socialist Guard" signed by Supreme Commander-in-Chief Krylenko. This instruction stipulates that the People's Socialist Guard is formed from soldiers of active armies on a voluntary basis, with the caveat that, in addition to personal desire, a recommendation from military committees is required. The instruction provides for the formation of companies, battalions, regiments, and corps.
Regulations for the formation of a revolutionary Red Army were developed by the Northern Front command; an appeal for the organization of a "People's Army" was also issued by the Western Front command. In fact, some such formations were created, but they proved temporary, playing a notable role in the fight against the Germans, Kaledin, and the Petliura counterrevolution. However, these formations were soon demobilized, and the best, more stable elements joined the emerging army in January following the decree of the Council of People's Commissars.

Extensive preparatory work was carried out in Petrograd. Here, the initiative belonged to the Party's military organization and its All-Russian Bureau. In fact, the first leadership of the People's Commissariat for Military and Naval Affairs consisted of leading figures from the All-Russian Bureau of the Party's Military Organizations. It also led the All-Russian Congress on Army Demobilization, which not only focused on developing measures for the demobilization of such a large army, but, on Lenin's instructions, also addressed the organization of a new, socialist army.
The All-Russian Bureau of Military Organizations under the Central Committee has met on more than one occasion and convened broad meetings of the military organization to discuss and develop issues of organizing the new army.
The principle of volunteerism runs through everything like a red thread.
Based on these meetings and documents from the fronts, the first “Regulations on the Organization of the Socialist Army” were developed and approved, signed by: “People’s Commissariat for Military Affairs.”
It must be said that by December, the Red Guard headquarters had already become an operational, viable center for forming detachments for immediate assistance to the fronts—both old and new. By early January 1918, the first detachment had been formed for dispatch to the front.
The great political significance of this dispatch of this first detachment of the Red Guard from St. Petersburg to the front is shown by the fact that Vladimir Ilyich Lenin came to the detachment’s farewell and spoke to the soldiers.

January marked the birth of the Red Army. February was its baptism of fire. Already in the first days of my stay in Petrograd, I not only studied the materials and documents given to me by Comrade Podvoisky, but, on his instructions, visited the districts of Petrograd, primarily the Vyborg district—the Kronstadt of St. Petersburg. I saw that work was truly in full swing—intense recruitment was underway for the new army. Red Guard detachments were being reorganized. A socialist army battalion was being formed from Red Guard detachments and volunteers—sailors and revolutionary soldiers—which was to have special teams: machine gunners, communications teams, and others. The First Machine Gun Regiment provided significant assistance by providing weapons and commander-instructors. But for now, everything was concentrated around the Red Guard detachments and headquarters. Recruiting centers for the Soviets did not yet exist; they appeared later. It was necessary to speed up their organization and the publication of the necessary finalized instructions and regulations.
By January 10th, together with comrades from the temporary bureau, we had developed proposals for an organizational and propaganda department for the future All-Russian Collegium for the Organization of the Red Army. I raised the issue at a meeting of the temporary bureau of the demobilization congress, which discussed my proposals.
Although the main leadership core of the workers had already been selected and the work had actually already begun, the work had not yet fully taken off, since not only the departments, but also the All-Russian Collegium for the Organization of the Red Army itself had not yet been officially formed.
At a convened meeting of the All-Russian Bureau of Military Organizations, Nikolai Ilyich Podvoisky reported that Comrade Lenin demanded that the draft decree be expedited, discussed at the military section of the Third Congress of Soviets, and submitted to the Council of People's Commissars. All comrades agreed to participate in the military section. The bureau designated three Congress of Soviet delegates to organize and lead the section: Comrades Podvoisky, Krylenko, and Kaganovich.
Before the convening of the military section of the delegates to the Third Congress of Soviets, a meeting of the All-Russian Bureau of Military Organizations was once again convened for a preliminary review of the draft decree on the organization of the new army and on the procedure for holding meetings of the military section of the congress.

This time we gathered at Comrade Podvoisky's, in the former office of the Minister of War, luxuriously furnished. In connection

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At this, some of us joked about our humble friend and leader: "Look where you've gotten to, our popular figure Nikolai Ilyich has disappeared, you can't get to him now." "Don't worry, friends," he replied, half-jokingly, half-seriously, "a Bolshevik, if he's a real one, will always and everywhere remain a Bolshevik—it's not the place that makes the man, but the man that makes the place. After all, all this was furnished with the people's money; we can't throw it away—we have to use it." After this humorous overture, we began discussing the matter.

Comrades Krylenko and Podvoisky reported on the draft decree on organizing the new army. The draft was very lengthy—something between a proclamation and a decree. I recall it being three or four times longer than the decree subsequently issued. The majority primarily favored retaining the draft, making it clearer and more precise.

Regarding the essence of the voluntary principle, everyone unanimously expressed their support for it; there could be no other option at the present time: the soldiers of the old army were in a state of demobilization, tired, and war-weary; it was impossible to mechanically enlist even the best of them into the new army. The Party believed that after a certain period of time, after the soldiers had returned home and received land from the landowners, they, at least many of them, would once again become combat soldiers, defenders of the gains of the October Revolution. Moreover, the overwhelming majority of the command staff were hostile to the revolution, and conscripting them now was impossible; it was necessary, especially at the outset, to forge a new command staff devoted to the Soviet system, recruiting only veteran military specialists. Therefore, at the present moment, the only way to create a new army was through volunteerism. It was agreed that it was precisely in this spirit that the principle of voluntary service should be explained and that militant workers and soldiers and sailors who had retained their fighting spirit and enthusiasm should be called upon to volunteer for the new army. But it is not enough to simply enroll all volunteers who want to, but to establish the need for recommendations from military committees and organizations that stand on the platform of Soviet power.

After discussing the draft decree, we heard and discussed a brief report on what was already being done to organize the new army. Comrade Podvoisky, having reported on this, proposed confirming the decision for all members of the All-Russian Bureau to immediately join this work, including those currently engaged in general party work. He turned to me and said, "Comrade Kaganovich has already joined the work, but he still considers himself associated with the Polesie party organization and finds it difficult to give his final approval. Let's make a final decision on the complete transition."

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"Comrade Kaganovich to work on organizing the Red Army and we will report to the Central Committee, and the Central Committee, I hope, will accept our proposal." The Bureau accepted this proposal. After a brief exchange of opinions on urgent measures, the Bureau instructed Comrades Podvoisky, Krylenko, Mekhnopgin, and Kaganovich, with the assistance of Comrades Trifonov and Yurenev from the Red Guard headquarters, to urgently revise the draft decree and organize its discussion at the military section of the Congress of Soviets.

The draft decree was abridged and reviewed by the congress's military section. Comrade Krylenko was elected chairman of the section. Comrade Podvoisky delivered a report on the draft decree. The discussion was lively; the speeches also touched on issues beyond the scope of the decree. Some delegates—soldiers, primarily from the front—emphasized that the main contingent of volunteers should come from rear garrisons, the Red Guard, and factories, because the front-line soldiers were exhausted and eager to return home. Other delegates, including some from the front, objected,

saying that there were many soldiers at the front, including those without homes, farmsteads, or families in the villages, who would readily join the new army, and that some units of the new army were already being formed at the front. Representatives of the fleet spoke out – sailors who firmly declared that the majority of sailors would remain in the fleet, on ships, and were ready, at the call of the Workers' and Peasants' Government, to organize detachments of sailors to defend the gains of the revolution on land as well.

Local comrades raised a number of organizational issues, but at the first section meeting, they decided to meet again to discuss them, as the decree's submission to the Council of People's Commissars could not be delayed. Comrade Podvoisky told us that this issue had already been discussed at the Council of People's Commissars, and Comrade Lenin had already made a number of amendments and was demanding that it be further shortened. After revising the draft decree again, we presented it to Comrade Lenin. On January 14, Comrade Podvoisky warned us that Comrade Lenin might summon us to review the draft decree.

And indeed, on January 15, Comrades Krylenko, Podvoisky, Trifonov, and Kaganovich were summoned to see Comrade Lenin. Lenin greeted us warmly and animatedly and immediately asked a series of questions: how had the delegates who had attended the meeting of the congress's military section responded to the draft decree, what amendments had been made, what was the delegates' general attitude, and so on. Comrade Krylenko reported to Comrade Lenin in detail, and after answering his questions, Lenin began examining the draft decree.

Comrade Lenin read the draft very carefully, and more than once, and after a brief reflection, began to read it aloud and examine it

The draft, point by point. Its most important amendments are etched in my memory. The introductory section stated that "the old army served as an instrument of class struggle in the hands of the bourgeoisie." Comrade Lenin said: "That's true, but it will be clearer to the masses if we say: 'The old army served as an instrument of class oppression of the working people by the bourgeoisie.'" We all, of course, agreed that this would be better; this formulation more clearly defines the class role and nature of the old army and will serve as a thesis for our agitators when explaining the decree. The draft further stated: "The Red Army is created without coercion or violence: it is composed exclusively of volunteers." Comrade Lenin, turning to us, asked: "Do you think this already guarantees the reliability of the army? After all, volunteers come in all shapes and sizes, and at the present critical moment, the class character of the new army being created is important." And then he proposed replacing our formulation with the following: "The Workers' and Peasants' Red Army is formed from the most conscious and organized elements of the working classes." We all happily agreed to this amendment, and it was written into the first clause of the adopted decree. Comrade Lenin then improved the following formulation of the draft: "Everyone who is ready to give their strength, their life, to defend the gains of the October Revolution and the power of the Soviets, joins the Red Army," adding at the end: "and socialism." And what profound meaning, what importance this word "socialism" holds for a Bolshevik! We exchanged glances, smiled, or rather laughed at ourselves, as if saying to ourselves, "Look how we missed the point, how we forgot to include the most important thing—socialism. How good it is that Lenin is here to correct us."

Comrade Lenin then drew attention to the clause on providing for the families of Red Army soldiers. Addressing us, Comrade Lenin asked, "Are you sure that local authorities will be able to fulfill everything written here?" After our rather hesitant response, Comrade Lenin said, "You should only promise what can be fulfilled, but these promises are written very broadly, which, given the current economic and financial devastation, our Soviet authorities are unlikely to be able to fully fulfill. It should be written something like this: 'Disabled family members of Red Army soldiers, previously dependent on them, are provided with all necessities according to local consumer standards, in accordance with the resolution of local Soviet authorities.'" This is what was written in

the adopted decree. After amending the draft, Comrade Lenin said, "Well, now let's submit this draft to a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars."
The discussion at the Council of People's Commissars meeting didn't take long. The draft, with Comrade Lenin's amendments, was adopted unanimously.

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I must say here that my stay with Comrade Lenin left a lasting impression on me. We have all heard many times about Lenin's simplicity and accessibility, but it seems to me that the word "simplicity" doesn't capture the essence, although I can't find another word. However, I would add that this isn't "the ability to behave simply," but an artless, natural simplicity, stemming from an equal, comradely attitude toward others. After all, Lenin made his critical comments on our draft, made his amendments, trying his best to convince us of their logic and necessity, without emphasizing any superiority whatsoever. We accepted his comments and amendments without objection or doubt, not only because we revered Lenin's authority or, like bureaucrats, accepted everything he said, as some "critically thinking individuals" would sarcastically say, but because Lenin is convincing with his iron logic. Lenin looked tired, but what animation and activity he displayed during the draft's consideration, and what concreteness and businesslike approach to the amendments. I confess that I was particularly struck, stunned, by Lenin's memory; I never imagined he could remember me from the conference of military organizations in June 1917. And when Comrade Podvoisky said, "We want to recruit Comrade Kaganovich, who is now serving as Chairman of the Polesie Party Committee, for this new job of organizing the Red Army," Comrade Lenin replied, "I remember Comrade Kaganovich from the military conference. After all, he spoke on my report... It's good that you're bringing him here, to work on organizing the new Red Army. Let Comrade Kaganovich work on this important matter, but coordinate it with Comrade Sverdlov."
Needless to say, my stay with Lenin inspired me.
After the end of the Congress of Soviets, Comrade Sverdlov had the opportunity to receive Podvoisky and me regarding my work. The reception was brief; many delegates from the regions were waiting in the reception room. “What can you say, Comrade Kaganovich, regarding the question posed by Podvoisky?” Sverdlov asked me. I briefly outlined what I had already told Podvoisky. “You know, Comrade Kaganovich,” Sverdlov replied, “I will tell you our opinion right away; we have already discussed this matter. You are, of course, right that people are needed locally, and we appreciate the fact that you are not chasing work at the center, but want to remain in your local work, but, firstly, we are forming a new state apparatus at the center, especially one so new as to organize a new army—you have now been elected to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee by the Congress of Soviets, and this gives you the authority necessary for this new endeavor, organizing an army, since you will have to

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"to deal with all the local Soviets and party organizations. As for the Polesie Committee, it must be taken into account that now it will no longer be the same Polesie Committee that played the role of the regional committee, to which the provincial capital of Mogilev and even a number of other districts of Belarus and Ukraine were subordinated; now Mogilev will be the provincial capital, and Gomel, although it will remain an important point, will be part of the Mogilev Governorate; secondly, in Gomel there are good old Bolsheviks, such as, for example, Privorotsky and Khataevich, who can replace you. You shouldn't even leave to hand over your affairs—with the current state of transportation, this is a drawn-out matter, and you need to begin your new work immediately here in St. Petersburg." I stood up and said: "I will do everything, Yakov Mikhailovich, to justify the trust of the Central Committee." That, essentially, was the end of our conversation.

When saying goodbye, Comrade Sverdlov said: “We will have to meet again more than once, since the organizational and propaganda department, which you will be heading, is the department closest to the Central Committee and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.”
Although I was sorry that I could not return to Belarus, the Mogilev and Gomel regions, to complete the work of strengthening Soviet power, the work of organizing the Red Army captivated me, and I gave it all my strength and energy.
Since the staff for the All-Russian Collegium's departments had been largely selected before their legal formation, the organizational period did not take long. In my subsequent report to the All-Russian Collegium, I described this period as follows: "With the appointment of a responsible commissioner on January 22, the organizational and propaganda department was established on January 25 and began its work. The department's first task was to develop the basic principles and structure of the department itself for its proper, systematic operation. This task was immediately implemented. The department urgently developed the relevant regulations, which were approved by the All-Russian Collegium at its meeting on January 30."
The entire department's staff was small, just 25 people. The department consisted of two subdepartments: organizational and propaganda and educational. Interestingly, even today, salaries were established without a significant gap between management and employees. For example, the department's commissioner received 500 rubles a month (at the ruble exchange rate at the time, this was a small sum), the heads of subdepartments also received 500 rubles a month, his assistant 400 rubles, the department secretary 450 rubles a month, the clerk 400 rubles, the paper registrar 350 rubles, the typist 350 rubles, and so on. It is also interesting that all the comrades who worked before the department was established actually received no pay, since the financial

The Collegium's department refused to pay because the department wasn't legally established, and people didn't protest, but accepted it as normal. The workday was set at seven hours—from 10 a.m. to 5 a.m.—but in reality, they worked 12 to 14 hours, including on holidays.
I must say that although the existence of the departments of the All-Russian Collegium had not yet been published or formalized, already during the Congress of Soviets and especially after its conclusion, delegates from the localities approached the Organizational and Propaganda Department, which had begun to be housed in the Mariinsky Palace, and me personally, regarding questions about organizing the Red Army. The comrades who attended raised not only organizational questions but also material and financial ones. The local representatives knew that on January 16, following the main decree, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin signed a decree of the Council of People's Commissars allocating 20 million rubles for the organization of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army. This was a significant sum for the time, but it was small compared to the needs and their direction envisaged by the decree. From the allocated sum, the decree stated, credits would be opened for local regional and territorial Soviets, army committees, and the headquarters of the Red Army for the organization of the Workers' and Peasants' Army, for the supply of soldiers of the organized army and their families, and for the organization of the Central Administration.
Regarding organizational matters, although we didn't yet have approved instructions, we did give our local comrades specific advice and instructions based on the existing draft, including even on armaments. For example, we advised, first of all, to take stock of everything that remained of the old army, to conscript, or even order, those who possessed weapons (and many former soldiers did) to surrender them to Soviet authorities. We, for our part, also promised them assistance with weapons and equipment from the center. Regarding funding, so many requests were made that we were in danger of completely disbursing the Collegium's available funds immediately, before any formation could take place. Therefore, while allocating a small amount of money, we assured the local representatives that as soon as they, upon their arrival, began recruiting for the army, forming and organizing their apparatus, and submitted reports to the All-Russian Collegium on actual potential formations and the apparatus they had created, the Collegium would immediately release

the funds. And it must be said that our comrades from the field understood us well and were satisfied with our answer, albeit without much joy. Everyone left St. Petersburg confident in our assistance and with a firm resolve to take seriously the task of organizing a new Red Army.
The All-Russian Collegium for Organization, created by decree

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The Red Army launched a broad, vigorous, and energetic effort to recruit volunteers and form military units, as well as to bring Red Guard detachments to a state of combat readiness, acting in complete coordination with its General Staff. All of this was undertaken by the Collegium's departments, with their small but well-selected staffs, primarily soldiers, non-commissioned officers, and a small number of junior officers from the military party organization, who, as Bolsheviks, took up this task with great zeal and dedication.
I must say that people worked as if they were at the front, as if they were in the Military Revolutionary Committee—at least, the apartments of the Mariinsky Palace, formerly home to the Tsar's State Council, had never seen anything like it. This, of course, applies especially to the senior staff, especially those in the organizational and propaganda department. For myself, I can say that, accustomed to intense work, I worked here day and night—both out of passion and necessity. My wife, Maria Markovna, worked at the All-Russian Central Executive Committee in the department of liaison with local authorities, including the distribution and circulation of literature. She also worked incredibly hard, and we didn't even have time to see the sights of Petrograd, let alone even stroll together through this most beautiful and fascinating city.
Over the course of two months, roughly from February 15th to April, the organizational and agitation department recruited, trained, and dispatched 300 agitators. They selflessly and valiantly worked in every corner of our vast Motherland, and the history of the Red Army must not forget them. We issued a "certificate" to each departing agitator and organizer. Here, for example, is one: "This is given to agitator Kalganov, stating that he is authorized by the organizational and agitation department of the All-Russian Collegium for the Organization of the Red Army to conduct agitation in the city of Oranienbaum, Petrograd Province, for the creation of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, for which he is granted the right:
1) Use all means of communication free of charge: telegraph, telephone, mail, etc.
2) Use all means of transportation free of charge, both on railways (in any train or carriage), and on dirt roads and waterways.
3) We ask all institutions and organizations to provide the bearer of this document with every possible assistance.
Department Commissioner Kaganovich.”
I must, by the way, note that the agitators and organizers from among the workers, soldiers, and sailors had to overcome difficulties

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Not only in acquiring knowledge and the ability to agitate in different places in different styles and answer questions, often tricky ones, while rebuffing the Menshevik-SR snakes, but also in overcoming material difficulties not only locally but even in Petrograd during the course. Here, for example, are the minutes of the general meeting of agitators on February 16, 1918: “We decided to appeal to the department commissar: in view of the shortage of bread for agitators, we ask the commissar to take measures within his power, bearing in mind that this issue is currently the most pressing for us. In view of the shortage of ammunition among some agitators, we ask the commissar to pay the most serious attention to this,” etc. And the commissar, that is, me personally, had a lot of trouble fulfilling this request; I had to contact the quartermaster’s office, various economic departments, and even the supply department of the Red Cross, which, incidentally, responded faster than anyone and helped with uniforms.

I'm telling you this because I think it's useful for our contemporary students, cadets, and even historians to know the conditions under which their fathers mastered the nuggets of political knowledge to carry them to the remote regions of our homeland. And the workers in our department were in an unenviable position, including, incidentally, the department commissar (even though I lived in the comfortable Astoria Hotel, where I was accommodated when I arrived as a member of the Constituent Assembly; and we felt very uncomfortable in what my wife called a bourgeois room in this posh hotel, but the food situation was extremely poor). Still, we provided for the agitators tolerably well. After completing their training, they set off for their respective fields in high spirits, ready to "fight" for the organization of the Red Army.
The developed and published “Instructions for Agitators on the Organization of the Red Army” was also a kind of brief theses for the speeches of the agitators.
The instructions obligated agitators to report to the center twice a week on their activities, their results, and the overall progress of organizing the Red Army; on the number of volunteers recruited, what literature was needed, whether additional agitational assistance was needed, and to report on each move from one point to another. The instructions obligated agitators to obtain a written certificate of agitation from the local Soviet. Every three weeks, the agitator received further instructions and, of course, a daily allowance. Thus, it was a controllable and manageable collective of agitators traveling throughout the country, encouraging militant Soviet citizens to voluntarily join the Red Army.

At the same time, local Red Army organizers were selected even more carefully. These were highly qualified individuals. Their responsibilities included organizing the Council's military department and, if it had already been organized, overseeing its work, assisting in correcting errors and shortcomings in the organization of the Red Army, identifying local opportunities for expanding work and strengthening volunteer recruitment, inspecting the material resources of the units being formed, organizing military training, internal order and discipline, and managing and conducting political work among Red Army soldiers. We developed and published separate instructions for the responsible provincial and regional organizers and commissars. It primarily established their goal: the proper organization of the Red Army at the local level. It emphasized that the responsible organizer or commissar must be a person competent in all matters of organizing army departments. Like agitators, the organizer must first appear before the Council and ascertain the actual state of affairs regarding the organization of the Red Army. He must help the Council (regional, provincial) to organize or improve the work of the department and the entire organization of the Red Army. The organizer or commissioner, as a competent person, directs the construction and work of military departments.
In order to properly organize the Red Army locally, the organizer or commissar travels around the region or province and instructs workers in the direction of improving work and eliminating shortcomings in the implementation of all directives and orders of central, regional and provincial authorities.
The organizer resolves any misunderstandings and obstacles that arise with the local Council, the regional executive committee, and the provincial executive committee, and, if necessary, contacts the All-Russian Board and the organizational and propaganda department. Like the agitators, the organizer maintains constant communication (twice a week) with the organizational and propaganda department, reporting on identified needs of the military department and on their activities, using direct lines, mail, and telegraph.
These organizers played a major role in accelerating the entire process of organizing the local apparatus, recruiting volunteers, and forming units. Many of them subsequently became provincial military commissars, and at the front, both commissars and commanders.

The movement to organize the Red Army also captured some of the troops at the front. On January 21, the newspaper "Workers' and Peasants' Red Army and Fleet" published the following message: "The Commission for the Formation of an Internationalist Army

"This is for information and guidance that a commission for the formation of an international socialist army has been established under the Central Committee of the active army and navy, which should be contacted for all inquiries and clarifications of any misunderstandings arising during the formation process. Chairman Maximov." I subsequently maintained contact on this matter with Comrade Maximov, my friend from Mogilev.

This movement subsequently expanded among former prisoners of war, among whom detachments of international fighters for the victory of the Soviet state were organized. As is well known, the Hungarian and Czechoslovak detachments were particularly prominent.

In Petrograd, a movement for voluntary enlistment in the Red Army was growing within the Union of Socialist Youth (today's Komsomol) and among some students. On January 24, without waiting for recruitment centers to be organized, we published the following notice in Pravda about the opening of enrollment in the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army: "Enrollment in the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army is open daily from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army building, 20 Liteiny Prospekt. Comrades are accepted on the recommendation of military and public democratic organizations aligned with Soviet power, party and trade union organizations, or at least two members of these organizations. Enrollment in entire units requires the mutual guarantee of all and a roll-call vote."

I must also emphasize the particularly effective upsurge of naval sailors, a factor in which not only their traditional revolutionary spirit played a significant role, but also the decree of the Council of People's Commissars of February 14, 1918, "On the Organization of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Fleet," signed by V. I. Lenin. A two-pronged process was underway in the navy: first, recruitment and voluntary enlistment into the Workers' and Peasants' Red Fleet were organized. I recall that in addition to the navy's own recruiting centers, we also set up a recruiting center in the former Guards' Crew Building, I believe on Yekateringofsky Prospekt. Second, many sailors volunteered for the Red Army. From these, volunteer detachments were formed for the front. The sailors who remained in the fleet guarded the navy like the apple of their eye, preserving and strengthening the combat readiness of the ships, which was especially demonstrated by them in the rescue of the fleet's ships when, after the conclusion of peace, the Germans wanted to seize the ships of the Baltic Fleet with the help of the White Finns, and our heroic sailors managed to take the ships to our safe ports.

February 1918 was the month of the most rapid growth

The Red Army, especially in the second half of February, when German imperialism treacherously broke the armistice and began an offensive along the entire front.

Lenin, protesting the German violation of the armistice, launched a vigorous struggle within the Central Committee for peace, even under the most difficult conditions. I personally participated in two meetings in February where Lenin spoke on the peace issue: the first, a joint meeting of the Bolshevik and Left Socialist-Revolutionary factions of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, and the second, a meeting of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. Both meetings took place on the night of February 23-24. A great deal of tension was palpable, especially among us Bolsheviks, who were supposed to repel the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, while within our own party, a group of "Left Communists" was operating, forming a united front with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. We all saw and sensed how difficult it was for Lenin to speak out, but he firmly, as always with inexorable, iron logic, convincingly defended the proposals of our Central

Committee, which were accepted after a fight by the majority of the Central Committee. We must, Lenin said, face the truth and not dismiss it with empty revolutionary phrases. We must acknowledge the complete impossibility of resisting the Germans; no one can force an unwilling army to fight. The Russian proletariat is not to blame for the German revolution's belatedness, but it will come, and we must gain time. By signing a peace treaty now, we will energetically put our economy in order and create a strong and durable army to defend our revolution, and by that time the socialist revolution in Germany will have arrived.

In this spirit, but in even more detail, was Lenin’s famous report at the meeting of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on the same day, February 23.

I recall there was a roll-call vote, with each member of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee answering whether they voted "for" or "against," and also reporting the opinion of the Council they represented. Recalling this vote, I can say with great satisfaction today that I voted for Lenin's policy—the policy of the Central Committee and the Soviet government—and I was pleased to declare that the Gomel Council also supported this policy—the conclusion of peace.

The resolution proposed by the Communist-Bolshevik faction received 116 votes in favor, while the Mensheviks, Right, and Left Socialist Revolutionaries voted against, garnering 84 votes and 26 abstentions. We were all outraged by the anti-party behavior of the "left communists," some of whom walked out of the meeting to avoid voting and thereby reduce the number of votes for the Bolshevik proposal.

At the suggestion of the Central Committee of the Party, a Committee was created in Petrograd

revolutionary defense, which was led by Comrade Sverdlov, Stalin and others.

The appeals of Lenin, the Central Committee, the Council of People's Commissars and the Committee of Revolutionary Defense in the terrible hours of danger further stirred up the masses of workers and soldiers, and voluntary enlistment in the ranks of the Red Army began with full force. On February 23, Soldatskaya Pravda wrote: "The turning point in the population's mood is final. The wave of panic has been eliminated. It has been replaced by a powerful wave of passionate desire for the all-out defense of Socialist Petrograd and its approaches."

During these days, members of the Military Organization Bureau, along with members of the Party Central Committee, traveled to the factories. I personally visited the Putilov Factory. On February 21, workers of the 7th District of the Putilov Factory, gathered for a general meeting, passed a resolution: "Immediately enlist in the ranks of the Red Guard for general service in defense of our people's Soviet power."

The movement in Petrograd's factories and plants had reached such proportions that the existing recruiting centers were unable to cope with the influx of volunteers, and overall, organizational efforts lagged behind the spontaneous movement. When agitators and organizers from the All-Russian Collegium's organizational and agitational department reported this, we informed the Committee of Revolutionary Defense and, on Comrade Stalin's advice, decided to convene a special meeting of representatives from Petrograd's districts, the Petrograd Soviet, and the Party Committee to develop a series of urgent practical measures to improve recruitment for the Red Army.

It should be noted that during these days, the central committees of many trade unions, including metalworkers, textile workers, tanners, and others, and even the union of doormen and janitors, passed resolutions calling on their workers to defend the Socialist Fatherland and join the Red Army. They organized headquarters to register volunteers. At the Petrograd Conference of Factory Committees, a detachment of the Central Council of Factory Committees was organized for dispatch to the front. The trade union Central Committees themselves declared that they were placing all their efforts and themselves at the disposal of the Council of People's Commissars for the defense and protection of the country, to fight German and other imperialisms.

The Union of Socialist Youth was particularly active in both recruiting volunteers and personally involving its youth leaders in organizing the Red Army. For example, they would retain one worker

in the entire district committee, while the rest went off to the front. And this was true not only in Petrograd but also in other parts of the country.

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In the military units of the old army, the situation was somewhat different than in the factories and mills. After all, the soldiers there had long been awaiting demobilization, and suddenly... There were also Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik elements among the soldiers. Therefore, we conducted our agitation there differently. We didn't immediately raise the issue of mass transfer to the Red Army—the law provided for personal selection and recommendations, and this remained in effect. But in the face of such a sudden threat to Petrograd from the Germans, one might say, we naturally sought to ensure that those who had no intention of joining the Red Army but were planning to demobilize, firstly, were politically with us and not with the enemies—the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, and secondly, were prepared to fight the Kaiser's Kaledinites in times of grave danger. And this verbal connection—"German Kaiser's Kaledinites"—is also not accidental. It demonstrated to the masses, especially the soldiers, the connection between internal and external counterrevolution and the danger of losing all the gains of the revolution and restoring the old tsarist, bourgeois-landlord, and Kornilovite generals' order. Therefore, while we weren't counting on a mass enlistment of soldiers into the Red Army at that time, much less the transformation of entire old units into Red Army units, we conducted active agitational and political work among the soldiers, ensuring their active readiness for defense, for the protection of the capital and the country. At the same time, we organized recruiting centers in military units, recruiting a considerable number of volunteers from among the soldiers of the old army.
Beginning on February 21, after Lenin's call, St. Petersburg's train stations were overflowing with newly formed units of the new Red Army heading to the front.
The Kaiser's cutthroats, with the help of traitors—counterrevolutionary White Guard officers—were hoping to capture Petrograd through Pskov and march triumphantly, but they unexpectedly encountered heroes—young Red Army, Red Navy, and workers' detachments, and some old soldiers, particularly Latvians and Estonians, who offered heroic resistance to the Germans.
The Party and Government highly praised this Pskov-Narva feat of the young forces of the Red Army and declared February 23 the day of the military birth of our native Soviet Army.
But the Germans continued their treacherous advance, and the Red Army's formation continued to grow. A total of 22,000 people had joined the Red Army in Petrograd by the end of February. The number of people willing to join the Red Army was estimated at several tens of thousands. It's no exaggeration to say that, in fact,

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By March 1, more had joined the Red Army, although we acted correctly then, adhering to the statistical rules of not providing unformulated, unverified figures. We, adhering to the Bolshevik principle of not allowing exaggerated successes, which sometimes take on the character of bragging, believed that this was the key to further success and the mobilization of all forces for the further growth of the Red Army's might. Summing up the results of February, it can be said that the Party and its Petrograd organization, of which we had the honor of being a member, continued with increasing energy to create and build our young, beloved Red Army.
Lenin rejoiced at the heroism of the young Red Army, but he knew that not only was it still numerically small, but also weakly consolidated and poorly resourced. The new army's rear was severely undermined, and a respite was needed—time to improve the economy and build a strong, powerful Red Army. This is why Lenin demanded peace, to gain time, to gain a breathing space, while assistance from the international proletariat, from the German proletariat, arrived. This is why the Party and the people accepted Lenin's position and rejected the most harmful, dangerous, and destructive to the revolution position of the "Left Communists," Trotskyists, and Left Socialist

Revolutionaries. All of them, regardless of the personal desires of many of them, were leading to the demise of Soviet power and the victory of the eternal enemies of the workers and peasants—the capitalists and landowners. After a struggle within the Central Committee of the Party itself, where Lenin was decisively and consistently supported, above all by Stalin and Sverdlov, Lenin's line prevailed, and this led to the conclusion of peace on March 3, 1918.

On March 14, the Fourth Extraordinary All-Russian Congress of Soviets opened in Moscow. By this time, the Party Central Committee and the Soviet government, headed by Lenin, had moved from Petrograd to Moscow. On March 12, the national flag of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic was raised over the Moscow Kremlin.

The Fourth Congress of Soviets was to discuss and resolve the ratification of the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty. Before the opening of the congress, on March 13, a meeting of the congress's communist faction was held, at which Comrade Lenin delivered a report on the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty. An overwhelming majority of communist delegates (453 for and only 30 against) approved the ratification of the peace treaty. The "left communists" who spoke were unsuccessful and failed with their proposals. Given the repeated indiscipline of the "left communists," the Central Committee warned them with a special resolution that all party members were obligated to vote at the Congress of Soviets.

According to party decisions, no party member has the right to make any declarations or statements contradicting this at the Congress of Soviets. Otherwise, it will be considered a violation of party discipline, with all the ensuing consequences. By an overwhelming majority, the Congress of Soviets adopted a resolution proposed by the Communist-Bolshevik faction to ratify the peace treaty (784 votes in favor, 261 against, and 115 abstentions).

Following the Seventh Party Congress and the Fourth Extraordinary Congress of Soviets, the scope of our agitation and organization for strengthening the armed might of the Soviet people expanded. As in January and February, so too did we subsequently campaign for volunteers to join the Red Army to repel the advancing enemy. But in March, in accordance with the decisions of the Seventh Party Congress and the Fourth Congress of Soviets, alongside the organization of the Red Army, we were already raising the issue of universal military training in a practical and pressing manner. Thus, March was the month of further formation of Red Army units from incoming volunteers and the beginning of the deployment of a broad front of military training for the working masses.

In March, at the All-Russian Collegium, at meetings of the Organizational Propaganda and Accounting Departments, we regularly (daily or over several days) summarized the results, reviewing the consolidated data of the Accounting Department. Using these seemingly dry figures, we determined the pulse of operational life and the progress of recruitment and the formation of the Red Army.

Our renowned newspaper, Soldatskaya Pravda, still in publication at the time, carried interesting reports on the progress of recruitment and the formation of the Red Army. The work of recruiting and forming Red Army units did not slow down in Petrograd in March and April, after the Government and the All-Russian Board for the Organization of the Red Army moved to Moscow. It must be said that the district headquarters of St. Petersburg, which had become accustomed to not only receiving assistance from a single center, but also demanding and criticizing in case of carelessness or delays in the provision of assistance, were a little "sad." They told us directly: "We are not sure that our city headquarters will have enough time and resources to provide timely assistance to us, the people of St. Petersburg." But we reassured them that we would not be separated from our native Petrograd and would assist the Petrograd General Headquarters from Moscow. In turn, we asked them to assist us in leaving Petrograd, which was not so simple and easy at the time—I personally experienced this especially as the authorized representative of the All-Russian Collegium, appointed to organize and ensure the relocation to Moscow of the entire apparatus, all departments of the All-Russian Collegium, with all

Documents and, to some extent, property. I could recount the rather complex ups and downs we encountered during the move, loading people, their families, baggage, and other items onto trains. Perhaps this would be of some interest for understanding the situation, but I won't take up my time or the reader's. I'll just say that, with the help of our Petrograd comrades, especially those from the district headquarters, who assisted and gave us a warm welcome, we left Petrograd on time and safely and arrived in Moscow.

In Moscow, we were given premises on Sretensky Boulevard in a large, multi-story building formerly occupied by an insurance company. The staff of the All-Russian Collegium were housed, as they say, "in tight quarters, but not out of place" on Kuznetsky Most in the Alpine Rose Hotel. And here in Moscow, I was tasked by the Collegium with quickly organizing the entire staff of the Collegium, so that work could be launched immediately, as if at the front, without delay. Since we had notified the local authorities in advance, the entire influx of telegrams and letters from the regions immediately went to Moscow. Upon our arrival, we were immediately inundated with them, and we even grabbed those from Petrograd that hadn't been processed there. We were also called to speak directly to the direct line. The Organizational and Agitation Department took energetic measures to resolve and satisfy all the issues and demands raised.

In Moscow, renewed efforts were needed to revive the work of organizing the Red Army. It was decided to convene a conference of the provincial military departments of the Moscow Military District. The All-Russian Collegium decided not to limit itself to hearing reports from the local level at this conference, but to present Comrade Podvoisky's report on the organization of the Red Army. The conference of provincial military departments of the Moscow Military District took place on March 25-26, 1918. Comrade Mikhail Vasilyevich Frunze, representing the Ivanovo-Voznesensk region, was elected its chairman. Even at that conference, Comrade Frunze stood out for his profound understanding of military matters and the clarity with which he articulated them. I had personally known Frunze even earlier, and at that conference I became even closer to him.

All the speakers raised the pressing issue of money first and foremost—there was no money. This issue was quickly resolved by the All-Russian Collegium—all represented provinces received funding. Everyone also raised questions of supplies, equipment, and weapons. These and other issues were addressed by the military district departments and the All-Russian Commission departments, who provided all the necessary assistance.

The main issue was Comrade Podvoisky's report on the organization

Red Army. Comrade Nikolai Ilyich Podvoisky set the goal of creating a Red Army of one and a half million men in the shortest possible time. But, he emphasized, it's not so much a matter of numbers as of ensuring that our army, in terms of technology and combat power, is on par with the German and Japanese armies. To achieve this, we must utilize all the technical resources at our disposal. We must attract generals, officers, and engineers and learn from them. Life itself, the conditions of our struggle, demand this of us. The army, Comrade Podvoisky continued, must fill the thoughts of every Soviet citizen; all meetings, rallies, and newspapers must be filled with the call "All to the ranks of the new, Socialist Red Army." But the army depends on the economy, so it is necessary to establish normal economic functioning so that the economy can supply the Red Army. The entire economy is for the war. There are no other more pressing issues. We face two tasks: 1) Create a strong, combat-ready army, and 2) Ensure the proper functioning of the country's economy and adapt it to war. We will publish lists of generals in the newspapers so that every citizen can challenge them. We will recruit specialists, but we will appoint two political commissars to supervise them.

We must now pay particular attention to the transition to universal military training. If we train a citizen in military affairs even for three or four hours a day, then within three months they will be able to master its basics. But we can train for more than four hours a day, following the principle: eight hours of work, eight hours of sleep, and eight hours of military training. Now, Comrade Podvoisky concluded, every day counts as a year, so there is no time to waste—everyone should get to work, everyone should be building an army.

In order to develop a number of basic provisions for the further organization of the Red Army, the meeting was divided into sections, in which we, representatives of the Collegium departments, took a businesslike and active part.

The move to Moscow gave us advantages in terms of communications with the entire country, and especially with Belarus and Ukraine. This was crucial because in March, German troops launched an offensive deep into Ukraine, while simultaneously continuing their offensive in Belarus. With regard to Belarus, direct communications and assistance from the Moscow Military District were crucial; it even issued operational reports on the Belarusian front (Mogilev, Vitebsk, Gomel, etc.). On the Western Front, our troops, which included Red Guards, young Red Army forces, and some revolutionary units from the old army, gave a serious rebuff to the advancing Germans.

In Ukraine, the betrayal of the Ukrainian Rada made it easier for German imperialism to launch a deep offensive throughout Ukraine.

The Soviet government of Ukraine and all Bolshevik Party organizations did everything possible to defend Kiev. At their call, workers and revolutionary peasants, along with some of the vanguard soldiers of the old army, waged desperate, selfless battles against the German invaders, but the odds were unequal. The heroism of Kikvidze's detachment is well-known; with only 1,500 fighters, it stubbornly resisted the German-Petliura offensive on the Berdichev-Zhitomir line for nearly 10 days. Also renowned is the heroism and bravery of Chudnovsky's Red Guard detachment, which fought on the Irpen River, stubbornly defending the crossings and repelling units of the German elite corps. The Red Guard railway workers fought similarly admirably and dealt a blow to the Germans.

But there was not enough strength to resist the German corps, and on March 1 they managed to capture our Kiev.

But the capture of Kiev did not yet mean the capture of Ukraine. Many regions of Ukraine were in an uproar, especially its proletarian centers: Kharkov, Donbass, Yekaterinoslav, and others. Work to form combat units began everywhere. Lugansk was particularly prominent, where the Lugansk Detachment of the Socialist Army began to form in early March. Comrade Voroshilov contacted us regarding this matter, and the All-Russian Collegium provided him with the necessary assistance in the form of weapons, uniforms, and advice. By March 10, this detachment was on its way to the front—to defend Kharkov. In Kharkov itself, the Red Guard headquarters declared mobilization, combined with voluntary service, thus providing reinforcements to the Soviet Army units. By April, several Red Army regiments had been formed from Kharkov workers. Red Army units were also already forming in Yekaterinoslav and Poltava. It is especially worth noting that in the poor Chernihiv region and Kiev Polesie, units of three thousand volunteers were formed and sent to the front.

Desperate and heroic resistance to the Germans was offered by workers' detachments and all Soviet troops on the territory of the Donetsk-Krivoy Rog Soviet Republic, formed in February 1918 at the Congress of Soviets in Kharkov under the leadership of the renowned figure of our party, Artem Sergeyev. As early as March 5, in addition to the detachments of Donbas workers themselves, units of the Soviet Army from other regions of Ukraine were also fighting there.

The center's main concern was supplying Donbas with weapons and uniforms. All of us, employees of the military department's central apparatus, were involved in this. I don't remember the exact figures,

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but I can say that in March and April tens of thousands of rifles, hundreds of machine guns, and many tens of thousands of sets of uniforms were sent.
At Lenin's suggestion, the Central Committee of the Party instructed all Ukrainian party organizations and the Central Committee representative, Comrade Ordzhonikidze, to fight for every inch of Soviet Ukraine, evacuate grain and metal to the East, create sabotage groups, and, as the Germans approached the Donbass, flood the mines and evacuate the workers and coal. This directive was implemented locally. The Central Headquarters of the Red Army of the Donets Basin was particularly active and proactive in this regard. In one of its orders, it wrote that although our units, hastily trained and still poorly organized, were unable to withstand the German onslaught, let the enemy know that they were temporary victors and that they would ultimately be defeated. Explaining this to the workers, the headquarters demanded the organized evacuation of weapons, food supplies, and all valuables and equipment. The headquarters established special surveillance over this matter. While evacuating valuable property and people, the Bolsheviks of Donbass endured battles with the advancing enemy, who sought at all costs to intercept the evacuated property and people.
Communists joined the Red Army en masse. On April 14, the general meeting of the Luhansk party organization resolved that all communists should voluntarily enlist in the Red Army.
Under difficult conditions and against unequal odds, our Soviet units, retreating, struck blows at the enemy. But the German imperialists, with the active assistance of traitorous nationalists, managed to capture almost all of Ukraine by May. It was not easy for the occupiers to hold on in Ukraine, where a widespread partisan movement, resistance, and uprisings developed. Suffice it to mention the glorious workers' uprisings in Mykolaiv and Kherson, and the resistance in Odessa, organized by the Bolsheviks.
Not only the Bolsheviks, but also the revolutionary working masses were confident that the Germans would be expelled from Ukraine and Soviet power would triumph.
In April 1918, the Red Army had approximately 200,000 volunteer soldiers, not counting the partisan detachments organized by workers and peasants to fight the Germans. The Red Army continued to grow, and by June 1918, the Soviet armed forces, including the remaining independent Red Guard units, food supply detachments, and partisan units, numbered approximately half a million men.

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The young Red Army, tempered in battle, was growing in quality, but it was not yet the regular, organized army the Soviet state needed to repel the onslaught of imperialists from across the capitalist world. We had organized military training, but, it must be admitted, it was hastily done and, of course, not professionally. It wasn't the experienced, skilled military men who, especially in the early days, overwhelmingly sided with the enemies of the peoples of Russia who trained our Red Army soldiers, especially in the early days, primarily by veteran revolutionary soldiers, non-commissioned officers, and young commanders we had trained in our courses. Many of them later emerged as remarkable, talented commanders, even marshals, but at first, despite all their heroic spiritual diligence, they naturally couldn't impart to the Red Army soldiers the military knowledge they needed to fight a disciplined enemy. Even the Red Army soldiers themselves couldn't quickly grasp even what our commanders were teaching them. The high moral and political spirit and consciousness of the Red Army volunteers were the foundation of a new, conscious discipline, but this alone is insufficient for an army that must act as a single, cohesive organism.
In the "Regulations" on the organization of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, we provided for a written commitment from everyone joining the Red Army to obey the established order and discipline and to fulfill all duties of service. However, this proved completely insufficient to combat

violations of discipline, since elected commanders could not impose disciplinary sanctions, but rather the Soldiers' Committee and assemblies of the soldiers themselves did so; in a number of units, comradely courts were also elected.
However, as the Red Army units grew, disruptive, anarchist-Left Socialist-Revolutionary, and even criminal elements found their way into its ranks, this system proved insufficient to combat these elements. Our Bolshevik organizations within the units waged the struggle through Soldiers' Committees and general assemblies of Red Army soldiers, where the issue was posed politically, and this also had a certain effect. At these meetings, sound, stern resolutions were adopted, condemning by name provocative, disruptive elements or, as some resolutions stated, people who joined the army not for its lofty goals, but for personal gain (obtaining uniforms, etc.). Sometimes decisions were made to expel the most vicious and incorrigible soldiers from the army and even to bring them before a revolutionary tribunal. All this contributed to the establishment and strengthening of discipline.

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In the Red Army, but this wasn't enough. A general military charter was needed, which didn't exist; an oath was needed; and, most importantly, serious changes had to be made to the very foundations of the Soviet Red Army's formation. Profound military training for the Red Army and its discipline required greater consistency in its staffing and formation.
The newly organized Red Army was created as a permanent, regular army.
That's why April 1918 marked the beginning of a new stage or period of reorganization and strengthening of the Red Army. I say "beginning of a new stage" because they didn't immediately begin by replacing volunteer service with compulsory conscription. Having set this goal, the Party, its Central Committee, and the Soviet government—Lenin—began by preparing the transition from forming an army on the basis of volunteerism to compulsory military service. Having established the correct new principle of forming an army based on conscription, the Party, as always, began with organizational preparations, and the first cornerstone of this entire reorganization was the decree of the Council of People's Commissars, signed by Lenin on April 8, establishing volost, county, provincial, and district military commissariats.
At the same time, a special decree "On the Term of Service" of April 2 stipulated that anyone who voluntarily joined the Red Army (meaning we had not yet abandoned volunteer service at that time) was obligated to serve for at least six months. Anyone who voluntarily left its ranks before the end of their term would be held accountable to the fullest extent of revolutionary law. This already had a beneficial effect on the stability of the Red Army.
Of particular importance for raising the conscious discipline and moral-political spirit of the army was the “Solemn Promise” developed and adopted by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on April 22—the oath of a Red Army soldier upon joining its ranks.
The Red Army's military commissars and political departments played a major, I would say, historically significant, role in the subsequent improvement of the quality of our army. The role of the military-political commissars and political agencies extended beyond the direct political education work carried out by the political departments. It was linked to the general question of the Red Army's command personnel, which became particularly pressing for the Party during the second stage of our army's development.
To unite the activities of military commissars and establish control over them, the All-Russian Bureau of Military Commissars was created, which included a significant part

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The functions of the organizational and propaganda department (with the exception of recruiting volunteers and managing the military departments of the Soviets) were also affected. The personnel

also underwent the inevitable changes in such cases, especially given the new People's Commissar Trotsky's penchant for the well-known "shakeup" of personnel.
Most of the All-Russian Collegium's staff found new jobs, some transferred to national and party-wide work, and others remained in various positions in the army. Comrade Krylenko, for example, transferred to the prosecutor's office, and Comrade Podvoisky to the Supreme Military Inspectorate. Comrade Trifonov did not remain in the central office of the Military People's Commissariat, unwilling, as he told me, to work with Trotsky, something he also advised me to do. Yurenev, the only member of the All-Russian Collegium (a close friend of Trotsky's from his pre-Bolshevik days in the inter-district organization), was appointed head of the Bureau of Military Commissars.
As for me personally, with the liquidation of the organizational and propaganda department, I was offered the opportunity to remain as head of the propaganda and educational department of the Bureau of Military Commissars or as an inspector-organizer with field trips. Personally, I insisted on being sent to the troops at the front. Comrade Podvoisky, my constant friend and mentor, suggested that I become his deputy at the Supreme Military Inspectorate. I agreed, with field trips in mind. Comrade Podvoisky planned to send me to Ukraine or the Volga region—Saratov, Samara. But, as we know, a Party member is at the disposal of the Central Committee—and I was summoned to the Central Committee for a meeting with Comrade Sverdlov. He questioned me warmly about the progress of the reorganization and the Bureau of Military Commissars. I explained the state of affairs. I said I fully agreed with the need to abolish the All-Russian Collegium, but regarding the Bureau of Military Commissars, I said I didn't think it would last long, that a new, more stable political apparatus would have to be created to manage military commissars and political agencies. Comrade Sverdlov, while not categorically confirming my prediction, nevertheless said: "Perhaps this is a transitional form; we'll see. We'll keep an eye on life, and life is a good teacher." When I remarked that I didn't consider Yurenev a good candidate, since he lacked experience in party work and was formal in his work and relationships, Sverdlov essentially agreed with this assessment. "But," he said, "between ourselves, we yielded here to the new People's Commissar (that is, Trotsky), who very persistently nominated him. But if the institution itself can be short-lived, then its leader can be even more so."
After this, Comrade Sverdlov moved on to the question of my work.

"We have assigned you," he said, "temporarily to the new task of organizing the Red Army; it was a critical period, there were few party organizers on the All-Russian Collegium, and at the insistent request of Comrade Podvoisky, we assigned you too, especially since they had a certain right to do so as a member of the All-Russian Bureau of Military Organizations. Now the situation is different. The Central Committee is in dire need of general party leaders, and we will take you on for general party work." To my remark that I had already agreed to Comrade Podvoisky's appointment as his deputy in the Supreme Military Inspectorate, and that in general I had already mastered and grown to love military work and would like to remain in this job, Comrade Sverdlov reacted decisively and even a little irritated. "I know," he said, "that Comrade Podvoisky wants to get his hands on you; he has a good appetite; it would, of course, be advantageous and convenient for him to have such a worker as you as his deputy. But this time we will not grant his request—now the Central Committee needs you more than the Central Committee. And as for your love of military work, of the army, it will be very useful precisely in the context of general Party work—now the entire Party and its organs are engaged in military work, and you, Comrade Kaganovich, will have to repeatedly demonstrate your interest and love for military affairs, precisely while being in Party work. We want to send you to one of the major industrial centers—Nizhny Novgorod—since things are not going well there, and Nizhny is the closest major center to Moscow and a frontline zone close to the Eastern Front and especially to the counterrevolutionary activities being hatched by the enemy on the Volga. So in Nizhny Novgorod, as the head of the Party organization, you will have to apply your newly acquired military experience." I told Comrade Sverdlov that I would do everything in

my power to justify this great trust placed in me by the Central Committee. "Keep this in mind," Comrade added. Sverdlov, "Comrade Lenin knows you're planning to go to Nizhny, and he's approved it." I replied with great emotion: "Please convey to Comrade Lenin that I'll spare no effort to do everything necessary and whatever the Central Committee and Comrade Lenin demand." After clarifying additional organizational matters regarding Nizhny Novgorod and the situation there, Comrade Sverdlov bid me a warm farewell, and in May I left for Nizhny Novgorod. My wife, Maria Markovna, who worked for the Moscow Party Committee, was also assigned to Nizhny by the Central Committee as a party worker and left with me.

Chapter 6

During the Civil War

In August 1919, when the military situation on the Southern Front became particularly dire, Nizhny Novgorod Province supplied many thousands of Red Army soldiers, a significant number of whom volunteered for the assembly points, especially communists. During the discussion at the Nizhny Novgorod Provincial Committee regarding the personal lists of comrades to be sent to the front, I raised the question of sending myself and several other leading comrades from the Provincial Committee and the Provincial Executive Committee to the Southern Front. Comrades Sergushev, Vorobyov, Mordovtsev, and others also expressed this desire.

The Provincial Committee, having agreed with the direction of comrades Sergushev, Vorobyov and Mordovtsev, objected, however, to my departure, in connection with which I went to Moscow to raise this issue with the Central Committee.

The Secretary of the Central Committee, Comrade Stasova, having approved my wish, expressed concern about the possibility of my leaving Nizhny and said that it was necessary to consult with Vladimir Ilyich on this matter.

After speaking with Comrade Lenin, she told me that Comrade Lenin had expressed a desire to speak with me: “Go to the Kremlin, where Comrade Lenin will receive you.”

Comrade Lenin first asked me about the situation in Nizhny Novgorod province, and after my answers, including about the recent provincial party conference, the provincial congress of Soviets, the improvement of the situation in the villages, and so on, Comrade Lenin said: "Comrade Stasova told me about your desire to go to the Southern Front; this is, of course, a very good desire. If the situation on the Southern Front were not so acute, I would say that Nizhny Novgorod is such an important military

Our industrial base is such that it would be impractical to change the existing Party and Soviet leadership. But at the present time, when the situation on the Southern Front, including in the frontline provinces, such as Voronezh Province—the most important center of the Southern Front's most important axis—is extremely grave, we must take the best forces from wherever possible and send them there. The Central Committee is currently sending a large group of responsible officials there. The Central Committee will also grant your request to send you to the Southern Front. "I," said Comrade Lenin, "think it would be best to send you to a place where your organizational experience can be utilized more fully. Voronezh, for example, urgently requires reinforcement; we must strengthen its defenses there and prepare for battle against the Denikin generals who have broken through. It is essential to strengthen the Defense Council of the fortified region there, and especially the provincial Party and Soviet leadership. That is where we will send you. We will now send you there as a representative of the Central Committee to inspect the state of the organization, in particular, to investigate the ongoing disputes and inconsistencies, and most importantly, to

provide them with immediate assistance. Then, when you return to us and report your findings, you will be officially appointed Chairman of the Provincial Military Revolutionary Committee. I advise you to recruit more good workers from Nizhny; I will tell Comrade Stasova about this." I agreed with Comrade Lenin's proposals, thanked him for satisfying my and my comrades' requests and for the trust he placed in me, and promised to do everything possible to fulfill the task entrusted to me. Without delaying in Moscow until I received the Central Committee's letter regarding personnel, I immediately left for Nizhny and two days later left Nizhny for Voronezh.

I arrived in Voronezh in early September. Already on the way, I sensed the tension of the situation. After Kozlov (Michurinsk), I made my way to Voronezh on empty freight trains. To speed up the journey, I transferred to departing "coal trains," as they were called then, whenever there were delays at stations.

I remember being "discovered" at one of the stations in one of those empty coal cars and taken to the commandant. I was unrecognizably covered in coal dust, and the commandant initially mistook me for a ticketless passenger sneaking into the restricted area of the fortified region. Only after I showed him my documents did the commandant apologize and officially help me get to Voronezh.

In Voronezh itself, already at the station, I saw great tension, in particular, the departure of many residents from Voronezh was noticeable

In the direction of Liski, although even there they were not guaranteed protection from Denikin's forces. I must say, however, that there was no sign of panic in the city, especially among the workers and communists, who remained in their positions, ready to defend Voronezh from the Whites. And among the leadership itself, from my first conversation with the chairman of the provincial committee and the provincial revolutionary committee, Comrade Kardashov, and other leading comrades, there was no sense of panic or confusion, as was reportedly the case in Tambov. There was no sense of doom; on the contrary, everyone was working to strengthen Voronezh's defenses. At the same time, it cannot be said that the Voronezh residents, including the provincial committee, were working according to the Central Committee's directive given in the letter "Everyone to the Fight Against Denikin"—"military discipline and military vigilance, taken to the highest limits, are necessary." Not only were the highest limits absent, but even the most basic ones were lacking. Comrade Kardashov acknowledged this in his very first conversation with me. Kardashov, emphasizing that the city committee was waging a struggle with the provincial party committee, was particularly outraged. The city committee, for its part, especially Comrade Rein, accused the provincial committee and its chairman, Comrade Kardashov, of being out of touch with the masses and the city party organization. I was outraged that this struggle between the provincial and city committees continued even at a critical moment.

On the night of September 8-9, the enemy approached Voronezh within cannon shot, and shells were already exploding in the streets. Early on the morning of the 9th, we held a workers' rally in Third International Square, where, in heated, passionate speeches, we called on workers to stand up for their beloved Soviet Voronezh and for Soviet power. The masses enthusiastically and unanimously supported our call.

The Military Council of the fortified region decided to evacuate the fortified region headquarters and its Military Council. After the departure of Comrades Yeremeyev and Kardashov, the following remained in Voronezh to provide leadership: Military Council member Comrade Stepanov, head of the political department and authorized representative of the Central Committee Comrade Kaganovich, deputy chairman of the Provincial Executive Committee Comrade Smirnov, Provincial Military Commissariat Director Artemenko, and a small group of military operations officers. Many senior officials remained, including the newspaper editor, Comrade Shestakov. For the first two days of the battle, we remained in the same building of the former Bristol Hotel, but Comrades Artemenko, Smirnov, and I were mostly forced to spend time at various sectors of the city's defense front with the fighting units.

The battle for Voronezh, which began on the night of September 8-9, lasted four days in brutal fighting for every street, square,

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For every district of the city. The main fighting took place around the Richard-Paul plant, which became our stronghold. The plant changed hands several times, and the fighting around and within the plant itself delayed the enemy for two days. Arriving at this battlefield, I participated in the selfless battle of our soldiers, especially the workers from this same plant, including Latvians led by Comrade Abel, as well as a detachment from the district military commissariat led by Comrade Protopopov that had arrived to help. But our forces were insufficient to continue the fight against the superior enemy forces. Having suffered heavy casualties and bleeding profusely, our units were forced to retreat.

Mamontov and his lieutenant, General Postovsky, did not expect such stubborn resistance in Voronezh. Having failed to capture the entire city, especially the bridge to Pridacha, and apparently having received intelligence that fresh Red Army forces were approaching Pridacha, General Postovsky, faced with the dire situation he had created, chose to retreat and abandon the central part of Voronezh he had captured—that is, to withdraw.

On September 13, 1919, the red banner of Soviet power, the banner of the Leninist Communist Party of Bolsheviks, fluttered over the entire city!

Before my departure from Voronezh to Moscow, Comrade Kardashov gave me the following document:

"The Voronezh Provincial Committee of the RCP(b) certifies that Comrade Kaganovich, having been in Voronezh from September 3 to September 19, took an active part in the defense of Voronezh: he headed the political department of the Defense Council, and during the battle for Voronezh, he fought with a rifle in his hands on the front lines.

Chairman of the Provincial Committee of the RCP(b) N. Kardashov."

In Moscow, I naturally immediately headed to the Central Committee of the Party on Vozdvizhenskaya Street (now Kalinina Avenue). That same day, September 25, I was received by the Secretary of the Central Committee, Comrade Elena Dmitrievna Stasova, and that evening, at a small meeting of the Central Committee Secretariat convened by Comrade Stasova, I delivered a report on the situation in the Voronezh organization and the leadership of the Provincial Committee and Provincial Executive Committee.

Central Committee Secretary Comrade Stasova and other comrades who spoke approved of my presentation of the situation in Voronezh and my assessment of the Voronezh organization, especially in the battle for Voronezh with the Mamontov breakthrough. They approved of my actions as the Central Committee's authorized representative, in particular, my temporarily assuming the duties of head of the political department. Regarding the leadership, Comrade Stasova said that although my assessment was objective, it was mitigating.

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The weaknesses and shortcomings of the provincial committee and provincial executive committee, and of Comrade Kardashov personally. "I know Comrade Kardashov," she said, "as a good old Bolshevik, but he suffers from isolation and uncommunicativeness with the masses. He is a competent leader, but he is unsuited to a military situation. Therefore, our decision to replace him must be confirmed. "Here," she said, "Comrade Kaganovich, in a conversation with me before the meeting, describing his work as head of the political department of the fortified region, asked to be sent directly to the front instead of Voronezh. But we must reject this request of his, because work in the Voronezh Provincial Military Revolutionary Committee is the same front, the same front-line work, and we must confirm him as chairman of the Provincial Military Revolutionary Committee and the Provincial Party Committee." Regarding the question of the chairman of the provincial

party committee, I asked that no decision be made now, as I believed that combining these two positions was difficult and hardly advisable, and I asked for the opportunity to resolve this issue on the spot. If the situation is favorable, Comrade Sergushev could be nominated as chairman of the provincial committee. Comrade Stasov and the others agreed with my proposal.
After the meeting, Comrade Stasova told me that the Central Committee Plenum on military matters was currently in session and Comrade Lenin would not be able to see me at the moment. I thanked her for the Central Committee's attentive and thorough consideration of my questions, but I was especially touched by Elena Dmitrievna's heartfelt response to my personal experiences of those days. After the businesslike questions, so to speak, were concluded, Comrade Stasova, turning to me, said, "It seems to me that, despite your optimistic report and cheerful appearance, you are visibly distressed. Tell me, what is the matter?" I told her that I had learned of the misfortune that my comrades had fallen into in Kursk: Vorobyov, Sergushev and their families, including my family —Maria Markovna, whom Elena Dmitrievna knew personally, and my daughter Maya. Comrade Stasova was extremely saddened and consoled me, saying that she would immediately find out what had happened to them. She immediately got in touch with Comrade Serebryakov, a member of the Southern Front Military Council, who informed her that he knew about the whole story, that Vorobyov had apparently been captured by the Whites and brutally murdered, and that the rest, including Comrade Kaganovich's family, had made it on foot under fire to our front line and were now being prepared to be transported to Moscow. Comrade Stasova told me all this. With her consent, I stayed in Moscow for a couple of days, and, after waiting to meet Comrade Sergushev, my family, Comrade Vorobyov's family, and others at Kursk Station, we,

Without delay, we left for Nizhny Novgorod that same day. Much could be written about all our experiences associated with these events, about the stories of our comrades and my Maria, but that is perhaps in another place.
I didn’t stay in Nizhny Novgorod for long.
In late September and early October 1919, the situation on the Southern Front deteriorated further. Denikin's troops, armed to the teeth with Anglo-French-American guns, shells, rifles, and tanks, began to implement Denikin's new directive to advance on Moscow with the Volunteer Army, reinforced by the corps of Shkuro and Mamontov. The elite cutthroats of the Volunteer Army and the cavalry corps launched an offensive along the entire central front from Kursk to Voronezh.
On October 1, despite the stubborn and desperate defense of the Voronezh forces, Shkuro's corps occupied Voronezh and began carrying out reprisals there, following the example of the Mamontovites. Due to the new military situation in the Voronezh region, the questions about aid to the fortified region that I was supposed to report to Comrade Lenin were no longer relevant, and I was already determined not to waste Comrade Lenin's time or ask for an appointment with him, but to head straight to the Voronezh front line and there seek out the location of the Voronezh Provincial Revolutionary Committee, since the Central Committee had not yet been able to tell me its location.
But before leaving for the Central Committee, Comrade Stasova told me that Comrade Lenin wanted to see me for a brief conversation. "Go to the Kremlin and wait in the reception room." I happily and nervously ran to the Kremlin, didn't linger long in the reception room, and was summoned to Comrade Lenin's office.
Having greeted me warmly, Comrade Lenin asked me how the Voronezh forces had fought against Mamontov's advance. I briefly recounted to Comrade Lenin what I had outlined above and concluded that the Voronezh workers and communists, as well as the still-weak Red Army fortified area forces, had performed remarkably well, fighting for every street, preventing Mamontov's forces from occupying the entire city. The next day, they were driven out of the central part of the city, which they had managed to capture. "That's very good," said Comrade Lenin, "because in Tambov, Mamontov managed to capture the entire city very easily." I told Comrade Lenin that I had received a number of requests for assistance from the fortified area, but that now, apparently, the situation

had changed. "Yes," said Comrade Lenin, "the situation has changed significantly for the worse: now that Voronezh has been occupied by Shkuro, a thorough fight will be required to liberate it."

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Comrade Lenin immediately asked me when I was leaving. I said tomorrow morning. "That's very good, we must hurry," said Comrade Lenin, "because the situation there is very grave. Voronezh has fallen—this is very dangerous for the entire front, and we must retake Voronezh at all costs! The role of the Provincial Revolutionary Committee and the Provincial Party Committee is very important; they encompass both military work and Soviet-Party affairs. We discussed military matters at the Central Committee Plenum and made a number of decisions on them. We decided to send Comrade Stalin to the Southern Front, who will undoubtedly assist the Southern Front and the Voronezh sector, to which he attaches great importance. In particular, we are strengthening the Voronezh sector with Budyonny's remarkable, combat-ready cavalry corps, which, we hope, will successfully counter General Shkuro's cavalry with our Soviet cavalry force. But we must remember that we cannot rely solely on the troops; we must mobilize all the forces of the frontline rear and the underground, coordinate and link the actions of the troops with those of the workers and peasants, assist the army with supplies and political work, and have strong military-revolutionary organs of power in the Soviets. And this is your task; this is frontline work. Therefore, you were wrong, as Comrade Stasova told me, when you again raised the possibility of sending you directly to the troops, especially now that Voronezh is in enemy hands. Comrade Lenin once again forcefully emphasized: "We must recapture Voronezh at all costs; victory over Denikin depends on it! When we recapture Voronezh, then you can come and raise all your questions, and we will help you." I understood perfectly well that this was the main thing Comrade Lenin wanted to impress upon me. I didn't detain him any longer, but with great inner excitement and cheerfulness, I told Comrade Lenin that I understood his instructions well and would do everything to carry them out. I added that we would establish the provincial revolutionary committee closer to the front and fight alongside the troops to recapture Voronezh! "That's very good! I wish you success," Comrade Lenin said to me. Having firmly shaken the dear leader's hand, I walked out of the office with a cheerful and confident step.

At precisely 6:00 a.m. on October 24, 1919, the glorious city of Voronezh was completely and finally liberated from Denikin's bandit troops. Lenin's slogan—"Retake Voronezh!"—was fulfilled! Thousands of Voronezh workers, their wives, and children greeted the Red Army troops entering the city with indescribable joy—it was a stirring meeting of triumphant Voronezh workers, Red Army soldiers, and their leaders!

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The new Soviet, party-political life of the workers of Voronezh, recaptured from the Whites, was marked that same day, October 24, at 8:00 a.m., by a rally of thousands of workers, Red Army soldiers, and other workers on the former Cadet Parade Ground—the Square of the Third International. It was an unforgettable rally, filled with great joy and a sense of the historical grandeur of this victory over the Shkurovsky-Denikinites, intertwined with the sorrowful memories of the hardships endured. The reign of Denikinites in Voronezh, with their gallows and executions—it was joy through tears, and tears mingled with joy.

As a political worker, and one with a temperamental streak and a certain propensity for enthusiasm, I conveyed warm greetings from the Provincial Revolutionary Committee and the Provincial Committee to Comrades Budyonny, Shchadenko, and Kivgell, expressing my admiration for the heroism and courage of the corps, the political and command staff, and Comrade Budyonny personally, who inflicted a crushing defeat on Denikin and his favorite, Shkuro, in Voronezh. I wished them similar victories in the future on their glorious battlefield. Comrades Budyonny and Shchadenko (representative of the Southern Front) thanked me for my warm words of greeting and,

in turn, greeted the Provincial Revolutionary Committee, the Provincial Committee, and all the Voronezh Bolsheviks.
After the meeting, we moved on to businesslike matters concerning the corps' progress in crossing the Don, the necessary further assistance to the army, the restoration of normal life in Voronezh, and so on and so forth. I showed Comrades Budyonny, Shchadenko, and Kivgell Order No. 1, adopted by the Provincial Revolutionary Committee that same day—October 24th. The corps' chief of staff, Pogrebov, was summoned and, after reviewing the order, expressed opposition to it. "How can this be, Semyon Mikhailovich," he said, addressing Budyonny. "You, as the corps commander and head of the garrison, are the supreme authority in Voronezh, so there can't be a formulation like 'All power in the city and province belongs to the military revolutionary committee.' And anyway," Pogrebov asked, "is such an order from the Provincial Revolutionary Committee necessary?" Comrade Budyonny, after some thought, asked whether this wouldn't create something awkward. After this, I, referring to the regulations on provincial revolutionary committees approved by the Government, justifying the necessity of the order and the aforementioned controversial point, said: “The workers and toilers must know that the power of the Soviets has been restored to them, which directs the entire work of establishing revolutionary order, restoring the economy and providing assistance to the Red Army, primarily the cavalry corps.” Comrade Shchadenko actively supported me, leaning towards Comrade Budyonny,

said to him (so quietly that we could hear): “You, Semyon Mikhailovich, keep in mind that Comrade Kaganovich has been appointed by the Central Committee and, before leaving for Voronezh, was received by Comrade Lenin himself, who told him about your corps.” Turning to me, Comrade Budyonny asked: “So, before leaving for Voronezh, you were with Comrade Lenin himself and he told him about my corps?” I told him about it briefly. You should have seen how Budyonny’s face was transformed, how it lit up with a kind smile and joy! “This means,” he said, “that Lenin, who is engaged in world affairs, knows and remembers about my corps!” Turning to Pogrebov, he said in a sharp tone: “You; "Brother, stop this pettifogging—we have the power of the Soviets, headed by Lenin, who appointed Comrade Kaganovich as Chairman of the Provincial Revolutionary Committee here—the order of the Provincial Revolutionary Committee is correct, and it must be issued as it is." After that, I said: "In order to ensure complete coordination and unity between military and civilian authority, I propose adding the following to the introductory part of the order: after the words 'by virtue of this,' add 'and on the basis of Order No. 2 of the garrison commander, Comrade Budyonny'—and further in the text: 'it is hereby declared...'" "That will be even better," Comrades Budyonny and Shchadenko said in unison. When, after the meeting, I reported on everyone's approval of our order, Semyon Mikhailovich, smiling, said: "But we also approved it right away."
While working tirelessly to restore normal life in the city and districts, the Provincial Revolutionary Committee never wavered in its attention and support for the Red Army and its combat operations. During these days, we maintained close contact with the Cavalry Corps. First of all, we agreed with Comrade Budyonny on the following procedure for using the material assets available in warehouses and stores and for meeting the needs of the Cavalry Corps: all material assets will be strictly accounted for by the Provincial Revolutionary Committee; no one has the right to confiscate them without permission. All requests and inquiries from military units and formations, including the Cavalry Corps, are sent to the Provincial Revolutionary Committee, certified by the corps command. The Provincial Revolutionary Committee releases material assets, especially uniforms and equipment, and organizes their production from available raw materials according to requirements and within available resources. In the event of a dispute, the matter is reviewed by the corps command and the leadership of the Provincial Revolutionary Committee.
This established order was of great importance and great effectiveness for the safety of valuables and the satisfaction of the army's urgent, acute needs. Cases of unauthorized action

Individual military units, and especially hooligan elements, were quickly eliminated by the forces of the garrison commander, Comrade Budyonny. I remember one such incident, for example. One day, I was informed of outrages at a confectionery factory and that all attempts to suppress them had yielded no results. I immediately went to see Comrade Budyonny. He took my report to heart, called someone over, scolded them, and then said to me: "Let's go there and see what's going on." As soon as we appeared in the factory courtyard, cries of "Budyonny has arrived!" rang out. The rioters dropped their belongings and fled. Those who lingered and lingered were caught by Comrade Budyonny's firm hand. "Well, those scoundrels have scattered," Budyonny told me, "now rest assured, they won't do it again." Fighting with the Whites was still raging around Voronezh. The enemy occupied the right bank of the Don River, stubbornly defending the crossings. Our infantry reached the Don, while units of the Cavalry Corps concentrated northwest of Voronezh, exchanging fire and preparing to cross the Don. Corps headquarters and Comrade Budyonny personally were very concerned about crossing the Don. The enemy had concentrated large forces to prevent our troops from crossing the Don; here too, the enemy deployed armored trains, bombarding the crossings with intense artillery fire. This crossing was not easy. Having begun the crossing on October 28, the corps, fighting with all its forces, successfully and victoriously crossed the Don on October 29. This was a major new victory for our Soviet troops, and especially the Cavalry Corps, which made it possible, having consolidated this bridgehead, to launch an offensive on Kastornoye. Rejoicing in this new victory, we buried with deep sorrow, honor, and profound respect the brave soldiers, commanders, and political officers of the Cavalry Corps who fell during the crossing of the Don River in a mass grave at the Voronezh cemetery. In this regard, I would like to share one fact that, in my opinion, has instructive political significance. Before the funeral, Comrades Budyonny, Shchadenko, and Kivgella consulted with me about the funeral arrangements, specifically on the following question: "Many Cavalry soldiers," said Semyon Mikhailovich, "have expressed a desire for priests to attend the funeral. What should we do? Perhaps we should agree to this?" After some thought, I said that we could take this step. After consulting with Comrade Sergushev, we gave the provincial party committee's consent. And here we stand on one side of the mass grave - all representatives of the party, Soviet organizations, workers and communists and the command of the cavalry corps, the Red Army soldiers

and political workers, and on the other side of the mass grave stand priests and deacons. We deliver our Bolshevik funeral speeches, including Kaganovich and Budyonny, and the priests and deacons perform their religious rites and prayers. I confess, for the first time in my life, and probably not only me, I had to participate in such a combination. Later, we were reported that this evoked a very positive response among the Cavalry Army soldiers. "Look," many said, "the Communist-Bolshevik Party is doing as Lenin tells them: since there were believers among the dead, it means they must be honored in a religious manner. The Voronezh Bolsheviks and our command did just that. This means that all those whisperers are lying about the Communists forcing people to be atheists." Agitation against God and religion is one thing, but in life, let everyone understand it as they wish. No one is forcibly imposing anything, and priests are not arrested; they were even buried together." In short, this fact alone was one of the revealing aspects of the enemy's provocations.
The moment had arrived for the Voronezh residents to bid farewell to the corps and its command. On October 29, by decision of the Provincial Party Committee and the Provincial Revolutionary Committee, we held a ceremonial meeting. At this meeting, on the instructions of the Provincial Party Committee and the Provincial Revolutionary Committee, I delivered a report on the current situation and the victories achieved over Denikin thanks to the efforts of our Great Party. I spoke of the victory in the Voronezh sector, the historic feat of the Cavalry Corps, its commander, Comrade

Budyonny, as well as the workers of Voronezh and their guiding force—the Communist Organization and Soviet power.
The meeting unanimously adopted a resolution: to rename the district town of Biryuch and the district where Semyon Mikhailovich's family lived, to the town and district of Budyonnovsk.
The Cavalry Corps faced new and significant combat missions. After the battles it had fought, it needed reinforcements, and Comrade Shchadenko, who was traveling to the Southern Front headquarters in those days, was intensely focused on this matter. Before leaving Voronezh, he had a personal, confidential conversation with me about transforming the corps into a cavalry army and asked my opinion. I replied that, having worked closely with the Cavalry Corps during the battles for Voronezh, I highly valued the combat qualities, strength, achievements, and significance of the corps and its command, and I believed that transforming it into an army was a remarkable and necessary undertaking. Comrade Shchadenko then asked me to write to Comrade Stalin about this and express my opinion on the advisability of appointing Kliment Yefremovich Voroshilov to the Revolutionary Military Council of this cavalry army, as he enjoyed great authority within the corps.

I fully and happily agreed with this and wrote a letter to Comrade Stalin, expressing my high regard for the qualities and services of the corps and Comrade Budyonny. I also expressed my opinion on the advisability and necessity of transforming the corps into a cavalry army, and that the corps's senior command and political staff would like to see Comrade Voroshilov as a member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Cavalry Army, a wish I personally supported. I also expressed my opinion of Comrade Shchadenko as a strong, good Bolshevik-Leninist who should also be appointed a member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Army. I passed this letter on to Comrade Shchadenko, telling him that I had also written about him to Comrade Stalin, although he, of course, had not spoken to me about it.
Following the battle for Kastornoye, the Cavalry Corps successfully continued its advance, capturing a second key chokepoint—Stary Oskol—on November 22, and Novy Oskol and Veliko-Mikhailovka on December 1. It was in this area that the victorious, heroic Cavalry Corps greeted the leaders of the Southern Front, Comrade I. V. Stalin and Comrade Yegorov, on December 6, 1919. It was here that the corps was finally, organizationally and practically transformed into the Cavalry Army, with a Revolutionary Military Council headed by Army Commander Budyonny and Revolutionary Military Council members Voroshilov and Shchadenko. This meeting of the Southern Front leadership and the Cavalry Army in Veliko-Mikhailovka was not of local but of front-wide and even national significance. It was in Veliko-Mikhailovka that Stalin determined the role, significance, and future direction of the Cavalry Army's actions in the general plan for the defeat of Denikin, adopted by the Politburo of the Central Committee, contrary to Trotsky's opinion, according to Stalin's famous letter to Comrade Lenin.
The provincial party committee and the provincial military revolutionary committee never forgot for a moment about fulfilling the tasks and slogan of the party and Lenin: "Everything for the victory over Denikin!", helping the army after the transfer of the Cavalry Corps headquarters from Voronezh and those units of the 8th Army that remained in Voronezh and the province.
At the same time, we concentrated special efforts on establishing normal party, Soviet and trade union life, on restoring the destroyed economy - industry, urban and agricultural in the liberated and liberated counties.
Naturally, the first priority was the restoration of party organizations, remembering that the soul and main driving force of all revolutionary life and Soviet activity is our Leninist Bolshevik Party. As early as October 28, 1919, the following Order No. 2 of the Voronezh

Provincial Military Revolutionary Committee. In furtherance of Order No. 1, the Provincial Military Revolutionary Committee decrees:
"1) Announce to citizens that the city commandant is responsible for maintaining revolutionary order, stopping all outrages, and maintaining internal peace. All complaints and requests for armed assistance should be directed to the commandant (formerly the Bristol Hotel).
2) The Department of Public Utilities is tasked first and foremost with properly establishing electricity, water supply, firewood supply, streamlining the housing issue, and generally improving the city's economy.
3) Urgently take stock of all remaining goods in warehouses and stores, establish food and distribution systems, and enable stores to function normally.
4) All Soviet institutions and individuals who have goods and products, as well as citizens who know about them, are required to deliver detailed information to the public utilities department (Revolution Avenue, Gubprodkom premises) on October 28 and 29.
5) All small shops, stalls, as well as traders in the bazaars, can continue their trade, and their goods will not be subject to confiscation.
6) All banknotes in circulation within the Soviet Republic must be accepted unconditionally at their value; however, all money issued by the counter-revolutionary government is annulled.
7) The Provincial Committee hereby informs representatives of the Orthodox and religious cult that it is permitted to conduct religious services with the ringing of bells in a completely free manner.
8) All of the above must be strictly and consistently implemented and enforced. Violations or failures to comply will be punished under martial law.
Chairman L.M. Kaganovich. Secretary P. Bulargin."
I must note that there was some debate regarding point 7 (regarding religious services, especially with bell ringing); some comrades objected, or at least had doubts. Noya and Comrade Sergushev argued with the comrades that it was necessary to counter the counterrevolutionary propaganda that had unfolded, claiming that the Bolsheviks were planning to close all churches, confiscate and melt down bells, arrest and shoot the clergy, and so on. With this point in the order of the Provincial Military Revolutionary Committee, we dealt a blow to counterrevolutionary propaganda and strengthened our position among the wavering.

elements of the workers. After our clarifications, the Provincial Committee unanimously adopted this point.
Through the heroic and intense efforts of the workers and all leading communist activists, we managed to successfully implement not only the provisions of these orders No. 1 and No. 2, but also the specific measures developed in their stead. As a result, within a short time after the liberation of Voronezh, electricity and light were restored, and not only the citizens but all of us, who had been forced to work under bizarre lighting conditions, were happier.
It was difficult for me to leave Voronezh in December, but when discussing the matter at the provincial committee, my comrades expressed serious concerns about my trip, both for general political and business reasons. We had grave and urgent needs that required resolution in Moscow, so the committee decided I needed to go. I think it's interesting to recount our journey.
Unfortunately, the railway situation was such that the railway workers couldn't guarantee I'd arrive in time for the opening of the congress. So we organized a horse-drawn carriage ride from Voronezh to Kozlov. It was risky, but I was assured we'd arrive on time. And so, despite snowstorms and drifts, we traveled by sleigh (about 180 km) to Kozlov (Michurinsk) station, and from there, by passenger train, arrived in Moscow in time for the opening of the congress on December 5th.
The 7th All-Russian Congress of Soviets opened precisely on the appointed date—December 5, 1919—at the Bolshoi Theater with Comrade Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin's opening address. He began by stating that the revolution, both in Russia and the West, had suffered enormous losses alongside its successes. He spoke of the great loss suffered by the international proletariat in the

persons of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. He then spoke of the loss of such a major figure as Yakov Mikhailovich Sverdlov and a number of other Party and Soviet leaders. Comrade Kalinin proposed honoring the memory of the fallen comrades by standing—everyone did, and the orchestra played a funeral march. Kalinin then spoke of our victories at the front, particularly the victory won in the defense of Petrograd.
When, in conclusion, Comrade Kalinin said that he would express the will of the congress if he said that the banner of the Seventh All-Russian Congress of Soviets should be raised in Petrograd, the entire congress rose, applauding wildly and shouting, "Long live Red Petrograd!" It was a soul-stirring moment. After this, the congress elected a presidium of 21 people. Among those elected to the presidium of the Congress of Soviets was "Kaganovich-Voronezhsky." This addition, "Voronezhsky," is recorded in the minutes of the congress, apparently because at the congress

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There was another Kaganovich—the provincial food commissar of the Simbirsk province. Later, this "Voronezh" designation was dropped, and some sometimes confused me with this Kaganovich, Pyotr Kirillovich, which wasn't always favorable for me, since that Kaganovich, Pyotr Kirillovich, while generally a prominent figure, became a Trotskyist in 1921 and signed the "platform of 83." In 1957, one well-known “historian” (comrade Pospelov) confused me with him, although if this historian had studied this issue as a serious historian should, then he, of course, would have known that Kaganovich Lazar Moiseevich, or, as it was then written, “Voronezhsky”, not only never signed the Trotskyist “platform of 83”, but throughout his entire adult life actively fought against Trotskyism as a loyal Leninist!
The central issue at the Congress of Soviets was, of course, Comrade Lenin's report, which combined the All-Russian Central Executive Committee's report with the Council of People's Commissars' report. It captured the attention of the entire congress, including mine.
The 7th Congress of Soviets adopted the resolution announced by Comrade Lenin: "The Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic desires to live in peace with all nations and to direct all its efforts toward internal development, in order to establish production, transportation, and public administration on the basis of the Soviet system, which has hitherto been hampered, first by the oppression of German imperialism, then by the intervention of the Entente and the hunger blockade."
The Workers' and Peasants' Government made peace proposals to the Entente Powers on several occasions, namely: August 5, 1918 - to President Wilson; September 3 - to the American representative Mr. Poole; October 24, 1918 - to President Wilson; November 3, 1918 - to all Entente governments through representatives of neutral countries; November 7, 1918 - on behalf of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets; December 23, 1918 - Litvinov's note in Stockholm to all representatives of the Entente; February 4, 1919 - a draft treaty worked out with Bullitt, who appeared on behalf of President Wilson on March 12, 1919; a statement on May 7, 1919, through Nansen.
Fully approving of all these repeated steps of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, the Council of People's Commissars and the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, the Seventh All-Russian Congress of Soviets again confirms its unwavering desire for peace, once again proposing to all the Entente powers - England, France, the United States of America, Italy, Japan - all together and separately - to begin immediate negotiations for peace and instructs the All-Russian Central Executive Committee

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The Committee, the Council of People's Commissars, and the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs are to systematically continue the policy of peace, taking all measures necessary for its success." When Comrade Lenin finished reading this draft resolution, applause and cries of "Vote

without debate" rang out in the hall. Comrade Kalinin, presiding, said: "The overwhelming majority of delegates express the desire to adopt the resolution without debate. Allow us to put to the vote the resolution just read by Comrade Lenin. Who is in favor of adopting the resolution? Who is against? Who abstained? Thus, the resolution is adopted unanimously."
The 7th Congress of Soviets elected the All-Russian Central Executive Committee (VTsIK). The list of central officials was headed by the beloved party leader, Comrade Lenin. A clear expression of the democratic nature of these elections to the VTsIK was the fact that the majority of its members were nominated by local officials from provinces, districts, and even volosts (among those elected to the VTsIK was myself, Kaganovich-Voronezhsky).
In July 1920, I was summoned to the Central Committee of the Party, where the Secretary of the Central Committee said to me: "The Central Committee, having discussed the situation in the Turkestan Republic (which then included today's Uzbek, Turkmen, Tajik, Kirghiz, and most of the Kazakh Republic), has decided to create a Turkestan Bureau of the Central Committee of the RCP (Communist Party of the Soviet Union) there. Considering your experience in Party and Soviet work, the Central Committee intends to nominate you to this Bureau of the Central Committee, as well as to include you in the existing Turkestan Commission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars. What is your attitude toward this, Comrade Kaganovich?" I replied that I would not like to leave Voronezh at the present time until the restoration of the economy and the strengthening of the lower organs of Soviet power are fully completed, but if the Central Committee deems it necessary to send me to Turkestan, I will accept this decision of the Central Committee and devote all my strength and experience to fulfilling the instructions of the Central Committee and the Government. (I confess, I had a serious personal reason for abandoning Turkestan—my wife, Maria Markovna, was suffering from tuberculosis, and the Turkestan climate was not favorable for her, but I was even embarrassed to mention my personal reasons to the Central Committee. Maria herself approved of my not mentioning this to the Central Committee and left with me.) "Very good," said Central Committee Secretary Krestinsky, "we assumed you would agree. As for Voronezh, the cadres there have strengthened and the restoration will proceed normally, and if necessary, the Central Committee will reinforce them. In Turkestan, however, the matter is more complex and difficult, which is why we are sending hundreds of workers there on Comrade Lenin's orders.

"On his instructions, we've summoned you. When you return from Voronezh to leave for Turkestan, Comrade Lenin will receive you. Just don't linger too long; we're giving you a maximum of one week to hand over your duties."
The matter was complicated by the fact that Comrade Sergushev, the chairman of the provincial party committee, announced that he was asking me to report to the Central Committee, that he, too, agreed and even requested that the Central Committee send him to Turkestan. I promised him and fulfilled his request—the Central Committee passed a resolution to send Comrade Sergushev to Turkestan. Following me, he left for Turkestan for party work; there, he carried out leadership work in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkestan and was of great service. At the insistence of the comrades—members of the presidium of the provincial executive committee—the handover of affairs culminated in the convening of a plenary session of the provincial executive committee, where I delivered the presidium's report, which was approved. I also spoke about the tasks and expressed my good wishes to them. They returned the favor and extended their kind words and best wishes to me.

Chapter 7

IN TURKESTAN

I asked for the opportunity to study the Central Committee's materials on Turkestan, and above all, the decisions of the Central Committee and the Government. I then contacted the People's Commissariat of Nationalities, where I became more familiar with not only the materials and the situation in Turkestan but also books on pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary Turkestan. All this not only enriched me but also sparked a great interest in Turkestan and cemented my agreement to go there.

All this prepared me for my conversation with Lenin. The first question Comrade Lenin asked me was about the situation in Voronezh Province. I think it stemmed not only from a desire to learn the actual situation but also from the need to determine whether it would be advisable to move me from Voronezh.

I briefly reported on the work accomplished to restore the economy based on the decisions of the 9th Party Congress and on strengthening our position in the countryside, but without embellishment, I was self-critical. I spoke of the continuing destruction and shortcomings both in the economy and in the lower organs of Soviet power; of the remaining kulak-bandit elements in a number of volosts (districts) and of our struggle against them. I described the measures we were taking to fulfill the tasks set in the Central Committee's theses, "The Polish Front and Our Tasks," and of the positive revolutionary-patriotic mood of the workers and peasants and their confidence in our victory over the Polish lords and their patrons—the Entente imperialists.

“Yes,” said Comrade Lenin, “at the 9th Party Congress we were already counting on a transition to peaceful construction, but our enemies—

"The international imperialists are not relenting and have made a new attempt to push us back at the hands of the Polish gentry and Wrangel. But their new campaign is unfolding under more favorable conditions for us than in 1918-1919. True, our troops are dispersed, while the Poles' are concentrated, but since war has been forced upon us, we will once again subordinate everything to the interests of the war with the White Poles and Wrangel—we will do everything for victory. It is good that you in Voronezh are mobilizing all your forces for this. As for the destruction and shortages in the economy, they exist everywhere, especially where the front passed. Still, it seems that things are better in Voronezh than in other, especially remote regions, such as Turkestan, so if you are leaning toward remaining in Voronezh, that is wrong."

I told Comrade Lenin that initially, during our conversation with the Central Committee, I had indeed expressed the idea that I would like to complete the work of economic restoration in Voronezh Province. "But while studying the Central Committee's decisions and materials on Turkestan, I became not only interested but also inspired by the desire to go there to work. And now, especially after my conversation with you, I would be very eager to go there and devote all my energy and strength to fulfilling the tasks set by the Central Committee."

"It's very good," said Comrade Lenin, "that you've shown interest and are willing to go there, because not everyone is eager to go there. This is very important, because in Turkestan, things are more difficult and complex. The British imperialists are engaged in treacherous intrigues there. In Bukhara, where the Emir still sits, suppressing the growing revolutionary movement there, turning Bukhara into a base for the Turkestan Basmachi, we must help the Bukharan revolutionaries overthrow and expel the Emir. This will deal a blow to the plans of the British imperialists and their efforts to foment and spread Basmachi in Turkestan. We must expedite the elimination of Basmachi and prevent a new escalation and expansion of the Turkestan front.

"Of course," said Comrade Lenin, "the task here is not purely military, and perhaps not so much military as general political and socio-economic, especially in relation to the local peasantry. From the materials and decisions we have adopted, you have seen that much has already been done, but even more needs to be done. The Turkestan Commission of the All-Russian Central Executive

Committee and the Council of People's Commissars, created by the Central Committee, has done significant work in the Turkestan Republic. A lot of it has been done, especially

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Comrades Frunze and Kuibyshev have done much, but from the standpoint of strengthening party leadership and consolidating all communist forces, there is still a lot of work to be done. "The most dangerous thing," said Comrade Lenin, "is that elements of great-power chauvinism still wield great influence in Turkestan, delaying the training of cadres from local nationalities and their advancement to leading state and party positions. Their arguments against the advancement of cadres from local nationalities, claiming that they are incapable of leadership, are anti-party. These are views hostile to communism. If, firstly, these local people are incapable today, they will learn through practice; secondly, there are already capable, fully trained, mature cadres, and they should be promoted more boldly. What do you think about this?" Lenin asked me. I replied that I completely agreed. "After all," I said, "we workers ourselves were not prepared for governance immediately after the October Revolution, and while we made mistakes and shortcomings, we have learned and continue to learn." "Exactly," exclaimed Comrade Lenin, "but, unfortunately, many do not apply this experience to the so-called nationalists. Have you read the latest decisions of the Central Committee on Turkestan?" Comrade Lenin asked me. "Yes," I replied, "I have." "I have two requests for you," said Comrade Lenin: "You should personally handle 1) the food issue and 2) the restoration of cotton growing. Both of these issues are of the utmost importance and urgency for the Government, and the Turkestan Bureau of the Central Committee and the Turkestan Commission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars must devote special attention to them."

I must say that I was so moved by this extensive conversation and Comrade Lenin's statements that I could only respond briefly: "I understand well, Vladimir Ilyich, your instructions and the significance of the tasks you have set, and I will personally draw all the necessary conclusions in all my concrete practical work. It is difficult for me now to say to what extent I will cope with these tasks, but I will tell you one thing, our leader and teacher: I will devote all my strength, energy, and experience to justifying your trust. To this end, I will also learn as I work under new conditions." "Very well," said Comrade Lenin. "To teach others, one must necessarily learn oneself, and continually."

In Moscow, having appeared at the Central Committee, I received in my hands the decision of the Central Committee on my appointment as a member of the Turkestan Bureau of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) and a member of the Turkestan Commission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars, and I considered it possible

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to leave. Then I received a mandate signed by the Chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, Comrade Kalinin, the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, Comrade Lenin, and the Secretary of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, Comrade Yenukidze. Needless to say, this mandate amazed and moved me. It's no joke to act on behalf of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars! Such responsibility and such trust, entailing many obligations. At the same time, this mandate, signed by Lenin, heightened my sense of responsibility and dignity. For many years, I treasured this mandate as a sacred relic, but then, to ensure the safety of the document bearing Lenin and Kalinin's signatures, I donated it to the V. I. Lenin Central Museum.

I left with a large group (about 100 people) of party and Soviet workers selected by the Central Committee of the Party to work in the Turkestan Republic.

On September 19, 1920, the 9th Congress of Soviets of the Turkestan Republic opened. This congress not only consolidated and formalized, so to speak, the decisions and resolutions of the

preceding 5th Congress of the Communist Party of Turkestan, but also adopted a number of important laws, most importantly, a new Constitution of the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. Along with Comrades Kuibyshev, Frunze, Sokolnikov, and other members of the Turkburo and the Turkcommission, I had the opportunity to actively participate in the drafting of this 1920 Constitution of the Turkestan Republic. It differed from the previous Constitution, adopted in 1918, primarily in that it codified all the new achievements achieved over those two years: the composition of the People's Commissariats was clarified, and amendments were introduced to address the period of Turkestan's severance of ties with the central government. At the same time, the rights and responsibilities of republican authorities and local regional executive committees in the economic and administrative spheres have been expanded.
The approved Constitution of 1920 was based on the Constitution of the RSFSR both in content and in style - in form, it corresponded to the position of the Turkestan Republic as autonomous and at the same time strengthened the national Soviet statehood of the Turkestan Republic, laying the foundations for closer ties and rapprochement of the working nations of Turkestan with all the peoples of the RSFSR and, above all, with the Great Russian people.
On the advice of the Turkestan Bureau of the Central Committee of the RCP(b), the final session of the IX Congress of Soviets was held in the old city -

Tashkent, where the population was almost exclusively Muslim—Uzbeks. Workers from the new city, of course, also attended. It's difficult to convey the enthusiasm that reigned at this expanded meeting. The invited Uzbek workers were the most active, along with a group of farmers and village proletarians invited from the villages. A separate group of Muslim religious leaders, including mullahs who recognized Soviet power and were invited by us to this meeting, stood out. The most important speeches were not so much those of the leaders as those of ordinary, grassroots people—workers, artisans, farmers, chayrikers, and marunkers—who warmly and wholeheartedly welcomed the Party, the Congress of Soviets, and the great Lenin who had secured their social and national liberation.
Following the Fifth Congress of the Communist Party of Turkestan and the Ninth Congress of Soviets of the Turkestan Republic, reports on their decisions were conducted in all organizations. On the advice of the Turkestan Bureau of the Central Committee of the RCP(b), the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkestan did not limit itself to covering only regional, city, and large district organizations; instead, all grassroots party organizations were covered in reports. It cannot be said that the criticism of the Turkestan communists, expressed in the decisions of the Fifth Party Congress and even in the decisions of the Central Committee of the RCP(b), was enthusiastically received by all organizations in Turkestan without exception. There were also statements expressing disagreement with the course of the struggle against great-power local nationalism, as well as calls for purging the party organization of them and all other "mazuriks." Even at a meeting of communists in the Zheleznodorozhny district in Tashkent, where I had the opportunity to deliver a report, the mood among some communists was oppositional. It took a lot of hard work and mobilizing the best forces of the healthy part of the organization to ensure that a resolution fully endorsing the decisions of the Fifth Congress of the Communist Party of Turkestan, based on the decisions of the Central Committee of the RCP(b), received a solid majority.
Although I had already spoken in the Old City at the final session of the IX Congress of Soviets, I was also nervous here at the party meeting, because the audience was new to me, and most importantly, my oratorical habit of maintaining contact with the audience during a speech encountered a language barrier here: the audience did not know Russian.

language, and I didn't know Uzbek. But I saw that the audience greeted the most spirited parts of my speech with applause, especially when I mentioned Lenin's name! The meeting ended with the adoption of a resolution fully supporting the decisions of the Fifth Congress and the Central Committee of the RCP(b), and, to thunderous applause, the acceptance of a greeting to Comrade Lenin.

There was a small, for that time, unique episode at the meeting. I'm a bit hesitant about whether to recount it here, but after thinking about it, I believe it contains an ideological and political lesson that's useful to know, so I will. The thing is, as one of the meeting leaders, Comrade Khakimov, told me, they hadn't anticipated that I wouldn't be able to finish my report before sunset. The meeting was in the garden, so it turned out that during the second half of my report, the gathering began to gradually disperse; that is, some began to slowly get up and leave. Naturally, I was perplexed, not understanding what was going on. The meeting leaders were also very confused, and they sheepishly told me, "The thing is, the sun was just setting, and some of the believers went to pray to Allah, after which they'll return immediately, but we'll give them a proper talk." I calmed them down, suggested calling a break, and during the break I told them how Lenin had instructed us to take into account even prejudices, including religious ones, overcoming them not by command and coercion, but by deep, long-term ideological propaganda work among the masses, especially among those communists and their sympathizers who still retained the threads that connect faith in Allah with faith in communist ideas.

The tasks of organizing and streamlining the work of the Council of People's Commissars of the Turkestan Republic were more difficult and complex, since its work in implementing the above-mentioned program was more voluminous and complex than that of the Turkestan Central Executive Committee. We developed and adopted Regulations on the work of the Council of People's Commissars: following the example of the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR, a Small Council of People's Commissars was formed, but, given the specifics of Turkestan and, in particular, the emergence of a new leadership requiring particularly coordinated and supportive work, we decided to make this Small Council of People's Commissars something like the Presidium of the Council of People's Commissars. Therefore, unlike the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR, where the members of the Small Council of People's Commissars are deputy people's commissars, in the Turkestan Council of People's Commissars the Small Council of People's Commissars was composed of

from the people's commissars of the main branches of economic and administrative life and was headed by the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars himself.

It's impossible to say that everything planned was accomplished, but the work of the Council of People's Commissars was undoubtedly improved in precisely this direction. All personnel issues, particularly the nomination of Deputy Chairmen of the Council of People's Commissars and People's Commissars, were not resolved easily or immediately. I recall a conversation, or even an argument, with the First Deputy Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars at a joint meeting of the Turkestan Bureau and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkestan. I recall Comrade Atabayev, as Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, making a proposal, or rather, requesting the appointment of Comrade L.M. Kaganovich as First Deputy. "Comrade Kaganovich," Atabayev said, "was particularly keen to have me nominated for Chairman. Let him help me handle this matter." It must be said that some supported this, but during the discussion, the majority of members of the Turkestan Bureau of the Central Committee agreed that, although this would be very good, it had serious drawbacks. I remember one comrade saying, "This could be interpreted as 'Danilo didn't die, he was just overcome by illness.' They replaced Lyubimov with Atabaev, and now, supposedly, they've installed Kaganovich as first deputy, who will effectively be in charge." Other comrades said it was inappropriate to appoint the Deputy Chairman of the Turkmen Bureau of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) and the Turkmen Commission of the All-

Russian Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars as Deputy Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Turkmen Republic, and so on. I personally also thought this was inappropriate, but, as the saying goes, I jumped from the frying pan into the fire. Since, despite any decision on the First Deputy Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, the question of providing serious assistance to Atabaev and improving the work of the Council of People's Commissars remains acute, some comrades, including Sokolnikov, citing the example of the center (where Stalin, a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee, is People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate, which is a people's commissariat of a special type, effectively interfering with the work of all people's commissariats), suggested that it would be best to appoint Comrade Kaganovich People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate, who, relying on the inspectorate, would be better able to fulfill the functions of the Turkcommission—control over the implementation of laws and decrees of the Central Government, bring the state apparatus to a "Christian" form, and genuinely help Comrade Atabaev without outwardly emphasizing his position. There was a certain logic to this. Everyone agreed with this, and I agreed too.

because this was a massive, newly organized work that would give me the opportunity to promote and train local workers, involve the masses in the management of the state, truly penetrate into the depths of Soviet construction, get into the thicket of the state apparatus and clean out its “Augean stables.”

So, I was appointed People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate of the Turkestan Republic. This truly gave me the opportunity not only to combat negative aspects but also, by studying the work of the People's Commissariats, to help restructure them and transform them into a fully functioning, well-organized state. This was one of the Council of People's Commissars' first and most important tasks, because with the existing haphazard and even random structure of the People's Commissariats, it was impossible to successfully fulfill the assigned tasks.

The aforementioned work of the Turkburo of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) - the Turkcommission, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkestan, the Council of People's Commissars and the TurkCEC, as well as all the work of the party organization and the Soviets in the area of party, Soviet and economic construction, took place in combat frontline conditions.

The Turkestan Front played a major historical role in the victories achieved during the Civil War. Under the command of the talented commander Mikhail Vasilyevich Frunze, the heroic troops of the Turkestan Front, with the active leadership of Turkestan's Party and Soviet organizations, liberated a vast territory—from Orenburg, Orsk, Uralsk, Aktyubinsk, Semirechye, and even the Transcaspian region—from the White Guard, Cossack counterrevolutionary hordes, invaders, and the counterrevolutionary feudal nationalists who served them.

The lifting of the blockade of Turkestan and the opening of a direct route from the center to the interior of Turkestan were of particular political, economic, and military significance for Turkestan and the entire country. The Soviet Red Army's advance into Turkestan brought the peoples of Turkestan—the Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Tajiks, and Turkmen—not the enslavement inflicted many years earlier by the Tsarist troops, but the complete and final liberation of all the peoples of Turkestan from all vestiges of colonialism, from attempts at renewed colonial enslavement by the White Guard-Cossacks and interventionist British imperialists, and liberation from feudal oppression within the indigenous peoples themselves.

Turkestan. For Soviet Socialist Russia and its proletariat and peasantry, this successful offensive of the Turkestan Front was crucial for consolidating the gains of the revolution, and in particular for supplying textile factories with cotton, industry with Emba and Chimkent oil, and so on.
The liberation of Khiva and the reconquest of Transcaspia—its liberation—led, of course, to a strengthening of the internal and military situation in Turkestan. One could say that the organized White Guard-Cossack and interventionist fronts were largely eliminated. But it would be a mistake to think that all counterrevolutionary and interventionist forces that required an organized frontline war against them were eliminated. These were primarily the Basmachi in Fergana, in Turkmenistan (Dzhunaid Khan), and Emir's Bukhara. This is precisely why the great Lenin, fearing demobilization sentiments in Turkestan, tirelessly demanded, above all, political measures—the correct and consistent implementation of party policy in Turkestan. Lenin fully agreed with Stalin, who, in a letter to Lenin on October 26, 1920, speaking of Ordzhonikidze's successes in the Caucasus, wrote: "I have no doubt that if our policy in Turkestan had been conducted as skillfully, we would not have tens of thousands of Basmachi." All the decisions taken by the Central Committee of the RCP(b) in June and July 1920, all the measures taken in Turkestan by both the Turkburo and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkmenistan, the Council of People's Commissars, and the Turkestan Central Executive Committee to implement them, including economic ones, were aimed precisely at this goal. But, of course, these measures primarily included military measures. That is why, in a conversation before leaving for Turkestan, Comrade Lenin told me: "You, Comrade Kaganovich, will have to engage not only in Party and Soviet work, but also in military matters, since the Basmachi are still rampaging." Although significant victories had been achieved against the Fergana Basmachi by September and October, including Madamin Bek, the Basmachi continued to perpetrate their vile deeds: they attacked villages, urban settlements, factories, and railways, blowing up and destroying everything in their path and killing residents, especially workers, including Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Tajiks, and Kyrgyz. They were inspired and supported by aid coming from Bukhara, that is, from the British. They marched to Bukhara under the banner of the emir (in reality, the British imperialists).

All sorts of rabble flocked from the remnants of Kolchak's and Dutov's defeated armies, the defeated Semirechye White Cossack rebels, and even fresh reinforcements of the Turkish counter-revolutionary anti-Kemalist forces led by the famous adventurer General Enver Pasha.
By late February or early March, the Emir of Bukhara and his close retainers (presumably including his harem) barely escaped with their lives, fleeing to Afghanistan. But the struggle continued, and only at the end of 1921 was the remnants of the Emir's army finally eliminated and our Red Army units withdrew from Eastern Bukhara, being replaced by units of the Bukharan army. The working Uzbeks and especially the Tajiks who inhabited Bukhara raised their heads, preparing for a new Soviet life free from feudal lords, beys, and the Emir's despots.
The struggle against internal Basmachi in Fergana in late 1920 and early 1921 dealt them serious blows. However, it must be said that the struggle against internal Basmachi dragged on, sometimes ebbing and sometimes escalating. The defeated Emir's bands partially united with the Fergana Basmachi—British agents and officer instructors organized them into regiments and hundreds, training them in military tactics and combat. All the counterrevolutionaries of Turkestan, as well as the remnants of Kolchak's regime, including Tatar-Bashkir counterrevolutionary nationalists, flocked to the Fergana Basmachi regions. Nationalists—former "Soviet" figures, such as the deputy chairman of the Turkish Central Executive Committee, Tyuryakul Dzhanazakov, and others—also fled there. The rich and wealthy, and especially the clergy, played a significant counterrevolutionary and reactionary role. They exploited the difficulties, food procurements, and the mistakes our people were making. But the longer the struggle dragged on, the more and more farmers, poor peasants, and farm laborers defected to our side. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of

Turkestan and local committees sent trained agitators from among Muslim workers, who successfully waged political warfare against Basmachi, rich, and religious agitation.
A major role was played by the brave Chekists, who skillfully and selflessly fought under the leadership of Dzerzhinsky, and in Turkestan - Peters and such old Bolsheviks as Privorotsky and Bulganin and others, against the counter-revolution, against the Basmachi and the spy and counter-revolutionary forces that inspired them. They

They provided valuable assistance to the Turkestan Bureau of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) and the Revolutionary Military Council of the front. Their contributions to strengthening the Soviet state in Turkestan were significant.
The entire life of Soviet Turkestan was inextricably linked with the life of the entire Soviet Republic. At the end of 1920, after the victory over Kolchak, Denikin, and the foreign interventionists, the Soviet Union gained the opportunity to move on to a new stage of peaceful socialist construction. We conducted all our ideological, propaganda, and practical economic work locally based on the Central Committee's directives and Lenin's speeches. I remember how we delivered mass reports and lectures based on Lenin's aforementioned speeches, where we, the leaders, spoke and saw how well the masses, including railway workers, responded.
Of course, we didn't limit ourselves to speeches; we worked intensively and in a businesslike manner. Leading party and Soviet bodies began to scrupulously and meticulously seek out reserves and goods, including for trade with Bukhara and Khiva. Generally speaking, it must be said that the formation of the Bukhara and Khiva People's Soviet Republics brought us much joy, but also many new concerns in providing them with the necessary organizational and material assistance. We focused our efforts on transportation, primarily rail. We vigorously worked to restore small industrial enterprises to increase the production of consumer goods, especially for the cotton-growing regions. Cotton was the focus of our work.
And at this difficult moment - in contrast to Lenin's directives on overcoming the greatest difficulties - Trotsky imposes on the party a "discussion about trade unions."
On January 14, 1921, the commission of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) officially released the Lenin Platform under the title “Draft Resolution of the 10th Congress of the RCP on the Role and Tasks of Trade Unions.”
After this, Pravda published platforms of the “Trotskyists,” “Bukharinites (buffer),” the “Democratic Centralism” group, the “Workers’ Opposition,” and others.
The fierce struggle was waged primarily around the platforms: Leninist, Trotskyist, and Bufferno-Bukharinist, as well as the "Workers' Opposition." This was the case here, in Turkestan, and, apparently, in most party organizations. It was precisely during this period that the Tashkent

In the Communist Party and other party organizations, the debate about trade unions became particularly heated. We waged a particularly active struggle against the Trotskyists of the "Workers' Opposition," which was initially strong among railway workers. It is important to note that in our Turkestan organization, primarily in Tashkent, Trotskyists, Bukharinites, and even the so-called "Workers' Opposition" and nationalists formed a coalition against the Leninist Platform, opposing it as a united, unprincipled front.
The situation was even more acute among the unstable masses, where the petty-bourgeois element overwhelmed and fueled intra-party oppositions, especially the demagogically, falsely branded "Workers' Opposition," which played into the petty-bourgeois mood among the workers. That's why, after Brest, this was the most heated, critical, and dangerous debate for the party and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The struggle was fierce and difficult. Some modern historians simplify the situation, dismissively assessing the debate from the perspective of today, when every child knows that Trotsky was an enemy of the Party and Leninism, and that Bukharin had become a right-wing ideologist of the kulaks. The situation was different then, and while opposing Lenin, they disguised their right-wing opportunist, anti-Marxist, anti-Leninist proposals with leftist phrases and quasi-businesslike proposals. After all, many communists voted for them, against Lenin's platform, based on some kind of "businesslike" considerations, and among them were those who later fought against Trotsky. Even within the Central Committee itself, Trotsky and his ally Bukharin held almost half the votes, and this despite the great authority of a leader like Lenin. Our Central Committee was on the brink of a split. So the situation in the party was extremely critical; it was not for nothing that Lenin wrote the article "The Crisis of the Party."

"The Trotskyists, Bukharinists, the Workers' Opposition, and others—all taken together—were especially counting on the outlying organizations, including the Turkestan Party Organization, given its supposed backwardness as a outlying organization. But they failed to take into account that the Central Committee of the RCP(b) and Lenin personally had done much to raise its general party level as a Bolshevik organization. They, of course, and with some justification, were counting on national discord, including among the communists, which had recently

In the past, the debate took on a particularly acute character. They, particularly the Workers' Opposition, counted on the railway workers, among whom many were still infected with great-power chauvinism. The opposition also counted on local nationalists. It must be said that the debate on trade unions also stirred up other murky petty-bourgeois elements within and outside the party, and on issues not even directly related to trade unions.

In addition to, so to speak, objective factors, in Turkestan we have seen a breakthrough in the subjective factor of leadership, in the Turkestan Bureau of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) itself.

Sokolnikov, Chairman of the Central Committee's Turkburo, found himself among the leaders of the anti-Leninist Bukharin buffer group, which played at being a "buffer" but in reality advocated a Trotskyist platform against the Leninist platform. The only "relief" was that Sokolnikov had already been largely "ill" and had not actually led the Turkburo. This is precisely why the Turkburo had previously elected Comrade Kaganovich as Deputy Chairman of the Turkburo and the Turkburo Commission—this served me well during the discussion, giving me the opportunity to lead it while Sokolnikov was suffering from "buffer sickness."

Comrade Peters, a member of the Turkburo and the Turkcommission, was, generally speaking, a rather staunch Old Bolshevik. On this issue, he stood, as he said, on Comrade Dzerzhinsky's side, that is, he essentially supported Trotsky's platform. To all my attempts to dissuade him, arguing that this wasn't a departmental dispute and that, as an Old Bolshevik and a Central Committee-approved member of the Turkburo, he needed to be guided by party-wide considerations and fight Trotsky, he stubbornly and repeatedly replied, in monosyllables: "I trust, respect, and love Comrade Dzerzhinsky, and I will support his position."

As a result, it turned out that, as they say, by the will of fate, Comrade Kaganovich, a member of the Turkburo of the Central Committee, turned out to be the only one of the five members of the Turkburo who actively defended and fought for Lenin's platform in the Turkestan organization and led the struggle for the Leninist platform. (I am telling about this, of course, not to highlight my personality, but simply to show the difficulties, or, to put it in a high style, the tragedy

The current situation in the leadership of the Turkburo of the Central Committee. By this I also want to say that these difficulties forced me to pull myself together, to draw from myself those

leadership strengths that under normal circumstances would have seemed unattainable for me.) My position was eased by the fact that I was Deputy Chairman of the Turkburo, and that the other members of the Turkburo did not interfere, at a critical moment in the discussion, by convening, on behalf of the Turkburo of the Central Committee, joint meetings of the Turkburo with the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Labor, in which we, Leninists, held a majority. True, this majority was not immediately determined, and during the first period of the discussion, the anti-Leninist wing was quite strong and significant, and in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Labor, in particular, the former leading official of the Moscow Regional Committee, the former "left communist" Solovyov, was particularly active, developing specific anti-Leninist work within the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Labor. Sergushev, who, along with other workers who had come from Moscow and Petrograd, fought resolutely for the Leninist platform, actively opposed him in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. We, the Leninists, carried out extensive individual work to consolidate the strength of the majority of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which had adopted a firmly Leninist position. Nationalist leaders such as Rakhimbayev, Atabayev, Babajanov, Sultan Khodjayev, Khadzhanov, and others performed particularly well. Tyuryakulov initially held a hesitant position. Our main and initial battle unfolded within the Tashkent party organization, where the situation was unstable during the initial period of discussion.

At the meeting convened to discuss the plan for the discussion, we decided to concentrate our efforts primarily on the Zheleznodorozhny district, the decisive district in the Tashkent organization, not only because it was the most proletarian, but also because, unfortunately, it was the least reliable in terms of the Leninist platform—the main forces of the Workers' Opposition, led by the railway chief Pravdin, were concentrated there. There was indeed still strong dissatisfaction there with the party's national policy, the alleged suppression of European-Russian cadres, which was exploited by the hidden forces of great-power chauvinism and opposition groups, who also exploited the common difficulties. Experience showed that our decision to concentrate primarily on the Zheleznodorozhny district was correct. I remember that when we were refining our

In the discussion plan, I spoke out against starting with a district-wide meeting. My proposal to begin with the grassroots cells was accepted, first and foremost with the main railway workshops—the largest enterprise in Tashkent. We believed that these were truly genuine proletarians who had proven themselves in the revolution, and they were the ones who needed to be guided along the right path—to win over this cell, transform it into a stronghold for Lenin, and successfully wage the struggle in the remaining railway cells. I remember that the meeting of the railway workshop communists dragged on and turned into three meetings. I attended all three. The entire leadership of the railway district, and not only this district, was also present. Of course, Pravdin, Semenov, Kazarinov, Weingart, and other leaders of the opposition were present. Representatives of each group defended their position. To avoid any pretext for demagoguery about pressure "from above," we decided that the first to speak in favor of Lenin's platform would be not me, but the veteran communist Comrade Manzhara, a local railroad worker. Before my speech, many other speakers, mostly workers, had spoken in defense of the Leninist platform. These were simple, compelling speeches by people who understood the issue in their own way and who, for the most part, firmly supported Lenin's platform. I remember them saying, "The Workers' Opposition" and the Trotskyites and Bukharinites, while expressing different ideas, are all saying the same thing: "the merging of trade unions with the state," the transfer of economic management to the trade unions, and so on. But for us workers, this doesn't suit us—ours is a Soviet state, a workers' state, but its apparatus is overrun with bureaucrats, and merging it with the trade unions will not reduce them, but rather increase them. Now, at least, if you can't get through to Comrade Pravdin, the railway chief, you can go to the trade union and complain. Although not always, the trade union will provide some assistance, but after "merging" or transferring management to the unions, where will

you go? You won't always get through to the boss. No, comrades, we must, as Lenin says, preserve the trade unions as a mass organization of workers that will teach us how to manage the economy, connect us with the Party, and combat bureaucracy and indiscipline among the workers. Our main task now, as Comrade Lenin says, is to emerge from the devastation, to provide more goods to both workers and peasants—we must devote everything to this.

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Force. And transferring from one place to another won't increase goods. And if it's as Trotsky says—production on a military scale and workers organized like soldiers—then everything will collapse completely—the worker isn't a soldier and won't allow himself to be commanded like in the army. The Workers' Opposition seems to be managing everything smoothly, gently, and democratically, but its proposals will lead to the complete collapse of economic management and labor discipline among workers and employees, and without it, who knows where we'll end up—we'll be eating each other, there will be no workers' solidarity. "We're surprised," they said, "by Comrade Pravdin, the head of the railway. He spoke for the Workers' Opposition, supposedly as a democrat, but who among us doesn't know that he's not a democrat, but a bureaucrat; you can't get through to him (they cited examples). Let him tell us who'll give up his place to whom—will he give up his place to our Union representative, or what? Or will they, arm in arm, manage the railway together?" "But, comrades, this will be such a 'hug' that Pravdin will strangle our poor trade unionist in his embrace. It seems to be that in words we have great rights, but in reality our union will be deprived of even the rights it currently enjoys. No, comrades," they concluded, "the truth lies not with Comrade Pravdin and his leader Shlyapnikov, but with Comrade Lenin—he proposes to us: strengthen the trade unions from below, and not by 'shaking them up' from above, as Trotsky proposes; give them the opportunity for real control and the fight against bureaucrats; help manage production and transport, so as to speed up their recovery—for this, we workers will consciously participate in management, in the organization of labor and discipline, and thereby contribute to the rapid recovery of the entire economy." They concluded their speeches with an appeal to communists to follow Lenin and vote for his proposals—this is the surest and most reliable path for the workers. These speeches made a great impression. Sensing the danger of their failure, the factionalists escalated the meeting, shouting all sorts of remarks, interrupting the speakers and preventing them from speaking, but this only served to anger the mass of communists. After the speeches of opposition leaders Pravdin and others, who were attempting to unite the forces of all opposition groups, L. M. Kaganovich spoke.

From the very beginning of my speech I stated that I was speaking in defense of the Leninist platform, in contrast to comrades Pravdin, Semenov and others who, in defending their platforms,

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At the same time, they were currying favor with other groups, including the great-power chauvinists, in order to gain their favor and form a coalition to win a majority. But against whom was the majority? Against Lenin, against his only true and reliable platform for the party and the proletariat. "If you give me time," I said, "I would like to tell you something about the history of this discussion." (Everyone agreed to give me as much time as needed.)

More than 80% of the assembled communists voted for our Lenin resolution. It's also worth noting that the locomotive engineers of the Tashkent depot also participated in this meeting, which was crucial for influencing the communists of the entire railway junction and even the entire railway. Following this meeting, meetings were held in all the cells of the Zheleznodorozhny district, at which leading figures from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Tashkent and the Tashkent City Committee spoke. I also personally spoke at a meeting of track workers and construction workers, who unanimously supported Lenin's platform, and at a meeting of communist wagon workers, who, although with a small majority, also defeated the anti-Leninists. Only at a

meeting of the communists of the road administration and traffic service did our resolution not immediately receive a majority. But overall, the majority of the cells of the Zheleznodorozhny district adopted the Leninist position. Therefore, we were confident that at the meeting of the Zheleznodorozhny district as a whole, we, the Leninists (as we called ourselves then), would prevail. Despite this, we were ready for battle. Both the rank and file and we, the leading figures, were prepared to speak. In my speech at the district meeting, I not only repeated what I had said at the meeting in the locomotive and wagon workshops but also enriched my speech with new arguments. As we expected, the extensive work carried out in the cells yielded results, and the Zheleznodorozhny District adopted firm Leninist positions not only on trade unions but on all party and political issues. Although this determined our victory in the Tashkent organization, we not only did not weaken our ideological offensive, but, drawing on the experience of the Zheleznodorozhny District, we continued our offensive in the city district, where the anti-Leninists had the strongest positions. The struggle was particularly intense in the cells of Soviet institutions and some small enterprises, although most of these enterprises followed our lead. As a result,

As a result of the persistent ideological struggle in these cells, the majority of the cells of the Soviet institutions spoke out in favor of Lenin's platform, although the anti-Leninists had many of their supporters among them, especially the "bufferists."

The situation in military organizations was difficult, as it involved fighting a platform representing the positions of the People's Commissar for Military Affairs. The Front Commander also "buffered" the situation. We began our struggle among the military with the command staff courses, where we had a strong core of Leninists; we invited the top brass of other units to their meeting. After three days of struggle and sharp speeches, including those by Kaganovich, a member of the Front Revolutionary Military Council, we achieved good results—a majority of the meeting adopted a resolution supporting Lenin's platform! This secured the victory of the Leninists in most military units.

Ultimately, at its citywide party conference, the Tashkent organization rejected all platforms by an overwhelming majority and adopted the Leninist Platform on Trade Unions. In its resolution, it particularly emphasized the task of preserving and strengthening party unity! Our entire successful struggle in Tashkent had a beneficial impact on the entire Turkestan region and was of great significance for the victory of the Leninist Platform in other organizations, primarily in Samarkand, Ashgabat, Fergana, and elsewhere. Our representatives were sent to these centers and other districts to assist the party committees.

In the first half of February 1921 (February 10-17), the All-Turkestan Regional Party Conference convened. The question of trade unions was the main issue of the conference. Comrade L. M. Kaganovich delivered the report "On the Role of Trade Unions - for Lenin's Platform Adopted by the Leading Party Bodies" on behalf of the Turkestan Bureau of the Central Committee of the RCP and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkestan. The co-reporter for Trotsky and Bukharin's platform was Preobrazhensky, one of the most prominent representatives of the opposition (who was then the secretary of the Central Committee), who had come specially from Moscow, and Pravdin spoke as a co-reporter from the Workers' Opposition. I will not recount here the course of the reports and debates, including my report, I must only say that my first speech at the railway workers' meeting formed the basis for all my subsequent speeches, supplemented and enriched by

I studied the entire course of the discussion, and especially Lenin's reports and speeches. At the party conference, I summarized the entire discussion in the Turkestan party organization. The conference was held at a high ideological and political level. I remember Preobrazhensky telling me

after the conference, "I didn't think I'd see such a high level of party leadership here in Turkestan." And this despite the fact that he and Pravdin had been given "fifths."
After a heated and heated debate, in which local comrades from the "nationalists" also spoke, the conference adopted Lenin's platform by a roll-call vote with an overwhelming majority. The platforms of Trotsky-Bukharin, the Workers' Opposition, and others, taken together, received only 20 votes.
The Turkestan Regional Conference, in accordance with its principled line, elected a delegation to the 10th All-Russian Party Congress consisting of 20 delegates. Among them were Comrades Burnashev, L.M. Kaganovich, Karimov, Mavlyanbekov, Meshcheryakova, Rakhimbaev, Sergushev, Solts, Tyuryakulov, Fokin, Khodjaev, Khudaibergenov, Safarov, and others.
After the 10th Congress, in connection with the congress's resolution to strengthen trade unions with party workers, the Central Committee sent me, as someone with experience in trade union work, to the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions as head of the organizational department. But a short time later, due to complications in Turkestan and the replacement of the Central Committee's Turkestan Bureau with new members, I was reinstated in the Central Committee's Turkestan Bureau and the Turkestan Commission of the All-Union Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars. Returning to Turkestan after a short break, I energetically set about implementing the decisions of the 10th Party Congress with renewed vigor.
Arriving in Tashkent, I saw that the best communists of Turkestan were diligently learning the lessons taught by Lenin about working under the new conditions of the NEP, but there were many people who had not learned Lenin’s policy.
Without embellishing the historical reality, it must be stated frankly that in outlying areas like Turkestan, there were far more communists, workers, and peasants than, for example, in Moscow, who did not understand the New Economic Policy in the Leninist sense and, what's worse, did not accept it. This also concealed the consequences of the imperialist and civil wars, which led to devastation in already weak industry, transportation, agriculture, and food shortages.

and in industrial goods supply, they were particularly significant. The best, most advanced workers supported the party in its policies, while some workers and communists, outraged by the restoration of private production and trade—that is, elements of capitalism—opposed it, especially fueled by the demagogic leftist phrases of the opposition. There were also those who, influenced by the agitation of class-hostile forces, seriously supported a return to capitalism. Kulak-bey and nationalist forces—both great-power and local—each in their own way, after the introduction of the NEP, developed exceptionally intense activity not only in anti-Soviet, anti-Party agitation, but also in organizing counterrevolutionary forces. Great-power chauvinists, defending the kulaks and a return to the old colonial order, sought the repeal of land reform and the return of the expropriated lands to the kulaks, citing the NEP as a justification for this. Muslim nationalists, defending the beys, demanded the full restoration of the free development of trade and capitalist relations and the restoration of bey authority in Turkestan. Anarcho-petty-bourgeois, declassed elements vehemently expressed their discontent, stirring up trouble, even going so far as to speak out against the Communist Party—"for Soviets without communists." Under these circumstances, the leading bodies of the Turkestan Communist Party mobilized all the best communists and honest proletarians to develop and strengthen propaganda and agitation explaining the true Leninist essence of the New Economic Policy, and to expose and repel any and all hostile forces. The Party did not limit itself to theoretical, ideological, political, and educational work—which had been actively and broadly conducted within the Turkestan Party Organization between the Fifth and Sixth Party Congresses and after the Sixth Party Congress—the Party decided to organizationally strengthen its ranks through a purge in 1921.
Overall, the purge was conducted openly, with the active participation of leading non-party workers. As a result of the purge, the Turkestan Party Organization, which had just over 40,000 members at

the start of the purge, purged approximately 10,000 people from its ranks, with just over 3,000 being converted to candidate status, and approximately 2,000 leaving voluntarily, without waiting for expulsion. Among those expelled were approximately 500 people from non-proletarian parties, especially former Socialist Revolutionaries, of whom there were very few in Turkestan.

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There were a considerable number of them, around 500 former White Guards and Basmachi. Thus, the Communist Party of Turkestan grew stronger, its composition improved, its authority among the masses increased, and their trust in the party increased.
In March 1922, the Sixth Regional Conference of the Communist Party of Turkestan was held. The conference elected 20 delegates to the Eleventh Party Congress, including L.M. Kaganovich. After the Eleventh Congress, I was summoned to the Central Committee to see Kuibyshev, and then to Stalin and Molotov, who offered me a transfer to the Central Committee as head of the Organizational and Instructional Department. A decision was immediately made, which I informed the Turkestan delegates.

Chapter 8

ON THE ORGANIZATIONAL WORK OF THE PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE IN 1922-1925

NEW APPOINTMENT

In 1922, after the 11th Party Congress, at which I was a delegate from the Turkestan Party Organization, a big change occurred in my life, which determined my general Party and general state activities for many years: I was transferred to work in the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks).
Having arrived at the 11th Party Congress, having been elected, as at the 10th Congress, at the Party Conference of the Communist Party of the Turkestan Republic, I took an active part in the work of the Congress, and then participated in the development and discussion of decisions of the Politburo and the Organizing Bureau on Turkestan affairs, promoted practical, so-called, current issues of the Turkburo of the Central Committee and the Turkcommission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars in central institutions, and prepared for my return to Turkestan.
Before leaving, I stopped by to see my friend, Comrade Valerian Vladimirovich Kuibyshev, who had been elected, along with Comrades Stalin and Molotov, Secretary of the Party's Central Committee. Congratulating him on his election, I told him that I had stopped by to finalize the remaining unresolved Turkestan matters before leaving.
However, Valerian, smiling, said to me: “It seems that you, Lazar, will have to delegate these matters to someone else, because we in the Secretariat of the Central Committee have formed ideas about promoting you to a new job.”
When I remarked that I would like to complete my work in Turkestan without moving to new positions, Comrade Kuibyshev said that he was talking about promotion to a central position. “I, for one,” said Comrade Kuibyshev, “also worked in Turkestan, and now

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"In the Center. The Central Committee is currently selecting fresh people for the job." When I asked what to do, Comrade Kuibyshev said: "Let's go together to Comrade Stalin, and you'll find out there."

Comrade Stalin received me in the office of the General Secretary of the Central Committee in the house on Vozdvizhenka (now Kalinina Street)*.

Although I had known Comrade Stalin since June 1917, I confess that, when I visited him for the first time as General Secretary of the Central Committee, I felt a certain amount of tension, especially since I didn't know what proposal Comrade Stalin would present. But my tension quickly passed, as Comrade Stalin greeted me warmly, rose from the table, greeted me with a gentle handshake, invited me to sit down, and immediately began conversation.

"We," he said, "intend to hire you for the Central Committee and appoint you head of the Organizational and Instructional Department of the Central Committee. What is your attitude toward this proposal of ours?" This took me by surprise, and I did not answer right away. Comrade Stalin did not rush me, apparently realizing that I was preparing myself for an answer. After thinking for a moment, I said to Comrade Stalin, "The work is very large, and I am not sure whether I can handle it." Comrade Stalin smiled and said, "I certainly did not expect such uncertainty and doubt from you. Comrade Kuibyshev told me that you are a brave man, capable of daring, and some others even added that you have a certain dose of self-confidence, and then suddenly doubts and uncertainty appear. I," Comrade Stalin continued, "think that you are being needlessly poor. "You are, after all, a party organizer—you worked in 1918 on the All-Russian Collegium for the Organization of the Red Army, heading the organizational department. Most importantly, you have a long history of local party and Soviet work in the industrial and agricultural provinces and national republics. This is precisely what is currently especially needed by the Central Committee apparatus in its work to implement the decisions of the Eleventh Congress and the instructions of our teacher, Comrade Lenin. "I believe," concluded Comrade Stalin, "that we will do the right thing if we reject your doubts and accept the proposed decision."

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* In recent years, this large building has housed the Shchusev Institute of Architecture. It's certainly good that this institute was established in Moscow, but I can't help but say that it would have been more appropriate to memorialize this building as a party building, for example, as a branch of the Institute of Light and Electronics (IMEL) or another party museum institution, and to find another, older building in a classical style for the Shchusev Museum of Architecture, or to build a new one. Today, this building doesn't even have a memorial plaque commemorating the Central Committee of the RCP(b), through which tens, hundreds of thousands of party members and soldiers of the Civil War passed, settling their affairs with the leaders of the Secretariat of the Central Committee and its departments.

After this, Comrade Stalin spoke about the organizational tasks in essence, emphasizing with particular force the most important point of Comrade Lenin's report and closing remarks at the Eleventh Congress—his general conclusion that the key now is not the New Policy in the sense of a change in direction—the New Economic Policy has fully justified itself, the retreat is over—but the key to the situation lies in the organization of the verification of implementation, in people, in the selection of people.

"This brilliant idea of Lenin's," said Comrade Stalin, "is central to all the work of the Party and the Central Committee, especially organizational work. Some," Stalin said, "narrow these issues, failing to understand that by checking execution, Lenin meant all Party and Soviet leadership work from top to bottom, that checking execution must be the responsibility of all organizations and all Communists in Party and government bodies, but above all the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars. Checking execution requires high quality of the resolutions themselves, and after their adoption—clarity, the establishment of deadlines, the appointment of persons entrusted with the task, their implementation—in a word, profound responsibility. But to check, one must know what one is checking. It is therefore necessary to raise the level of work of all organizations, first and foremost, of the Party.

A well-organized performance audit accurately reports the state of work, exposes bureaucrats and criminals in the state apparatus, and eliminates shortcomings in the work of party organizations. The verification of implementation is not a one-sided check from top to bottom, but a mutual control of the practices of local organizations by central organizations and the orders of the Center by the practices of local organizations - this provides more opportunities to take into account experience and enrich the entire work.
Monitoring performance educates cadres, revealing their shortcomings and weaknesses. A factual review of the state of affairs is invariably linked to the assessment of cadres, their ideological commitment, their efficiency, their dedication to the cause, and their knowledge of the affairs they manage, with the replacement of those unsuitable with more qualified personnel. Speaking of cadre selection, Lenin meant not only their evaluation but also their potential for advancement, their development through work and study, primarily through honest criticism and self-criticism, and the development of workers' democracy in party, soviet, and trade union life. Without studying and personally getting to know people, the leadership can fall into bureaucratic slump.
It is necessary to improve the work of the entire apparatus of party organs, including the Central Committee, primarily its Organizational Department, to ensure the implementation of the congress resolution on organizational party building.

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"At the congress, in speeches," Comrade Stalin continued, "there were valid criticisms of the work of the Central Committee's Organizational Department. You, Comrade Kaganovich, will study these comments and address these shortcomings. In general, organizational work, especially at the present time, is directly linked to personnel selection, and perhaps in the near future we will have to consider merging two departments—the Organizational and Instructional Department and the Accounting and Distribution Department. But you, Comrade Kaganovich, will need to effectively take over the selection of personnel for party work right now—the Organizational and Instructional Department."
In short, there's a lot to do; we need to roll up our sleeves and get to work immediately, and we, turning to Comrade Kuibyshev and Comrade Molotov, who arrived a little later, will check on the implementation and help Comrade Kaganovich."
I tried to hint at the possibility of my going to Tashkent to report on the congress, but Comrade Stalin said, "We would all like to go to the field now to report, but there's a lot of work at the Center right now, implementing the decisions of the Eleventh Congress and Comrade Lenin's instructions. You, Comrade Kaganovich, must begin work at the Central Committee immediately—tomorrow. Your new appointment has been agreed upon with Comrade Lenin. Although he regrets your departure from Turkestan, in view of the importance of the Central Committee's organizational work, he agrees to this proposal."
Comrade Stalin went on to describe the great importance Lenin attached to the party's organizational work, beginning with the creation of a revolutionary working-class party of a new type, fundamentally different from the social-reformist parties of the West. "The party's organizational work cannot be narrowed; it must be understood more broadly; it is inevitably more closely linked to all party activities than other branches of party work, to the entire party's policy. As head of the Organizational Instruction Department of the Central Committee, you, Comrade Kaganovich, will have to use your leadership experience in the provincial and territorial committees (Turkmenistan Bureau) to assist the Secretariat of the Central Committee in coordinating the work of the Organizational Department with that of other departments of the Central Committee.
I advise you to study again and again all the great and valuable things our teacher, Lenin, said and wrote about party building. For example, although I'm older than you, as I begin my work on the party itself, I'm rereading party decisions again and again, especially what my teacher, Comrade Lenin, wrote and said about the party and party building.
Speaking further about Lenin’s basic principles about the party in the spirit

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Comrade Stalin particularly emphasized Lenin's position on the unity of programmatic, political goals and objectives with their organizational and practical implementation, which he later so brilliantly and profoundly scientifically expounded in his remarkable work, "On the Foundations of Leninism."
"Therefore," Comrade Stalin concluded the conversation, "a party organizer must constantly raise his theoretical level and political qualifications, linking theory and policy with organizational practice."
While working on the Central Committee, I visited Comrade Stalin many more times over the course of more than 30 years of working together on the Central Committee. But it was this first detailed conversation that most deeply imprinted itself on my memory and consciousness. I was deeply impressed by the way Stalin, who had just been elected General Secretary of the Central Committee by the Central Committee Plenum, spoke so profoundly and concretely about the tasks of organizational party work and about party building in light of Lenin's teachings on the party, and at the same time spoke of Lenin—his teacher—with such heartfelt love and respect.
This conversation with the secretaries of the Central Committee—Comrades Stalin, Molotov, and Kuibyshev—not only encouraged me, but also instilled in my soul and mind greater confidence in the fulfillment of the tasks ahead. Soon after my appointment as head of the Organization and Instruction Department of the Central Committee, I delivered two reports at a meeting of the department's communists. The first report was on the practical tasks of the department, and the second report (a lecture of sorts), "On Some Important Moments in the History of the Organizational Development of the Leninist Party." I delivered this second report-lecture on the advice of Comrade Stalin. When I reported to him, Comrades Molotov, and Kuibyshev about my first report to the party cell of the Organization and Instruction Department on the practical tasks, debates, and proposals regarding this report, Comrade Stalin said, "It's certainly good that you gave the report to the cell, it's good that you consult on practical work, listen to and consider the opinions and suggestions of the communists working in the department, but I would advise giving them another report or something like a lecture—on the main points in the history of the party's organizational development. I think they need it and it would be very useful for them." Molotov and Kuibyshev fully supported this. I, of course, agreed with this, saying that it would be useful for me as well, as preparation for my upcoming organizational and practical work.

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I had to, of course, work seriously and thoroughly. Although this topic was not new to me, it was one thing to report to an underground circle or a local party school, and quite another to report to an audience of communists working on the Central Committee. Comrade Stalin himself, as well as Comrades Molotov and Kuibyshev, assisted me with their advice, and I received consultations from such veteran Bolsheviks as Vladimirsky, Mitskevich, Zemlyachka, Podvoisky, and others. The great tension and anxiety I experienced in preparing and carrying out this assignment are understandable. I recall the following episode. I shared my worries with Comrade Vardin-Mgeladze, then working on the Central Committee and a friend I had become friends with in Saratov in 1917. When I told him that I had received such advice—an assignment—from Comrade Stalin, he said to me: "This is a serious matter, and you must prepare thoroughly, because Stalin is not only pursuing an ideological and educational goal here but is also giving you a test of sorts." I didn't take his words about the exam seriously at the time, but later, I confess, I was very pleased when, after the lecture, Comrade Stalin told me, "I've been told that the Communists in the department cell are very pleased with your lecture." I myself was pleased with this event, which, of necessity, forced me to rise to a new level in my understanding of Lenin's great doctrine of the party and its best application in the practice of organizational and party work.

This, by the way, helped me to complete it later
The Central Committee Secretariat was tasked with writing a brochure, "How the RCP(b) Is Built," and publishing it in early 1924 for the Lenin Appeal. The first and most important concern and responsibility of the leaders of the party apparatus, in this case the organizational and propaganda apparatus, was to organize the ideological education of party workers by organizing all party work in a way that would lead to a deep ideological conviction in the correctness of Lenin's line and instill in the workers' minds and souls confidence in the victory of this line.
Without this ideological conviction, this cheerful confidence in victory, this persistence in overcoming despondency, skepticism, whining, passivity and, especially, decadence, a party worker will inevitably turn into a naked administrator-bureaucrat, formally giving “orders”, or into a sexton, a priest; a nasal “preacher” from the pulpit, endlessly repeating the same thing,

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without an exciting ideological, spiritually revolutionary call to fight against class enemies.
Naturally, immediately after the Eleventh Congress, the Secretariat and the Central Committee's Organizational Bureau began restructuring the very content and organizational forms of the Central Committee and local party organizations—improving and fine-tuning, so to speak, the instrument of leadership. The Central Committee Secretariat was directly involved in this work on a day-to-day basis. I must say that I was initially surprised and particularly pleased that Stalin didn't limit himself to general instructions but meticulously delved into the specific development of decisions, providing his own additions and revisions to the proposals submitted by the Central Committee's departments and commissions for restructuring the apparatus of local organizations and their work. Stalin raised this issue to a fundamental level, emphasizing that many people underestimate the importance of the apparatus in leadership, not to mention Menshevik, anarchist, and other opposition groups within the party, who go so far as to make absurd anti-party demands for the liquidation or weakening of the party apparatus to the point of undermining the strength of the party, its ideological and Bolshevik organizational leadership of all organs of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the failure to fulfill Lenin's fundamental tasks of defeating capitalist elements and building socialism. At the same time, the party apparatus and its work contain serious shortcomings, as identified in the decisions of the 10th and 11th Congresses. Therefore, the Central Committee must create a small in number but high in quality party apparatus in the Central Committee and in the localities, which would continue with dignity the glorious traditions of Lenin's professional revolutionaries and would be the backbone, the executive apparatus of the party and its broad elective apparatus in the person of the bureau of cells, district committees, district committees, provincial committees, regional committees, territorial committees, the Central Committee of national communist parties and the Central Committee of the RCP(b), its Politburo, Orgburo and Secretariat - elected by the party in the manner established by the charter.
It must be said that this restructuring began after the 10th Party Congress, but it unfolded more broadly and profoundly after the 11th Party Congress. It affected all branches of party work and departments of the Central Committee, provincial, regional, territorial, and central committees of national communist parties, as well as district, district, and even party cells. Naturally, I will briefly cover this restructuring here using the example of organizational work and the Organizational and Instructional Department, which I happened to head at that time—initially

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as head of the department, and then, after the 13th Party Congress, as secretary of the Central Committee.
Having begun my work immediately after the 11th Congress, I inevitably immersed myself in current affairs, especially since a great deal of unresolved and unresolved work had accumulated—related to the Congress and its preparations, as well as the reception of comrades from the local

areas. But, as the saying goes, "every cloud has a silver lining." I even think there was little harm in this at the time; on the contrary, there were more blessings than blessings. Conversations with local comrades were particularly helpful. As for the paperwork, it also helped me get up to speed more quickly, as among the so-called current affairs were important life issues, even major ones.
It was then that I realized that the whole point is to be able to separate the important from the unimportant, the essential from the unimportant, to be able to identify those fundamental issues that are scattered throughout so-called current affairs like grains of gold in the sand. And, of course, it's essential to be able to correctly resolve minor current issues, each of which has its own importance and value, especially for the one who raised them.
Working on these current cases helped me assess the department's efficiency and its ability to address issues. I concluded that the department's shortcomings weren't so much that it was mired in routine work, as had been criticized, but rather that it lacked the necessary expertise and depth to address so-called current issues and respond to substantive inquiries. As the saying goes, "they lacked the guts," despite their diligent efforts.
Meanwhile, so-called current affairs included matters and issues related to the vital needs of party organizations, government agencies, and the worker and peasant masses. These included letters received by the Central Committee from party organizations not only expressing their local needs and requests but also general party proposals; appeals, letters, and inquiries from central institutions, including people's commissariats and trade unions; and letters from individual party members and workers. Of course, there were also important current operational assignments from the Central Committee Secretariat and individual Central Committee Secretaries. Current work also included receiving visiting comrades. Naturally, significant work was carried out on liaison with local organizations, providing instructions, studying and developing materials received by the Central Committee from local organizations, preparing draft resolutions for the Secretariat and the Orgburo on organizational and party matters, and other matters.

But this work was not yet systematic and targeted. Quality suffered, and many important issues were overlooked.
To avoid being overwhelmed by a heavy workload, it's especially necessary to employ Lenin's organizational skills—to identify the key links in the chain in order to pull it all together. To do this, it's essential to have a plan for organizational and party work that identifies major issues, which the Central Committee department and local party organizations should address. Then, incidentally, important current matters will be drawn like a magnet to the major issues in the plan and resolved more successfully.
This primarily concerned the Organizational and Instructional Department, and so, already in May, the department submitted a work plan for the Organizational and Instructional Department of the Central Committee for approval by the Organizational Bureau of the Central Committee, according to which the department worked until October 1922. The plan primarily envisaged solving the main task—improving the social composition of the party and all organizational and ideological-educational work within the party, right down to the cells of the worker, peasant, and toiling masses and their organizations—trade unions, Soviets, cooperatives, the Komsomol, and among women.

ORGANIZING DEPARTMENT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

Following the Eleventh Congress, the Secretariat and the Central Committee's Orgburo set about improving the work of their Organization and Instruction Department, first reviewing and approving the "Regulations on the Organization and Instruction Department of the Central Committee," developed by the department's leadership. This regulation was crucial to all organizational party work for several years. Although it was naturally amended later, it was

essentially long-lasting. It was developed by the Organization and Instruction Department, but during its development, the draft was repeatedly reported to the Central Committee secretaries: Comrades Stalin, Molotov (who, as per the division of labor between the secretaries, oversaw the work of the Organization and Instruction Department), and Kuibyshev. All the Central Committee secretaries contributed their own additions, changes, and amendments. Overall, I can say without exaggeration that Stalin's style is evident in it—clarity, brevity, conciseness, and precise definition of tasks.
It is important to note that from the very beginning it is established that the Organizational and Instructional Department is an integral part

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The Secretariat, through which the Secretariat carries out its tasks, defines the primary tasks not as departmental ones, but rather as those of the Secretariat of the Central Committee, carried out through its service apparatus—the Organizational and Instructional Department of the Central Committee.
This once again convincingly refutes the slanderous attempts of the Trotskyists, the so-called "Workers' Opposition," "Democratic Centralism," and other anti-party elements to portray the party leadership as dominated by the apparatus. Naturally, the reports and overviews were not formally bureaucratic in nature, but rather elucidated the state of affairs in essence. The Regulations themselves stipulate that these reports should primarily cover the state of the organization (healthy and unhealthy phenomena, cohesion, infighting, activity, or decline in the mood of party members); the performance of party organizations (provincial and district committees); the successful implementation of resolutions and instructions of the highest party organs (congresses and the Central Committee); the principled consistency of the party organization; the general political and economic state of the province or region; and the role of party organs in Soviet, trade union, and cooperative work. This mere listing of the contents of the main reviews and summaries shows the breadth of coverage of the issues in the reports, which in fact were even broader, and this reflected the scope of Stalin’s work.
The Organizational Instruction Department was also tasked with the literary processing of information materials for printing.
The main organizational tasks of the Central Committee and its departments are, first of all, the establishment of organizational ties with party organizations at the local level, including the ties that, in addition to the Department Regulations, are established in the “Regulations on Instructors” and in the separately adopted resolution “On Written Communication – Information Reporting.”
The Organizational Instruction Department monitored and verified the activities of party organizations, checking their implementation of the decisions of congresses, conferences, plenary sessions of the Politburo, the Orgburo, and the Secretariat of the Central Committee. It instructed local bodies, assisted them with advice, reminders, and sometimes even by influencing them, submitting relevant proposals and drafting Central Committee resolutions to ensure the organizations' implementation of congress and Central Committee decisions and resolutions. In this work, the Organizational Instruction Department was closely linked with the work of the Central Control Commission.

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The department studied the experience of party building and summarized this experience, presenting its findings to the Secretariat and the Organization Bureau of the Central Committee; developed draft guidelines and organizational circulars for the Central Committee; and systematized party decisions, especially their coordination with those issued previously, so as to avoid the accumulation of contradictions between previously issued and partially or completely obsolete decisions and newly issued ones that meet new needs.

The Organizational Instruction Department was given a separate duty to regularly inform the secretaries of the Central Committee about the state of the party organizations.
In accordance with these objectives, the following structure of the Organizational Instruction Department was established:
1. Information and instructional subdepartment.
2. Subdepartment for recording and studying local experience.
3. Transport subdepartment.
4. General sub-department.
It's clear that the most important subdepartment was the information and instruction department. That's why it was headed by the deputy head of the Organization and Instruction Department. This subdepartment was responsible not only for developing reporting forms for local organizations but also for ensuring the accurate receipt of reports from regional, provincial, and even the most representative district committees and cells. It also processed local reports, compiling monthly and ongoing summaries on the status and organization of work at the local level. These reports played a particularly important role during oral reports from provincial and regional committee secretaries and responsible Central Committee instructors at the Orgburo or Secretariat of the Central Committee.
The department provided practical guidance to local party organizations on all matters of party life and party building, particularly regarding the regulation of party composition and the study, analysis, and resolution of local conflicts. The importance of this work is evident from the responsibilities of the Organizational Instruction Department, as specified in the Regulations, to instruct local organizations on all matters of party building and the resolution of organizational conflicts by:
- selection and dispatch of responsible instructors to the sites;
- preparation of draft instructional letters for the Secretariat of the Central Committee on general issues for all party organizations,

as well as on individual issues of current work and their distribution to local areas;
summoning secretaries and heads of organizational departments of provincial committees to the Central Committee;
- organizing special meetings on organizational issues;
- development of circulars, instructions and regulations;
monitoring the correct construction of party apparatuses at the local level;
- monitoring the timely supply of all instructional materials and guidance literature of the Central Committee to the locations.
A significant part of the Organizational Instruction Department's work was the recording and study of local party work and party building experience. During the discussion of the Regulations for the Organizational Instruction Department, Comrade Stalin attached great importance to this work. He proposed, and the Secretariat of the Central Committee adopted, the formulation that the subdepartment for recording and studying local experience would be "essentially a laboratory" on a nationwide scale. This, Stalin stated, would lend a more scientific, generalizing character to our work. In particular, Stalin, as well as Molotov, emphasized the importance of the clause stipulating "the concentration, study, and development of all new proposals and initiatives in the field of party building, identified both in local organizations and in the pages of the party press."
The sub-department for recording and studying experience was engaged in the study and development of the most important issues arising from the experience of the localities (for example, about leaving the party, etc.), the analysis and generalization of materials on conflicts in party organizations, the identification of the main causes of these conflicts and presented its general conclusions.

The department must study the materials of the institutional distribution department and the data of the information and instructional subdepartment of the leading party cadres and compile characteristics of the members of the bureau of provincial committees, members of the presidiums of provincial executive committees, provincial trade union councils, and later - the bureau of the district party committees, and so on, with an assessment of their performance and suitability for leadership work.
The subdepartment also systematized party directives for their relevance, obsolescence, and inconsistency. I recall that Comrade Stalin added the words "obsolescence and inconsistency," emphasizing that it often happens that a directive is long outdated or has already been amended by another directive, and the corrections remain unanswered, which confuses local organizations in their work. Therefore, it is crucial to implement this in practice.

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All other departments of the Central Committee are required to submit their materials to the subdepartment for recording the experience of the organizational and instructional department. Because the established functions of the Organizational Instruction Department in one way or another affected the functions of other Central Committee departments in providing instructions to localities, it became necessary to include a special subsection in the Regulations on the Organizational Instruction Department of the Central Committee, entitled "Relationships with Other Departments." There was some debate on this issue, but with Comrade Stalin's support, it was established that planned instructions to localities and information on all areas of party work would be concentrated in the Organizational Department. This did not preclude corresponding guidance from other Central Committee departments, which carried out ongoing liaison with local departments in their respective areas of work.
I should also note that during the discussion, Stalin emphasized the particular importance of the transport subdepartment of the Organizational Department, as there were no political departments for transport; work was conducted through the district party committees of the railway regions and trade unions. The situation in transport was dire, and the provincial party committees, through their transport subdepartments, were to direct party work in transport, while the Organizational Department of the Central Committee, through its transport subdepartment, was to direct them. I wouldn't say this was an absolutely perfect organizational form of work in transport, but it was the best for that period. This subdepartment was comprehensive, closely interfacing with the work of all departments of the Central Committee and provincial party committees, as well as with trade unions, the Komsomol Central Committee, women's departments, and so on.
We all, especially the head of the Organizational Instruction Department, tried to help him fulfill the Party and government's tasks to improve the operation of rail and water transport.
Of great importance was the creation of the general sub-department. This was not what is usually, and ironically, called an office—this general department was charged by regulation with carrying out all urgent and current work of the Organizational Department and all assignments of the head of the Organizational Instructional Department; maintaining current communications with all bodies with which the Organizational Instructional Department came into contact; receiving and registering all correspondence sent to the Organizational Department, distributing it among the sub-departments, and reporting it to the head of the department. Thus, it was a single center for correspondence for the entire department. The sub-departments were freed from this in order to better concentrate on, so to speak, productive party work. In addition, the general sub-department was engaged in

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Collecting and preparing materials for meetings convened by the Organizing Department, keeping minutes of meetings, and preparing materials on issues submitted by the Department to the Orgburo

and the Secretariat of the Central Committee. Naturally, developing a good structure and precisely defining the tasks approved by the Department's Regulations are essential for establishing and implementing effective work, but in implementing these Regulations, personnel is paramount. Keeping in mind this directive from Lenin and the Congress, the newly appointed head of the department, in addition to developing the Regulations and a work plan for the department to implement the decisions of the Eleventh Congress, busily occupied himself with reviewing existing personnel and selecting new ones, especially since the department was understaffed even according to the established staffing levels. It should be emphasized here that, despite the extensive work envisaged by the Regulations and plan, the department's staff was reduced after the Eleventh Congress. While there had previously been 92 employees, after the Eleventh Congress their number increased to 77. Over the course of the year, four were added, bringing the total to 81. Significantly, of the 81, 62 were responsible employees, including 19 Central Committee instructors, 20 informants, and six in the experience subdepartment. The technical staff numbered 19, meaning 11 were laid off.

Naturally, we didn't set ourselves the task of recruiting new staff at all costs, especially since many of the existing staff had been carefully selected. If they had weaknesses or errors in their work, firstly, much was beyond their control, and secondly, many people who are performing unsatisfactorily and poorly today could, with skillful leadership, become good workers tomorrow. Therefore, first of all, we studied all the employees in the department, from the manager to the technical staff, for, especially in an apparatus such as the Organization and Instruction Department of the Central Committee, technical staff are also of great importance. A significant number of them were retained in their current positions, while others were transferred to other positions. When retaining staff, especially those in leadership positions, we primarily considered their ability and willingness to adapt to the new conditions. Such a person, for example, was Comrade Okhlopkov—an old Bolshevik, intellectually developed, well-versed in party work, and former secretary of the Smolensk Provincial Party Committee. He was a bit slow, and we had to speed him up, but he was thoughtful, serious and truthful.

worker, which is very important. He was appointed my first deputy. My other deputy was Comrade Lepa, whom I knew from his work in Turkestan, where he served as secretary of the Semirechye regional committee. He was a cultured, developed party worker, an energetic organizer, devoting himself entirely to his work. He was well versed in local party and Soviet work, especially in the national regions of the country, treated the work of local party organizations and local workers with love and interest, and maintained close ties with them.

We nominated Comrade Rostopchin, a veteran Bolshevik and party worker, former secretary of several provincial party committees, as head of the subdepartment for recording and studying local experience. He was a developed and highly cultured worker with a talent for analyzing, studying, and generalizing facts. When I reported his candidacy to the Central Committee Secretariat, Comrade Stalin gave it his enthusiastic endorsement. Comrade Rostopchin, he said, was the kind of worker who, it seemed, would not rush to conclusions, but would meticulously study facts and thoroughly generalize them, and this was the most important aspect of this subdepartment's work. I recall that we also selected other experienced party workers for this subdepartment, such as Comrades Karib, Kitsis, Bogomolov, Vorobyova, Blumberg, and others.

Comrade Zdobnov, an experienced party worker and railway worker from Orenburg, was appointed head of the transport subdepartment.

We staffed a literary bureau for processing information materials, selecting a good literary and literate party worker, Comrade Maryin, and comrades Yavits, Antonov-Chalay, and others as his assistants.

Comrade Popov became the secretary of the bureau of foreign party cells.

The General Department was headed by a developed, experienced party worker, Comrade Arkadyev. His deputy was Comrade Balashov, a capable and energetic party member; other diligent and good workers also worked there.
It's no exaggeration to say that the restructuring of the department's work under the new Regulations has brought greater organization to communications and management of local organizations, monitoring of performance, and recruiting personnel. It goes without saying that party life and leadership cannot rely solely on written communications and information. A vital connection with the local level, right down to the cell itself, with its rich life, brimming with the independent activity of party members, is as essential as air.

The responsible instructors of the Central Committee, along with, of course, the representatives of the Central Committee sent to the localities, became this living connection.
Even before the 11th Congress, the Central Committee had responsible instructors, but there were only five of them, which is, of course, very few for our party, with such diverse regions of the country. The Central Committee's responsible instructors and representatives traveled to the local areas. Among them were comrades like Muranov, Semashko, Vladimirsky, Molotov, and others, some older and some younger than me, whom the Central Committee sent as representatives, for example, to Voronezh, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Orenburg, and Turkestan. But this was insufficient to fulfill the assigned tasks. It was necessary not only to increase the number of instructors to at least 15 but also to develop a "Regulation on Responsible Instructors of the Central Committee."
A precise definition of the duties, rights, and responsibilities of the responsible instructor has become crucial. This was demanded by the responsible instructors themselves and local party organizations. The "Regulations on Responsible Instructors of the Central Committee of the RCP(b)", developed by the Organizational Instruction Department of the Central Committee and adopted after thorough and careful review by the Orgburo of the Central Committee and feedback from local party organizations, establishes that the responsible instructor is the link connecting the Central Committee with local organizations. He or she not only oversees but also directs the work of party committees, helping them firmly and consistently implement the directives of central party organs. At the same time, adhering to the principles of democratic centralism, the Regulations stipulate that the responsible instructor, as a representative of the Central Committee, does not have administrative or managerial powers, except in cases where he or she receives special assignments from the Central Committee with specific powers specified in the mandate.
During the inspection, the responsible instructor of the Central Committee clarifies all aspects of party work, including the influence of party organs on Soviet, trade union, and cooperative work. To fulfill his duties, the instructor is obliged to: acquaint the party organization with the most important immediate tasks of the party and the measures adopted by the Central Committee and its departments for the resolution of these tasks; make reports on the results of his investigation at meetings of the bureau or plenum of the provincial committee, as well as at meetings of responsible workers of the organization whenever he deems this necessary in the interests of the matter.
The Regulation on responsible instructors specifically

It is stated that in the event of improper actions by a party organiser, the instructor raises the issue of reversing the inappropriate measures and resolutions with the provincial committee bureau. If the provincial committee disagrees with the instructor's proposal, the matter is referred to the Central Party Committee for consideration.
The Regulation further provides the right of the responsible instructor to review all minutes, including secret ones, of conferences, meetings, and sessions of the provincial party committee and its bureau, presidium and departments, control commissions, and district party committees; all

instructions and circulars of the provincial party committee and its departments; and all materials received from district party committees, district party committees, and other party organizations. At the request of the responsible instructor of the Central Committee, communist leaders of economic, trade union, cooperative, and other state institutions, including GPU departments, were obliged to submit all requested materials to him.

The responsible instructor had, of course, the right to attend all meetings of the provincial committee, the control committee, and the district committee, factions, and cells, including secret closed meetings. This was crucial, as there were instances when provincial committees did not allow this. In general, some underestimated the rights of the responsible instructor. There were also instances of excessively demanding instructors themselves, which the Central Committee corrected. The Regulations state that the responsible instructor, being an instructor of the Central Committee, and not of a department of the Central Committee, is directly subordinate in his work to the head of the Organizational and Instructional Department of the Central Committee. (This paragraph was included by Comrade Stalin during the discussion of the draft. The entire draft as a whole, like others developed by the department, was reviewed in advance, often with the necessary amendments introduced by Comrade Molotov in the course of monitoring the work of the Organizational and Instructional Department of the Central Committee.) |

The Central Committee's responsible instructor was assigned to a specific group of provincial and regional committees, was responsible only for their respective areas of operation, and was responsible for accurately informing the Central Committee and evaluating the work of the provincial committees. To ensure the full effectiveness of this function, each instructor was assigned an informant, who served as the instructor's assistant and processed materials from organizations in the instructor's area. Upon returning to Moscow from a tour of the provinces, the responsible instructor studied the informant's report, compared it with his own data and conclusions, and presented them to the head of the Organization and Instruction Department and the Secretariat of the Central Committee.

The instructors' work plan for field trips, often in conjunction with an informant, was established by the head of the Organizational Instruction Department and approved by the Secretariat of the Central Committee. The responsible instructor submitted a written report to the Central Committee and made an oral report to the head of the Organizational Instruction Department and the Central Committee Orgburo.

The Central Committee granted responsible instructors the right to attend meetings of the Central Committee's Organizational Bureau, all Party congresses, conferences, and meetings. In order to cover not only organizational issues but also all other matters related to the Central Committee's work, the responsible instructor of the Central Committee received basic instructions from the Central Committee's Organizational Department and the Central Committee Secretary during field visits, and, in matters concerning other Central Committee departments, from the heads of those departments.

As needed, the Organizational Department or the Secretariat of the Central Committee convened meetings of the responsible Central Committee instructors. During their work, the instructors received all Central Committee circulars, instructions, theses, printed publications, and published party literature related to their tasks.

All of this was aimed at improving the work and qualifications of the Central Committee's responsible instructors. We believed that, although some of these points were already being applied to varying degrees in practice, outlining all the duties, rights, and responsibilities of the Central Committee's responsible instructors in a single regulation would undoubtedly provide complete clarity, improve their work, enhance their authority within local party organizations, and help the Central Committee fulfill the tasks set by the 11th Party Congress.

The same applies entirely to regional, provincial, and district committees, where a team of responsible instructors must be selected who would carry out essentially the same tasks within their district.
The Central Committee placed great importance on responsible instructors and other forms of live communication by sending Central Committee representatives to the localities, primarily members and candidates of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission. This in no way contradicted the requirement for systematic, regular, and thorough written communication between the Central Committee and the localities, and between the localities and the Central Committee—live communication cannot be equated with written communication. The interrelationship between written and live communication is an essential and crucial condition for successful Party leadership. The fact that the Central Committee attached such great importance to responsible instructors required us, the leaders of the Organizational Instruction Department, to concentrate great attention and effort on their selection.

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We successfully accomplished this qualitative task under the leadership and with the assistance of the secretaries of the Central Committee: comrades Stalin, Molotov, and Kuibyshev, who not only reviewed the proposals of the Organization and Instruction Department, but personally received each person recommended by us, determining individually who exactly could be approved.
At various times during the period 1922-1923, more than the 15 people designated by the staff served as responsible instructors of the Central Committee, because a number of comrades, having worked for a certain period as responsible instructors of the Central Committee and having earned authority and respect at the local level, were elected at conferences as secretaries of provincial committees, regional committees, and even the Central Committee of national communist parties; some were appointed by the Central Committee to the regional bureau of the Central Committee of the RCP(b).
Thus, the institution of responsible instructors of the Central Committee served as a kind of reserve for work in the field, just as many provincial committee secretaries were promoted to the Central Committee to serve as responsible instructors. For example, Comrade Asatkin, secretary of the Vladimir Provincial Committee, was appointed responsible instructor of the Central Committee. He served in this capacity for quite a long time. His reports and proposals were approved by the Central Committee's Orgburo; he was a competent Marxist and a seasoned Bolshevik. As a thoughtful and serious leader, he earned authority and respect in the Belarusian organizations he repeatedly surveyed and was nominated at the All-Russian Party Conference as secretary of the Belarusian Central Committee. The Central Committee of the RCP(b) granted the request of the Belarusian comrades, assigning Comrade Asatkin to them. The selection of other responsible instructors of the Central Committee proceeded in the same manner. I will name several comrades.
Comrade Krivov, an old Bolshevik, a worker, a leading member of the provincial committees, an experienced party worker with a focus on control work. The Central Control Commission requested him, and we had to comply.
Comrade Struppe was an old Bolshevik, distinguished by his deep, unhurried examination of organizations, penetrating not only the Party, but also Soviet, trade union, cooperative, and economic work. He was also distinguished by the fact that he not only focused on uncovering shortcomings, but also sought to comprehensively illuminate the state of the organization he was examining and reflected this accordingly in his proposals. Comrade Struppe also traveled to the villages and knew how to converse simply with the peasants (his full beard was attractive to them). For us, it was especially important that he provided good coverage.

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The situation in the village, making appropriate proposals. Then, at Comrade Kirov's request, Comrade Struppe was nominated as Chairman of the Leningrad Provincial Executive Committee, and we were forced to accept, having lost such an outstanding and responsible instructor.
Comrade Zaslavsky was an old Bolshevik, a former secretary of the provincial party committees, an educated intellectual, and a good Bolshevik-Leninist. He distinguished himself by delving deeper than others into all aspects of party work—not only organizational but also agitational, propaganda, and ideological aspects, as well as the work of the press, especially since he himself was a journalist. His conclusions were especially readily accepted and utilized by all departments of the Central Committee.
Comrade Ryabov was a pre-revolutionary Bolshevik and a worker. Before joining the Central Committee of the RCP(b), he was chairman of the Central Committee of the Construction Workers' Trade Union. As a responsible instructor for the Central Committee, he distinguished himself by his close ties to the lives of broad, non-party working masses. He brought to the Central Committee valuable and important facts and conclusions about workers' sentiments, the state of work among them, their needs, and their requirements, which were crucial for the Central Committee in developing the necessary measures. His reports to the Orgburo attracted particular interest, particularly from Comrade Stalin, who asked him many questions about workers' life and mass work among non-party members.
Comrade Khataevich was a pre-revolutionary Bolshevik, a trained Marxist, a party organizer, and former secretary of the Gomel Provincial Party Committee. While not distinguished by his outward "brilliance," he had a profound understanding of party affairs and the necessary organizational measures. He was well-qualified not only in organizational matters but also in all the fundamental aspects of party leadership.
The responsible instructor was an old Ivanovo-Voznesensk Bolshevik, Comrade Shorokhov. He was, one might say, a talented, natural-born worker. He wasn't "very literate," but he had remarkable party instincts and socio-political awareness. Having experience in grassroots party work, when he arrived at a place, he would immediately contact the grassroots party members, quickly learn important facts, and arrive at the "top" of the provincial or regional committee already prepared for the "rounded-out," as he put it, reports from the provincial committee and its apparatus. When, as he liked to say, the provincial committee staff began to embellish the situation, he would tell them: "You can't take me, brother, with your bare hands and sweet words—that's what I have."

"Facts, not invented, but taken from the lives of your own cells and districts." Shorokhov—a seemingly good-natured man—was in fact a scourge of all elements of decay—ideological, political, and everyday. He was a true fighter for the Leninist line, for proletarian Bolshevik morals in the party. His reports to the Organization and Instruction Department, when he returned from business trips, were attended by workers from other departments. His reports were not eloquent, but the facts and his conclusions were eloquent and instructive.
Comrade Sergushev, the responsible instructor, stood out as a great expert in purely party organizational work. A veteran Bolshevik from Sormovo, he served as secretary and chairman of the Nizhny Novgorod Provincial Party Committee and as the head of organizational and instructional work in the Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkestan. He was a model of selfless, morally pure Bolshevik, faithful to Leninism, and deeply familiar with all the intricacies of party work, from the industrial and rural cells to the provincial committee and the Central Committee. His reports were distinguished by their depth, comprehensiveness, and lack of conciliation toward those who deviated from the line and practical directives of the Party and its Central Committee. He was respected locally, but, fearing his qualified assessments, they more seriously prepared for "counterattacks" based on his conclusions. I do not recall, however, a single instance where, at meetings in the Orgburo or following them in the Orgburo or the Secretariat of the Central Control Commission, his conclusions on an investigation of a given organization were

not generally accepted. He was, one might say, a qualified specialist in organizational and party work and one of the most worthy and responsible instructors of the Central Committee. It should also be added that, coming from a working-class background, he was intensely self-educated and independently and competently drafted his reports, never claiming this as a particular virtue, as Sergushev (underground name Markel) was, in general, an exceptionally modest and thorough man. Such respectable workers as Comrade Avdeyev, a St. Petersburg worker, an old Bolshevik, and an experienced party worker, Comrade Goncharov, an old Bolshevik, one of the leading workers in the Moscow organization, and later in the North Caucasus, were nominated and accepted as instructors of the Central Committee. He was elected a member of the Central Control Commission and transferred to work there. Comrade Tambarov, a prominent figure among the military commissars of the Red Army, Comrade Blokhin, from the Ryazan Provincial Committee. From among the young, Comrade Yegorov, a capable

Baku worker, then he was elected secretary of the provincial committee, and so on.
The Central Committee's instructor staff naturally changed over the course of three years, but their level never declined. And if we encountered weaker comrades, we tried to raise their level as they worked. They grew along with us.
The Organization and Instruction Department also attached great importance to informants, carefully selecting them individually and appointing them as assistants to the responsible instructors. After all, the responsible instructor himself, by examining and studying the organization, is essentially the Central Committee's primary informant on the organization's situation and condition. His information is especially valuable because it is the result of his direct observations, but he himself, naturally, cannot document all the rich material. Moreover, some of them lacked the skills of "writing," as Comrade Shorokhov used to say. I remember how Comrade Shorokhov once came to me upset; he was even ready to ask for his release. "I," he said, "can tell you everything down to the smallest detail, from memory, by heart, but writing it all down is difficult for me. Either you give me a 'writer,' or you release me." "I'll figure it out, if he writes it incorrectly, I'll correct it, but if he doesn't want to, I'll tell him in a matter-of-fact manner... But let him help me cope with all the rich and extensive material on my provinces." Although most instructors wrote their own reports, I cited the conversation with Comrade Shorokhov because, to a certain extent, this also applied to other responsible instructors, even intellectuals, who needed help systematizing their materials and synthesizing those that came to the Central Committee, independently of the instructors. These systematizers, the instructors' assistants, were the informants we selected, mostly qualified workers. They studied not only the data and materials brought by the responsible instructors, but also the minutes and written reports of the provincial and regional committees, the materials of their departments, and so on. The point was not so much in their literary processing as in their knowledge of Party life and the ability to identify the main features characteristic of a given organization, requiring the Central Committee's response and assistance. Of course, before submitting the reviews to the Secretariat of the Central Committee, the leadership of the Organizational Instruction Department processed and summarized them, but at the core was the work of a qualified instructor

and an informant. Therefore, we carefully and responsibly selected our informants. Suffice it to say, for example, that one of our qualified informants was Bill-Belotserkovsky. He was a revolutionary party member who, after wandering in America and working there as a stoker and sailor, returned to his homeland—Russia—in September 1917, joined the Bolshevik Party, participated in the battles for Soviet power, conducted party work, and simultaneously pursued literary pursuits. I observed with great pleasure and satisfaction how this modest son of the Party, diligently and industriously

fulfilling his party duty as an informant for the Organization and Instruction Department of the Central Committee, simultaneously occupied himself with writing. He subsequently developed a reputation as a playwright—his play "Echo" and the talented play "Storm" took a solid place in Soviet drama. Working alongside Bill-Belotserkovsky as informants were comrades such as Zaitsev (former secretary of the Zamoskvoretsky District Committee), Magnitsky, former secretary of the Khamovnichesky District Committee, Golubtsova (later rector of the Power Engineering Institute), Vorobyov, an old Bolshevik, Weinstein, Mitskun, Snitkin, Ruzheynikova (later graduated from the Institute of Red Professors), Loginov, Druyan, Ipatov, Ginzburg, Torova, a former senior official in the Women's Department, Velikodvorsky, and others. Of course, not all of them were equally qualified. Some required extensive training along the way, just as we, their supervisors, underwent training ourselves, but the important thing is that they studied and worked diligently, rising to the level of the task assigned to them.

But the issue, of course, is not just the informants, no matter how diligent they may be, but the system of information and reporting.

Although our Central Committee, even in the most difficult years of the Civil War, tried to maintain contact with local organizations and lead them (I know this from my own experience), it must be said that continuous communication began to be seriously established after the 10th Party Congress and took on a particularly stable, continuous, systematic character after the 11th Party Congress. Subsequently, given the growing and more complex needs, as well as the merger of the Organizational Department with the Department of Institutional Distribution, the Central Committee created an independent Information Department. We didn't have modern technology, but we tried to organize information scientifically. In particular, soon after the Eleventh Congress, we introduced a card index for recording the most

important facts, which, of course, made it easier to compile reviews, made it possible to quickly, without delay, respond to certain requests, and so on.

We especially valued the work of the Central Committee's Statistics Department, which was closely linked to the Organizational Department. In particular, I deeply respected the head of this department, the veteran Bolshevik Comrade Smitten. This department, with its modest staff, kept extensive statistical records of the party and conducted membership censuses, enabling the Central Committee leadership and the Organizational Instructional Department to draw the necessary conclusions about regulating party composition, etc.

The Central Committee's resolution on written reporting by local organizations and written communication between the Central Committee and local organizations played a major role. Although the Central Committee's Resolution was titled "On Written Communications between the Central Committee and the Provincial and Regional Committees," it was, in fact, a comprehensive, all-encompassing document, essentially defining the entire range of issues and tasks that the provincial committee, regional committee, and even the Central Committee itself were and should be engaged in. This systematic, planned written reporting was the foundation, the primary documented, that is, responsible basis, without which it was impossible to lead consciously and systematically, rather than ad hoc.

I will allow myself to shed more light on this issue, not because, of course, I, as one of the authors of this Resolution and this reporting system, am "in love" with it, but because I have always attached, and continue to attach, great importance to it, this reporting system, in Party leadership. The importance of reporting is addressed in the Resolution from the very beginning, briefly but powerfully, in the form of criticism of provincial and regional committees for their inaccurate reporting and violation of the resolution of the Eleventh Congress. For February, March, and April, only five provincial committees fulfilled their Party obligations and sent complete reports, while the majority either did not send any at all or sent incomplete reports. (I well remember the atmosphere and the intensity with which this issue was discussed at the Orgburo, in the presence of several

provincial and regional committee secretaries—this was a response to some of their underestimation of the issue's significance. During the discussion of this project, Comrades Stalin and Molotov made the following conclusion: "This situation can no longer be tolerated. The Central Committee has firmly resolved to ensure the timely submission of reports from all provincial and regional organizations.")

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The following is a detailed operative section covering all types of reporting. The content of the reporting reflects the nature of the tasks and work, so the presentation itself, and most importantly, the perception of the Resolution on Reporting, is essential for a deeper understanding not only of the importance the Central Committee attaches to information and reporting, but also of the content of the work itself and the context in which it occurs.
The significance of the secretaries' closed letters is primarily determined by the Resolution's stipulation that these letters are personally drafted by the secretaries of the regional bureaus of the Central Committee of the RCP (the Communist Party of the Soviet Union), national Central Committees, regional and provincial committees, including provincial committees that are part of regional associations. This last point was emphasized because some leaders of regional associations resisted this, believing that a letter and the regional association's reports were sufficient. The Central Committee, however, considered this an improper separation of the provincial committees they were amalgamating from the Central Committee.
Having emphasized that all letters must be strictly objective, businesslike, and touch upon all the most important aspects of the party and political life of the province and region, the Central Committee established the following groups of issues that should be covered in the secretaries’ closed letters:
— the most important events in the economic life of the province over the past month (the state of the harvest, the progress of food processing, the work of the main enterprises, the state of transport, the development of cooperation, the receipt of local taxes);
— the mood of the workers and various strata of the peasantry (if possible, report one or two characteristic facts);
— about political parties hostile to us (their influence in certain segments of the population, methods of work, etc.);
— the state of operation of the Soviet apparatus;
— the life of the party organization, including issues of concern to party members;
— the most important decisions, the growth of the party’s influence, the conduct of certain campaigns, etc.
The Central Committee emphasized the need for a differentiated approach in reports and letters depending on the characteristics of the province, region, or national republic. Information should prioritize the most important issues for a given area in a differentiated manner: in agricultural regions, issues of harvest, food production, trade, the mood of the peasantry, the work of the Socialist Revolutionaries, and the state of reading huts should be covered more thoroughly and comprehensively; in provinces where

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At major railway junctions, the secretary of the organization's attention, both in work and in information, must be focused on transport; in industrial provinces, attention must be focused on covering the situation in the factories, the mood of the workers, the influence of the Mensheviks, etc.; in reports from the outskirts, space must be given to issues of national relations, etc.
The Central Committee especially drew the secretaries’ attention to the fact that the disclosure of shortcomings and generally negative aspects of local work in the secretaries’ closed letters should be more decisive and complete than is the case in ordinary official information reports.

Closed letters were sent directly to the Secretariat of the Central Committee, which attached particular importance to these letters for consideration in the work of the Central Committee.
It is not difficult to see how these instructions for composing closed
The letters essentially teach secretaries to work, even to draw up a work plan, to highlight the main points taking into account the specific features of the area, to cover all types of direct party work.
The Central Committee, for its part, set an example for local organizations by composing and sending out closed letters to the localities of the Central Committee, which covered not only issues of the internal life of the party and the country, but also foreign policy.
The Written Reporting Regulation provides even more detailed instructions on the preparation of official information and statistical reports.
It is established that these reports are submitted with the signatures of the secretary and the head of the organizational department of the relevant committee and are sent to the Central Committee on a monthly basis.
It can be said without exaggeration that between the 11th and 12th Congresses, the Central Committee, its Organizational Bureau, the Secretariat of the Central Committee and its apparatus, primarily the Organizational Instruction Department, developed live and written communication and concrete leadership of local organizations.
The number of visits by Central Committee members and candidates, representatives, and special commissions to inspect party organizations increased significantly—they visited 66 organizations and participated in 98 local party conferences. This year, the number of reports by provincial and regional party committee secretaries heard and discussed at the Central Committee Organization Bureau more than doubled. A total of 38 reports were heard, and decisions were made on them.

The corresponding decisions and instructions. Systematic written communication and the receipt of reports, which, although with still ongoing partial interruptions, were received more or less regularly from the provincial and regional committees, played an important role in the management and development of specific directives for the provinces and regions. Significantly, this year the Central Committee fully processed the materials received from the local authorities across all organizations. By the 12th Congress, reviews of party work for 100 provinces and regions had been compiled, while by the 11th Congress only 45, and by the 10th Congress only 22, and these were primarily from the central provinces.
An important and democratic form of communication between the Central Committee and local organizations was the dispatch of representatives to provincial and regional conferences. These representatives not only spoke on behalf of the Central Committee but also actively participated in the conferences' work. Between the 11th and 12th Congresses, according to a plan developed by the Organizational and Instructional Department, Central Committee representatives participated in 62 party conferences.
Representatives of the Central Committee who arrived from conferences, as a rule, reported to the Secretariat, the Orgburo, and in important cases, the Politburo, about their conclusions, impressions, and proposals.
In fact, I don't recall a single instance where the Secretariat, the Orgburo, and the Politburo disregarded reports from Central Committee representatives, commissions, responsible instructors, provincial and regional committee secretaries, much less territorial and republic committees.
Meetings when such reports were on the agenda were important days not only for the apparatus and its leaders, especially the Organizational and Instructional Department, which prepared materials, proposals, and delivered co-reports, but, as I witnessed, also for the leading members of the Central Committee, especially its secretaries. The entire atmosphere was favorable for the reports and their evaluations. Speakers were usually given additional time, Orgburo members asked questions and spoke, and those who weren't speaking usually chimed in. I remember Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin, who stood out for his witty, gentle, yet critical remarks, knowing the local area well due to his

extensive travels across the country. The speakers, who usually started tensely, then became bolder and even more cheerful, as they say, "getting going." There were many corrections and criticisms, at times sharp and angry, especially regarding troubled organizations that needed "treatment." How

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As a rule, drafts were adopted mainly with the instruction to the designated commission or the Organizational and Instructional Department of the Central Committee to take into account the comments and amendments adopted at the meeting and to submit a finalized draft resolution of the Central Committee.
Of course, we did not limit ourselves to just a specific resolution, but drew lessons for the general work - for developing general conclusions on general party issues, for developing corresponding directives for the Central Committee.

RELATIONS WITH NATIONAL REPUBLICS AND REGIONS. FORMATION OF THE USSR

The historic decisions of the 10th and 11th Party Congresses took into account, in a Marxist and Leninist manner, the changes in historical conditions—the transition from the Civil War to peaceful construction—and drew the corresponding conclusions about party and Soviet construction based on the development of intra-party and workers' democracy and the strengthening of ties between the Central Committee and the localities and the localities with the Center.
The congresses pointed out the dangers and difficulties facing the party and demanded that all local party organizations strengthen the unity of the party, cleanse its ranks, combat decadent moods, capitulators, and strengthen the party and its local organizations ideologically and organizationally.
After the Eleventh Congress, the Central Committee of the RCP(b) focused special attention and efforts on organizing systematic and deeper communication and leadership of outlying organizations, particularly the party organizations of the national regions and republics. Of course, the Central Committee had been involved in these matters even before the Eleventh Congress; Comrade Lenin himself devoted his attention and concern to them, as did his closest assistant, People's Commissar for National Affairs and Politburo member Comrade Stalin, and, after the Tenth Congress, Secretary of the Central Committee Comrade Molotov.
I know well from my work in Turkestan what kind of party, political-economic, military, and organizational assistance the Central Committee and Comrade Lenin personally provided to the Bolsheviks, workers, revolutionary working masses, and organs of Soviet power of the Turkestan Soviet Republic in their selfless, heroic struggle for the very existence and development of the Soviet

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With the lifting of the blockade of Turkestan, the Central Committee of the RCP(b), the Council of People's Commissars of the Republic, and Lenin stepped up their assistance to the Turkestan Republic in successfully completing the military victory, overcoming economic devastation and famine, and uniting the peoples and nations of Turkestan around the Party.
However, the hardships, famine, and devastation were not so easily eliminated, primarily because the military resistance of the remnants of the Kolchak-Dutov White Guard continued. Agents and military aid from foreign imperialists roused kulak, rich, and feudal counterrevolutionary nationalist forces against Soviet power, organizing bandit uprisings, especially the Basmachi. In 1920, Bukhara, with its reactionary emir at its head, became the center of British imperialist intelligence and its military forces. Overthrown by his revolutionary people, the emir and his henchmen, under the direction of imperialist agents, organized new Basmachi gangs in eastern Bukhara and revived and intensified the Basmachi movement in Fergana and other regions of Turkestan. The Basmachi

seized districts, railway stations, factories, and villages, destroying them and plundering not only the Russian population but also those of their own nationalities. They killed party and Soviet officials, workers, and their families. The Basmachi were fought not only by Red Army troops but also by units of the indigenous population, especially workers, whose core consisted of communists and Komsomol members.

Traveling to the field as a member of the Turkestan Bureau of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) and a member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Turkestan Front, I witnessed the heroic struggle of the finest sons of the people, the working class, and our Great Party. I also saw major shortcomings in the work, including in the party sphere—the weakness of party bodies, including regional committees, which, under military conditions, were unable to establish systematic party ties with lower-level organizations and provide leadership. I also saw that, having lost many outstanding communists in this difficult war with the Basmachi, many aliens remained in the party ranks alongside good communists. Naturally, the Turkestan Bureau of the Central Committee and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkestan took the necessary organizational and propaganda measures to strengthen party work, purify the party, and recruit new and better members of the working class. The purge carried out after the 10th Congress seriously improved the ranks of the party organization, freeing it from the entrenched careerists, swindlers, bribe-takers, and former tsarist officials.

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who, together with former translators from the local population, carried out the old colonial, oppressive practices, more than 10 thousand of the 40 thousand party members were purged. |

After the 11th Congress of the Central Committee of the RCP(b), having discussed the situation in the Communist Party of Turkestan, it decided to conduct an additional purge, resulting in the expulsion of another 4,000 members, bringing the total to 14,000. This strengthened the party in Turkestan, and especially in Bukhara and Khiva, opening the way for the entry of the best members of the working class and revolutionary peasantry, particularly from the Union of the Poor.

The heroic struggle of our glorious Red Army, led by Lenin and the talented command of Comrade Frunze, routed the enemy forces of the Semirechye and Transcaspian Fronts in Turkestan by the second half of 1920. However, the Basmachi movement remained, particularly after the revolutionary overthrow of the Emir of Bukhara and the Khan of Khiva.

The Central Committee of the RCP(b) and Lenin personally deeply understood that victory over the Basmachi required not only renewed military efforts but also a series of economic, organizational, and political measures, primarily the elimination of existing shortcomings and errors in the work and political behavior of the communists toward the indigenous peoples, especially in the villages. I remember how, in a conversation with me before my departure for Turkestan, Comrade Lenin particularly emphasized the task of infiltrating the Soviets and organizing their work to unite farmers in the most remote areas—the kishlaks and auls of Turkestan.

For Lenin, this was a question connected with the entire program and tactics of the Comintern in the struggle of the peoples of the East for their national and social liberation from imperialism. Drawing on the experience of the Russian proletarian revolution, and Turkestan in particular, Lenin developed at the Second Congress of the Communist International his brilliant thesis that even where capitalism does not yet exist, but pre-capitalist relations still exist, it is possible and necessary to draw the backward masses of the peasantry into the system of Soviet organizations, gradually leading these peoples to socialism, bypassing the capitalist stage of development. Of course, Lenin always emphasized, theoretical possibility does not in itself become reality. To achieve this, it is necessary to wage a struggle not only against the direct class enemy—imperialism—but also against the socialist class.

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But also with its lackeys—bourgeois-nationalist chauvinists of all stripes—supporting truly revolutionary liberation movements, organizing Soviets at the very grassroots, and uniting in them the broad masses of toiling peasants and workers. Moreover, Lenin—primarily he—especially saw that even among communists—members of a revolutionary-internationalist party like ours—there were those who tolerated a colonialist, great-power approach toward local nationalities, especially in Turkestan, as well as nationalists from local nationalities infected with bourgeois nationalism directed against the international unity of the working class. This is precisely why Lenin and the Central Committee of the RCP(b) never limited their leadership to "purely" organizational directives, but always placed the fundamental political question first. The most important resolution of the Central Committee, adopted on Lenin's proposal on June 29, 1920, on the fundamental tasks of the RCP(b) in Turkestan, emphasized that the primary tasks of the Communist Party and the organs of Soviet power in Turkestan were the elimination, eradication, and liquidation of the dysfunctional relations that had developed over decades between the incoming European population and the indigenous peoples who had inhabited Turkestan for centuries, relations that had developed as a result of the tsarist government's fifty-year colonial policy in the Turkestan region, while simultaneously gradually eliminating the patriarchal-feudal legacy that remained deeply entrenched in the social relations of the local indigenous population. This resolution of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) provided a program—a plan of practical measures to ensure the implementation of this fundamental party line. To ensure its implementation, the same resolution established, alongside the existing Turkestan Commission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars, the Turkestan Bureau of the Central Committee of the RCP(b). This bureau and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkestan, the organs of Soviet power in the Turkestan Republic, accomplished a great deal, in particular, to revive cotton production and organize grassroots primary councils of deputies in villages, auls, districts, and counties. It would be wrong, however, to think that the Central Committee's decision was fully implemented, either by the councils or by party work, which lagged behind needs and the overall party level. This was especially dangerous in the new phase of the New Economic Policy, which brought many negative consequences along with positive ones.

phenomena, especially in relation to the needs of the working poor.
In August 1921, Comrade Lenin wrote a letter to the Turkestan communists, emphasizing and demanding that they increase their attention and concern for the needs of the working people, the poor, and especially the indigenous nationalities. At this new stage, the Central Committee of the RCP(b) again provided fundamental political and practical direction to the Turkestan communists. In a letter to the Central Committee (January 1921), written by Comrade Stalin and approved by Lenin, the Central Committee of the RCP(b) wrote that the line of the planned and ongoing nationalities policy in Turkestan is in no way altered by the so-called "New Course" of economic policy. The Central Committee emphasized in its letter that the conclusions of those comrades who believe that the implementation of the New Economic Policy in Turkestan should lead to a revision of the Soviet government's land policy, a revision of the Semirechye land reform, which returned the seized lands to the Kirghiz population, are deeply erroneous and completely superficial. These conclusions, the Central Committee declared, are essentially the same old colonialism under a new flag, completely false, attributing to the Soviet government a willingness to return the Kirghiz to the bondage of the kulak farmers. This crucial instruction from the Central Committee of the RCP(b) formed the basis of the struggle waged by the Turkestan Bureau of the Central Committee of the RCP(b), later renamed the Central Asian Bureau, in Turkestan, correcting the errors committed by some members of the Turkestan Bureau (Tomsky, Peters, and Safarov) toward excesses that affected even the middle peasantry. Resisting the great-power colonialist bias, the Central Committee of the RCP(b) in this letter gave instructions for combating local national deviationism, which attempted to disguise itself as the New Economic Policy. The Central Committee letter pointed out that the

implementation of the New Economic Policy in Turkestan in no way signified the granting of free rein to native commercial and monetary capital or the "right" to economically enslave and politically subjugate the working masses—the semi-proletarians and proletarians—of Turkestan. The New Economic Policy in Turkestan, the Central Committee writes, means providing small farmers and artisans with a larger share of their produce at their free disposal, greater freedom of trade, and precise limitation of taxes and duties levied for the benefit of the Soviet state. But, the Central Committee of the RCP(b) writes, one thing

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In addition to measures to strengthen and expand market trade, Soviet economic policy in Turkestan must ensure the implementation of measures to support the working farmer and grain grower, artisan, potter, tanner, and the like against commercial capital, through economic support for workers' cooperatives in all their forms. The letter emphasizes with particular force that Soviet authorities must not only, and especially not, formally comply with the laws of the market, but also organize small producers into cooperatives and economically assist them, providing them with a way out of capitalist bondage and finding in them loyal allies of the Party and the proletariat.
The Central Committee's letter does not limit itself to these general instructions; rather, developing the decisions of the 10th Congress on the national question, adopted by the Congress in response to Comrade Stalin's report, it identifies specific economic tasks in Turkestan: restoring the area of irrigated crops, expanding the area of dryland crops, reviving and developing the cotton crop, primarily improving the existing irrigation system, restoring livestock farming, and so on.
The Central Committee demands support for handicraft production, equipment for large industrial enterprises, the organization of trade turnover through cooperatives, and so on.
This was a program for several years, which formed the basis for all subsequent work of the Turkestan party organization, its governing bodies—the regional committees, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkestan, the Turkburo, and the Central Committee of the RCP(b), in whose work the role of Comrade V.V. Kuibyshev and the organs of Soviet power deserves special mention. The entire Turkestan party organization and leading figures of the working class and revolutionary peasantry fought for its implementation.
However, the general backwardness of the region, especially the weakness of local cadres, led to the party organization lagging behind the overall level of party work throughout the party. This lag was especially dangerous and harmful in the new stage after the 11th Congress. Therefore, the Central Committee of the RCP(b), its Secretariat, its apparatus, primarily the Organizational and Instructional Department, organized an inspection of the implementation of the Central Committee decisions and resolutions of the 11th Party Congress in the regions of the Turkmen Republic. Based on data from the Organizational and Instructional Department, the Central Committee determined the state of party work in five regions that were part of the Turkmen Republic: Fergana, Syr Darya, Samarkand, Transcaspian, and Semirechye (Alma-Ata).

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(with the center then called Verny). The Central Committee of the RCP(b) objectively assessed the state of party work, emphasizing the shortcomings. The Central Committee pointed to unfavorable working conditions in each of the aforementioned regions, which prevented the Central Committee of the CPT from exercising systematic party leadership: continuous military operations in the Fergana region, which disrupted the efforts of the Central Committee of the CPT and the regional committee to establish contacts with grassroots party organizations and lead them in the Semirechye region. In addition, there were also, so to speak, natural conditions of isolation (the absence of a railway, let alone aviation, automobiles and highways—travel was "horse-drawn"). And most importantly, in all regions—the weakness of cadres, and at times an almost complete absence of Muslim communist workers well acquainted with local conditions and the languages of the Uzbeks,

Kyrgyz and Kazakhs, Turkmens and Tajiks. In 1922, the Central Committee of the RCP(b) again devoted considerable attention to this, one of the largest national organizations—the Turkestan. After reviewing the work of the Turkestan party organization and verifying the implementation of the decisions of the 11th Party Congress, the Central Committee of the RCP(b) heard a report from the Central Asian Bureau, then chaired by Comrade Rudzutak. It established that party work in Turkestan still lagged significantly. My previous work in Turkestan, as the Central Committee's field instructor, not only failed to prevent me from objectively and self-critically uncovering the remaining shortcomings and weaknesses, but also helped me, equipping me with a better understanding of the situation in the regions of Turkestan, so that I could more specifically assist the Central Committee of the RCP(b) in formulating and identifying shortcomings and outlining tasks for their subsequent correction.

In 1922, the Central Committee of the RCP(b) paid great attention to the Transcaucasian party organizations – Georgian, Azerbaijani and Armenian.

The Transcaucasian party organizations, fundamentally ideologically and organizationally sound, successfully overcame difficulties, shortcomings, mistakes, and vacillations within their own ranks. These mistakes became particularly evident among the Bolsheviks after they came to power, when it became necessary to define a line of leadership for state building. It was during this period that so-called national deviationism within the party became particularly pronounced, sliding toward Menshevism, Mussavatism, and Dashnaktsutyunism, and later toward Trotskyism (and in subsequent developments, some even slid toward fascism). The dead Menshevism that existed in Georgia

In its time, it was strong, seizing the living. The dead Mensheviks dragged along with them, particularly on the national question, living national deviationists. Their source of nourishment was the numerous petty-bourgeois, non-proletarian elements alien to the party, who were part of the Communist Parties. The Central Committee of the RCP(b) and the Transcaucasian Regional Committee, dealing with issues of strengthening the party organizations of Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia, turned their attention primarily to the composition of the party organizations. In Georgia, for example, of the 18,000 party members, only 13% were workers; the rest were employees, peasants, and artisans. Therefore, the goal was set to reduce the party organization by 30% at the expense of non-proletarian elements while simultaneously increasing the number of newly admitted workers. As a result of the purge of members of the Georgian Communist Party in the second half of 1921 and the first half of 1922, over four thousand people were purged, and in the second half of 1922 and the first quarter of 1923, another six thousand were purged. By March 1923, the Georgian Communist Party had approximately 11,000 members, with workers accounting for over 17 percent. Lenin believed it necessary, given the economic collapse and capitalist encirclement, to form a federation of Transcaucasian republics. In one of his letters, Lenin demanded a thoughtful, unhurried approach to this matter, requiring several weeks and, after taking into account Comrade Stalin's opinion, several months of preparation. In late 1921, the Transcaucasian Bureau of the Central Committee, with the participation of Comrade Molotov, a representative of the Central Committee of the RCP(b), adopted a resolution on the organization of a Federation of Transcaucasian Republics. Nationalist deviationists launched a campaign against this in 1922. Even after the issue was discussed at the Plenum of the Central Committee of the RCP(b), which rejected all their proposals and affirmed the need to create a federation, they did not cease their struggle. It should be emphasized that they were already effectively supported by Trotsky, and this encouraged them in their subversive work. They pitted the Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party against the Transcaucasian Regional Committee and even briefly achieved a majority in the Georgian Central Committee. This majority was short-lived. Already in March, at the Congress of the Communist Party of Georgia, this majority was defeated: just over 10% of delegates voted for

its line—the overwhelming majority of the congress, in Leninist fashion, supported the Transcaucasian Regional Committee.
The Central Committee of the RCP(b) dealt with issues in Transcaucasia, particularly Georgia, for almost the entirety of 1922. Besides Molotov, Georgia

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A Central Committee commission consisting of comrades Dzerzhinsky, Manuilsky, and Mitskevich-Kapsukas visited the congress. Based on its report and proposal, the Central Committee approved the line of the Transcaucasian Regional Committee, requesting the Georgian Central Committee to strictly implement the directives and decisions of the Transcaucasian Regional Committee. The Central Committee again sent comrades Kuibyshev and Kamenev to the congress of the Georgian Communist Party. They established that the previous composition of the Georgian Communist Party Central Committee had committed serious nationalist and anti-internationalist errors not only on the fundamental question of the Federation of Transcaucasian Republics but also on other major fundamental political issues, particularly the fight against the remnants of Menshevism and the implementation of an agrarian revolution in the countryside. The plenum of the Central Committee of the RCP(b), having discussed the situation, deemed it necessary to address a letter to the communists of Transcaucasia, in which a significant portion was devoted to the situation in Georgia. In this letter, the Central Committee stated that the fundamental organizational slogan of our party at the current moment is party unity. This unity is especially necessary, the Central Committee wrote, in Transcaucasia, in the face of the looming threat of imperialist invasion. The Central Committee pointed out that Transcaucasia, as a peasant country lacking broad proletarian masses except in Baku, requires that Communist Parties exercise special attention and caution toward elements infected with the nationalist remnants of the petty-bourgeois masses. At the same time, it is necessary to be proactive in drawing the broad masses into the mainstream of Soviet construction. Mistakes in this matter could lead to the separation of the petty-bourgeois, peasant, and intellectual strata from Soviet power. Mistakes could push them toward pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism in Azerbaijan, and toward the Entente in Georgia and Armenia. The Central Committee particularly emphasized that the struggle to strengthen national peace and fraternal solidarity among the workers of Transcaucasia remains the most important task of the communist parties and their leadership. The Central Committee emphasized the need to end factional struggles, squabbles, and especially the principled political struggle that destroys the unity of the party ranks, warning against the application of the expulsion from the party envisaged by the decisions of the 10th and 11th Congresses to groups and factionalists. The Central Committee also examined the state of party organizations in Azerbaijan and Armenia in equal detail. As a result of the efforts of the Central Committee of the RCP(b), the Transcaucasian Regional Committee, the newly elected Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party, and the overwhelming majority of Georgian Bolsheviks, the Communist Party of Georgia successfully

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overcame the resistance of the remnants of counter-revolutionary Menshevism, strengthened Soviet power in Georgia, and, as true Marxist-Leninist internationalists, together with other republics of Transcaucasia, created the Transcaucasian Federation, actively participating in the creation of a single Union of Socialist Republics.
In Ukraine, the struggle for the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic was particularly acute because foreign imperialists—German and Entente, and the Russian White Guards under Denikin—relied on the insidious enemy of the Ukrainian people—the nationalist-minded kulak-bourgeois Rada, the Petliura regime. The Petliura regime was insidious, hypocritical, and corrupt. While employing slogans of independence and the national rights of the Ukrainian people, from the very outset, it made the "independent Ukraine" they proclaimed completely dependent on the imperialist powers

—first the Germans, then the Entente. Disguising themselves as "friends of the people" and even calling their government the "Ukrainian Rada," meaning "Soviet," they smashed the genuine Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies. Being a kulak-bourgeois power, they opposed the agrarian revolution, defended the landowners from the peasant poor and the capitalists from the workers, acting as a united front with the bourgeois nationalists of other nations - Jewish Zionism, Polish chauvinism and others.

Despite the repeatedly declared will of the Soviet government of the RSFSR, headed by Lenin, to recognize the Ukrainian state, to make peace with it, and despite its refusal, of course, to form an alliance with Denikin, with the landowners and capitalists, the Petliura Rada went to war against the Russian Soviet peoples.

The great merit of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine lies, first and foremost, in the fact that, under the leadership of Lenin and the Central Committee of the RCP(b), they were able to expose the Ukrainian nationalists to the Ukrainian working people. Naturally, the Bolsheviks of Ukraine, as in Transcaucasia, won Lenin's position on the national question in a fierce and principled struggle against a considerable number of deviationists within the party who distorted Lenin's national policy. There were also general opposition groups within the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine on all other issues of policy and organizational development—Trotskyists, the "Workers' Opposition," "Democratic Centralism," and other remnants of Menshevik opportunism, who came forward.

Even in the trade union debate against the Leninist line, they had their representatives, sometimes in significant numbers, at congresses and conferences of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, to which the Central Committee of the RCP (Bolsheviks) sent its representatives to combat them and guide the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine in the right direction. One of the leading representatives of the Central Committee of the RCP (Bolsheviks) was Politburo member Comrade I.V. Stalin. But by the 10th, and especially by the 11th Congress of the RCP (Bolsheviks), the Leninists in the Ukrainian party organization successfully defeated these opposition groups, winning a solid majority that stood for Leninism.

This also strengthened the organizational party organizations of Ukraine, so the Central Committee of the RCP did not have to take extraordinary organizational measures after the XI Congress.

During this period, the working situation in the countryside remained difficult. In a number of districts, bandit gangs operated in the countryside, although in most cases they had already degenerated into purely criminal ones. The New Economic Policy intensified the process of differentiation, strengthening the position of the kulak and increasing its attempts to legally integrate into the Soviets and the Soviet apparatus, weakening the position of the party and its support base—the poor (the impoverished peasants). Under these conditions, the Central Committee of the RCP(b) and the Central Committee of the Communist Party(b) of Ukraine set the task of the party organizations to strengthen the political power of the Soviets in the villages, preventing the penetration of kulaks and rich people into the Soviets; to actively promote the development and qualitative improvement of agriculture on the basis of the NEP, preparing it for a gradual transition to higher cooperative-collective farm forms of cultivation and land use; By improving the living conditions and raising the culture of the village in every possible way, preserving and strengthening the committees of the poor—the komnezamy—remembering that the agricultural proletarians and the komnezamy, by strengthening their alliance with the middle peasantry, would in the future be the main support of the party in the struggle against the growing kulaks. Regarding work in the working-class regions of Ukraine, the situation was also difficult: the industry of Ukraine had not yet been restored and was in a grave condition; the issue of timely payment of already reduced wages was acute. Due to financial difficulties, the debt of economic organizations to workers was large, one might say enormous, as a result of which the financial situation of workers and

communists was dire. Exceptional fortitude, endurance, and dedication were required from party workers, from all communists, to conduct party, agitational, propaganda, organizational,

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Trade union work among the masses, as well as strengthening and maintaining morale within the party organization itself, were crucial, especially since even within the communist ranks there were unstable comrades who succumbed to decadence, as well as oppositional opportunists who sowed the panic of capitulation. Therefore, the task was set of intensive cadre training, selecting steadfast comrades to assign to work units. At the same time, without waiting for their training to be completed, comrades literate in Marxism were recruited and assigned to work units.

Between Transcaucasia and Ukraine lies a large and important region—the Southeastern, or, as it is now called, the North Caucasian, region. Given its complexity and importance, the Central Committee of the RCP(b) established the Southeastern, and later the North Caucasian, Bureau of the Central Committee of the RCP(b), with its center in Rostov-on-Don. This regional bureau united provincial party organizations: the Don, Stavropol, Kuban-Black Sea, and Terek regions, as well as a number of national regions and autonomous republics such as Dagestan, Kabardino-Balkaria, North Ossetia, Chechnya, Ingush, and Karachay. After the 11th Party Congress, the Central Committee of the RCP(b) heard a report from the Southeastern Bureau of the Central Committee, led by Comrade K.E. Voroshilov (Comrade Mikoyan became the bureau's head somewhat later). First of all, the very existence of the Southeastern Bureau of the Central Committee was discussed, as a group of delegates to the 11th Congress, and later other comrades from several provinces of the North Caucasus, had raised the question of the unnecessary existence of a regional center in the North Caucasus. I recall Comrade Stalin and Comrade Molotov summoning me and asking the opinion of the Organizational and Instructional Department of the Central Committee on this matter. After briefly examining the matter, I firmly replied that I considered this demand by local provincial comrades unacceptable. Comrades Stalin and Molotov supported my observation that for some comrades, this was a manifestation of a certain parochialism, an unwillingness to have a direct representative of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) to directly verify the implementation of the decisions of the Congress and the Central Committee.

Further study of the region and the development of the necessary measures, carried out by the apparatus of the Central Committee and reviewed by the Orgburo of the Central Committee, fully confirmed the correctness of the said decision of the Central Committee.

Despite all the shortcomings noted in the work of the Southeastern Bureau, especially in its early days, its preservation and operation were fully justified. It is well known what a brutal civil war raged in this region, and what resistance

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Soviet power was undermined by counterrevolutionary Cossacks—Kornilovites, Kaledinites, Krasnovites, and Denikinites (there were, of course, revolutionary Cossacks, but they were a minority)—and the devastation to the region's economy was the result of White banditry, actively supported by foreign imperialist interventionists. The crop failure of 1921 further undermined the region's economy and normal life. In 1921 and the winter of 1922, various White-Green bands, primarily drawn from among the indigenous Cossacks, were still active. The situation was further complicated by the presence of various warring tribes of various small nationalities—all of this, coupled with a small proletariat, created and exacerbated difficult working conditions for party organizations.

In the second half of 1922, the situation improved somewhat - a good harvest and its sale improved the mood of the peasants and working Cossacks, banditry decreased, and in a number of areas was eliminated, and the material situation improved - the supply of workers in the cities.

Like the Dagestan Party Organization, the Regional Bureau and the Central Committee of the RCP(b) provided assistance to all organizations in the national regions and republics—Kabardino-Balkaria, North Ossetia, Karachay, Chechen-Ingush, and Kalmyk—which were experiencing significant difficulties in building their national centers of culture, statehood, and economy. It must be said that, although less active than the Dagestanis, their representatives were persistent in defending their interests, even engaging in fights among themselves, which the Regional Bureau of the Central Committee had to resolve and settle. They traveled to Moscow, attended receptions at the Central Committee with the secretaries of the Central Committee, including Comrades Stalin and Molotov, and their first stop was the Organization and Instruction Department, headed by Comrade Kaganovich. In the Central Committee of the RCP(b) they encountered criticism, help, attention, and care as equal members of the Great Family of liberated peoples of the Soviet Republic.

The Central Committee also worked intensively on the so-called national minorities, that is, those national minorities who, due to historical circumstances, whether temporary or long-term, were not united by a single territory and state association, but were scattered throughout the provinces, regions, and republics. These included Jews, Poles, Tatars, Mordvins, Chuvashes, and others, as well as those temporarily deprived of their territories: Latvians, Lithuanians, and Estonians, whose interests needed to be taken into account.

It was necessary to provide assistance in their daily, economic, cultural, and political development. At the local level, even since the time of the People's Commissariat of Nationalities, when Comrade Stalin was People's Commissar, special departments had been established in a number of provincial executive committees, and there were corresponding workers in party organizations. The Central Committee had national sections, which had their own press organs in their own languages, a cadre of organizers and propagandists, and so on.

The Central Committee identified shortcomings in work among ethnic minorities, pointed them out to local organizations, and demanded stronger work among ethnic minorities. Not a single periodic report from the Central Committee failed to highlight the implementation of national policy, including work among ethnic minorities.

Every worker from a national republic, region, district, or section, arriving in Moscow, could come to their Central Committee of the Party and always received a worthy reception, advice, and assistance from the Secretariat of the Central Committee and personally from the General Secretary of the Central Committee, Comrade Stalin, as well as from the Secretaries of the Central Committee, Comrades Molotov, Kuibyshev, and Andreyev, when he became secretary, in the Organizational and Instructional Department of the Central Committee. And, I will say without false modesty, as its head, I had to devote not only attention to them but also practical efforts to advance and resolve their problems.

The Urals were one of the country's largest industrial centers. The Urals were also a significant agricultural region, so the Central Committee attached great importance to the Urals Party Organization. After the 11th Congress, the Central Committee deemed it necessary to strengthen the Urals Bureau of the Central Committee and appointed comrades Goloshchekin, Kharitonov, Bela Kun, Lomov, and others to it.

It is well known what a heroic role the workers and communists of the Urals played in the struggle for Soviet power during the war against Kolchak and then, as a reservoir and rearguard, in the fight against Denikin. By the end of the Civil War, during the transition to the New Economic Policy, industry was in dire straits, and agriculture was devastated. Added to this were the constant conflicts over land relations, especially on the border with Bashkiria, which often escalated into bitter ethnic hatred. In 1922, political banditry was nonexistent in the Urals, but criminal banditry, fueled in part by hunger, was widespread. As a result, the mood in the villages was still unstable, stoked by the Socialist Revolutionaries, who used kulaks and the remnants of Kolchak's forces.

Although here too the work of the anti-Soviet parties of the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries

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In the first period, it did not meet with active opposition everywhere, but in industrial centers, workers took firm positions of support for the party and Soviet power.
In 1922, no fundamental anti-party groups or acute struggles emerged. By May, even the "Myasnikovism" in the Perm organization had ceased to manifest itself. It could be said that the Ural organizations had strengthened, but in a number of places, negative developments in party life, related to the NEP, continued. This was expressed in a misunderstanding among some communists of the meaning of the NEP and even, among some, a disagreement with the new economic policy: a search for ways and means of personal provision, partly due to the difficult financial situation, a craving for personal farming, including a small house, a cow, and the like. This was also true of some district and even provincial communists, not to mention peasant communists, a significant number of whom were absorbed in developing and strengthening their farms. Closely related to this was a tendency toward parochialism, an unfriendly attitude toward visiting workers, and a certain isolation among the core of long-serving local workers.
An increase in drunkenness has been noted among some of the senior staff of the Chelyabinsk and Tyumen organizations.
There was almost no growth of party organizations in the Urals; although the number of people leaving the party had decreased recently, it still continued; not only peasants but also some working communists left (even in the Yekaterinburg district, 217 people left in January-June 1922).
The Central Committee turned its special attention to the most important link in the chain of Ural party organizations - the largest Yekaterinburg provincial organization.
The Central Committee's Organizational Bureau issued a corresponding resolution to strengthen work in grassroots organizations—the Party cells. To ensure its organizational implementation, it was deemed necessary to replace the secretary of the Yekaterinburg Provincial Party Committee with a new, more powerful party worker.
As for the Ural Bureau itself, the Central Committee recommended convening the Ural Regional Party Conference in Yekaterinburg and sent the Secretary of the Central Committee, Comrade A.A. Andreev, and the Head of the Organization and Instruction Department of the Central Committee, Comrade L.M. Kaganovich, to this conference as representatives of the Central Committee of the RCP(b).
The party's work in the Far East proceeded under more difficult conditions. The protracted Japanese occupation of Khabarovsk

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The Soviet Union and Primorsky Oblast forced the party organization to operate illegally in these regions, heroically fighting to restore Soviet power throughout the Far East. During this struggle, the party organization maintained contact with Soviet Russia—with the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), following its instructions and leading the communists who held power in the government of the Far Eastern Republic. 1922 brought us great success and victory in the Far East—the occupation of Khabarovsk by the People's Army on February 14 ensured the subsequent complete defeat of the White Guard bands. Japan, taking this into account and the Soviet Republic's strengthened international position, was forced to begin negotiations on the evacuation of its troops from the Far East and the liberation of Russian territory from occupation. As usual, Japan delayed the negotiations, even leading to a temporary suspension. But when the Red Army heroically defeated the White bands and the occupation forces reached their limit, Japan was forced to retreat—the People's Army of the Far Eastern Republic occupied Vladivostok. Vladivostok, as the great Lenin proudly and joyfully declared, became ours!

On November 14, 1922, the People's Assembly of the Far Eastern Republic dissolved itself and the government, creating a Revolutionary Committee (Revkom) to organize organs of Soviet power in the Far East. The People's Assembly declared its full recognition of the Constitution and all laws of the RSFSR, extended them to the entire territory of the Far East, and declared its complete annexation to the Russian Federative Soviet Socialist Republic. Thus, the borders of the RSFSR shifted and once again reached the shores of the Pacific Ocean, with the exception of Sakhalin, which now also awaited its moment of liberation before becoming Soviet. Under the leadership of the Far Eastern Bolshevik Organization, workers, peasants, and toiling people enthusiastically began to establish Soviets and organize organs of Soviet power. The Far East Bureau of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) expanded its activities in the Khabarovsk and Primorsky regions, and by the autumn of 1922, it was already leading the Baikal, Transbaikal, Amur, Primorsky, Khabarovsk, and Primorsky regional party organizations, as well as the party organizations of the CER right-of-way. The Far East Bureau of the Central Committee faced new and significant tasks. The Central Committee sent Comrade Kubyak, the responsible Central Committee instructor, there (who, some time later, we nominated and appointed Secretary of the Far East Bureau of the Central Committee of the RCP(b).

Comrade Kubyak, as a Central Committee instructor, helped the Far East Bureau itself, first and foremost, accurately account for party members and the cells that united them. Naturally, the organization, which had so belatedly embarked on the task of organizing Soviet power and the great work of uniting communists, faced enormous and difficult challenges. I remember how cautiously, carefully, and I would even say with a gentle spirit, we approached criticism of shortcomings in the Central Committee and the Organization and Instruction Department, offering advice and providing the Far East Bureau and all organizations with every possible assistance, primarily with personnel and good party and Soviet workers. On the instructions of the Central Committee Secretaries, Comrades Stalin and Molotov, the Organization and Instruction and Accounting and Distribution Departments selected workers who were not only capable of performing their duties themselves but also able to teach local workers who needed to be promoted and trained. Of course, in the first period there were gaps in discipline and incompetence, but the main thing was the lack of party, Marxist-Leninist and practical business education.

I must say that the Far East and its party organizations have been and have always remained for a long period the subject of special spiritual concern for our Central Committee and the Soviet government.

Our review and assessment does not include our glorious capitals - Moscow and Petrograd, because the relationship of the Central Committee and connections with these capital organizations were not built on one-time surveys or their individual reports, but on the daily political and organizational connections of the Central Committee and their leadership.

A powerful musical "oratorio" has yet to be written about the Bolsheviks of Moscow and Petrograd marching into the depths of Russia for its socialist restructuring. But it lives in the hearts of the people, the proletariat, who speak from their hearts: Glory to the Bolsheviks of Moscow, Petrograd, and other industrial centers of the country, who, at the call of the Central Committee, at the call of Lenin, traveled to the most remote, remote regions to fight the White agents of imperialism, the saboteurs, the speculators, the merchants, the kulaks, and all the class enemies of socialism—for successful, correct party and Soviet construction, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the construction of socialism throughout Great Russia—the Soviet Union, right down to its most backward corners!

During 1921, Moscow's ties as the center of the RSFSR with the independent republics and autonomous republics and regions were strengthened.

Communication with the RSFSR authorities in the field of economy and culture

Instead of being episodic, it became increasingly systematic, not only in the autonomous republics but also in the independent republics. These were not yet union relations—work was conducted within the framework of treaties; however, already in 1921 and part of 1922 (before the congress's decision), the Government of the RSFSR increasingly played the role of a pan-federal, all-Union center, as dictated by economic necessity. In order to strengthen these treaty relations, it was necessary to conclude additional treaties and adopt separate decisions regulating the relations between the bodies of the RSFSR and the bodies of the independent republics. Plenipotentiary representatives of the treaty republics were established under the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR, who represented the republic in all matters and issues arising between the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Central Executive Committee of the respective republic.

In June 1921, a decision was made to introduce representatives of the independent republics into the Council of Labor and Defense and the State Planning Committee. In coordination with the republic governments, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee adopted certain important legislative acts, such as the extension of the law on labor-based land use to all republics, among others. The People's Commissariat for National Affairs painstakingly, diligently, and persistently worked to gradually bring the republics and regions closer together organizationally and economically, and to strengthen ties and achieve genuine rapprochement with the treaty republics. The People's Commissariat for Nationalities, in accordance with the decision of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars, had its own representatives in the treaty republics, who also, by agreement with the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, served as advisors to the RSFSR mission in the respective treaty republic.

The People's Commissariat of Nationalities directed all its work toward bringing the peoples of the Soviet republics closer together, guided by Lenin's instructions that it was impossible to immediately achieve a voluntary union of nations, that it had to be achieved, "worked through with the greatest patience and caution, so as not to spoil the matter, so as not to arouse mistrust, so as to allow the mistrust left by centuries of oppression by landowners and capitalists, private property and hostility due to its division and redistribution to be overcome."

The strengthened trust of nations and independent republics in the RSFSR was particularly evident in connection with the Genoa Conference and the imperialist offensive on the diplomatic front. All republics instructed the RSFSR delegation to defend their interests at the Genoa Conference. In addition to certain official acts, at a meeting of plenipotentiary representatives of all eight Soviet republics in Moscow—the Ukrainian, Byelorussian,

A protocol was signed transferring representation at the Genoa Conference to the RSFSR by the Georgian, Azerbaijani, Armenian, Bukhara, Khorezm, and Far Eastern Republics. On behalf of the RSFSR, Comrade Kalinin stated that he accepted with satisfaction the instructions of the Union and fraternal republics and that the Government of the Russian Republic would take all measures to ensure that the interests of all republics were adequately protected at the conference.

All of this, taken together, brought the Soviet state very close to the transition to a new, higher level – unification into a single federal union state.

This new unification movement arose from below, among the worker-peasant masses themselves, in their Soviets, and in all the republics. It could be said that it began particularly with the question of uniting three republics—Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia—into a single Transcaucasian Federation.

The unification of the three Transcaucasian republics was dictated by the urgent need to quickly restore their devastated economies. The railway was common to all the republics. It connected not only the interior regions of Transcaucasia but also the Black Sea and Caspian ports. The policies of

the bourgeois-nationalist governments, with their customs barriers, hampered the already weak trade turnover between the individual parts of Transcaucasia. Moreover, at that time, the major tasks of socialist construction could only be accomplished through a federal unification of the republics. Lenin was particularly interested in this issue; he first raised the question of economic unification and proposed creating a single bank for all of Transcaucasia. In April 1921, an agreement had already been reached to unite the railways of Transcaucasia under a single management, and in July 1921, the Caucasian Bureau of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) recognized the need to develop a unified economic plan for all Transcaucasian republics and conclude an economic, financial, trade, and military convention between the Transcaucasian republics and the RSFSR. The Transcaucasian Economic Bureau was established. This was a serious beginning to the unification of all the Transcaucasian republics.

In July 1921, Comrade Stalin, on the instructions of the Central Committee and Lenin personally, came to Transcaucasia and provided the Communist Parties of Transcaucasia with invaluable assistance in strengthening Soviet power, in developing economic measures, in particular in the unification of economic bodies, and especially in the preparation

The formation of the Transcaucasian Federation of three republics. Stalin's report at the meeting of the Tiflis party organization on July 6, 1921, "On the Immediate Tasks of Communism in Georgia and Transcaucasia," was of great significance. "I remember," Comrade Stalin said, "the years 1905-1917, when fraternal internationalist solidarity reigned among the workers of Transcaucasia, but now, as a result of the dominance of nationalists in a toxic nationalist environment, the old international ties have been broken.

The next task of the Georgian communists is a merciless fight against nationalism.

It is necessary to eliminate the isolated existence of Georgia, it is necessary to create a healthy atmosphere of mutual trust between peoples and achieve the unification of the economic efforts of the Transcaucasian republics."

While emphasizing the need to create a Transcaucasian Federation, Stalin at the same time said that this would in no way mean the liquidation of independent republics.

In all three republics, vigorous work has begun to prepare projects for a practical solution to this issue, primarily in the economic sphere.

In November 1921, the Central Committee of the RCP(b) sent Comrade Molotov, Secretary of the Central Committee, to Transcaucasia to participate in a meeting of the plenum of the Transcaucasian Bureau of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) on the Transcaucasian Federation. This plenum and the regional meeting of the leading activists voted in favor of forming a federation —a federal union between three republics—Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia.

The Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) adopted a resolution drafted by Lenin on the formation of a federation of Transcaucasian republics. Lenin recommended that this issue be widely discussed among workers, without any haste.

Dozens of party meetings, rallies, and workers' gatherings in Tiflis, villages, Baku, and Yerevan supported the idea and proposals for organizing a federation.

It's impossible, however, to think that this occurred without internal struggle, especially among the top ranks of the party. Within the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the Georgian government itself, there was a rather influential group of national deviationists who opposed the formation of the Transcaucasian Federation. They waged a desperate struggle against unification, accompanying their actions with hostile nationalism directed against other nationalities.

Transcaucasia. They demanded the establishment of cordons on the borders with other Soviet republics and opposed land management based on the law confiscating landowners' lands. They

advanced such right-wing, anti-Soviet proposals as, for example, denationalizing the Batumi oil reserves and leasing them to the Americans as a concession. Among them, Mdivani stood out; many later abandoned national deviationism, such as the elder, respected Bolshevik Filipp Makharadze. There were similar nationalist deviationists in the Azerbaijani Party. The Central Committee of the RCP(b) and Lenin personally repeatedly addressed these issues: summoning them to Central Committee meetings, explaining them, admonishing them, and at the same time harshly condemning them.

Following Lenin's instructions, the Central Committee of the RCP(b) did not allow administrative pressure, but showed great restraint and patience.

In March 1922, the Azerbaijan, Georgian, and Armenian Socialist Republics voluntarily united into a federal union, and then, in the second half of 1922, finally formed a single Transcaucasian Federative Republic. In mid-1922, representatives of the Transcaucasian Regional Committee of the RCP(b) traveled to Moscow and raised the general issue of the need to strengthen federal ties with the RSFSR.

Almost simultaneously with the Transcaucasian question, the question of forming a union state was raised by the Ukrainian and Belarusian Soviet Republics.

In August 1922, the Central Committee of the RCP(b) created a commission to prepare a draft resolution of the Plenum of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) "On the Relationship between the RSFSR and the Independent National Soviet Republics." The commission included the following comrades: Stalin I.V., Molotov V.M., Kuibyshev V.V., Ordzhonikidze G.K., Rakovsky Ya.G., Sokolnikov G.Ya. and representatives of the republics Agamali-oglu S.A. (Azerbaijan), Myasnikov A.F. (Armenia), Mdivani P.T. (Georgia), Petrovsky G.I. (Ukraine), Chervyakov A.G. (Belarus). Naturally, other secretaries of the Central Committee and the heads of the main departments of the Central Committee, including Kaganovich's Organization and Instruction Department, also took part in this work of the commission.

The first draft developed by Stalin was sent to the Central Committee of the Communist Parties for discussion. According to this draft, the independent republics of Ukraine, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia would join the Russian Federation. Although their rights were greater than those of ordinary autonomous republics, and although the draft did not mention

They were described as autonomous, but it turned out that they joined the RSFSR as autonomous republics. The Central Committees of Azerbaijan and Armenia supported this project, the Central Committee of Georgia spoke out against it, the Central Committee of Belarus spoke out in favor of maintaining treaty relations, and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine did not express its opinion and did not discuss the issue.

Following the October Plenum of the Central Committee of the RCP(b), the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine fully subscribed to the decisions. The commission, which met on September 23-24, met under the chairmanship of Comrade Molotov. It heard the report and unanimously (with the exception of the Georgian representative, who abstained) accepted Comrade Stalin's draft as a basis.

Lenin was ill at the time and was unable to participate in the commission's work or give specific instructions. The draft draft, compiled and adopted by the commission, was sent to Lenin on September 25. Comrade Lenin, having reviewed the draft, wrote a letter to the members of the Politburo in which he spoke out against the draft and the clause on "autonomization" of independent national republics. Lenin believed that the republics' accession to the RSFSR would place them in an unequal position and curtail their sovereign rights. Instead, Lenin proposed forming a new union of all the republics—a Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—which would include all independent republics, including the RSFSR, as equals, with equal rights and responsibilities, as independent, sovereign states. Lenin proposed establishing, alongside the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, a Union Central Executive Committee as a federal Central Executive Committee.

The commission headed by Stalin agreed with Lenin's proposals.
In October, the Central Committee Plenum considered this new draft. Unable to attend due to illness, Lenin sent additional proposals, including the introduction of positions for chairmen of the Union Central Executive Committee representing all the federated republics. Lenin steered the Plenum against great-power chauvinism and local national deviationism, which was evident among right-wing elements and Trotskyists.
On October 6, the day of the meeting of the Central Committee Plenum, Lenin wrote: “I declare war to the death on Great Russian chauvinism... We must absolutely insist that the Union Central Executive Committee be chaired in turn by a Russian, a Ukrainian, a Georgian, etc. Absolutely!”
The Plenum of the Central Committee not only accepted all of Lenin’s proposals,

but also in the resolution condemned manifestations of great-power chauvinism and local national deviationism.
After the Central Committee Plenum, Comrade Stalin summoned me—the head of the Organization and Instruction Department and head of the Central Committee's Agitation and Propaganda Department—and gave instructions to launch deeper and broader explanatory work in the localities in the spirit of the Plenum's decision, which was especially important in connection with the preparation and holding of the congresses of Soviets of the republics, and then the Union Congress of Soviets.
Throughout November and December, we communicated with the Central Committees of the national communist parties, the provincial and regional committees, and received reports from them on the progress of the explanatory work and the rise of the unification movement. I, for example, communicated not only with the Central Committees of the national communist parties but also with the provincial committees. I systematically reported to the Secretariat of the Central Committee and personally to Comrades Stalin and Molotov.
The Party not only explained but also combated nationalism, all manner of disguised proposals that undermined the idea of the USSR. For example, in Ukraine, the Borotbist national communists, in collaboration with Trotskyists (Rakovsky), vigorously promoted the idea of a "confederation" with severely curtailed rights: all decrees of the "confederation" government, for example, must be confirmed by the republic governments; "confederations," as a rule, must not have their own army, unified citizenship, legislative bodies, etc. And it was this "union-confederation" that the national deviationists peddled in place of a genuine federal union state. The Party, the Central Committee, and local organizations organized the exposure of this cunning substitution of a confederal fiction for a genuine Union State.
National deviators from Bashkiria and Tatarstan demanded the liquidation of the Russian Federation so that these republics could enter the Union separately.
Stalin convincingly demonstrated that this path would lead to the dissolution of existing federations; furthermore, in addition to the eight autonomous republics, it would be necessary to create a special Russian All-Russian Central Executive Committee and a Russian Council of People's Commissars from the RSFSR, which would lead to a major organizational shakeup, unnecessary and harmful.
At the same time, organizational work was underway to prepare for the Congress of Soviets. We at the Central Committee carried out this work jointly with the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.
The preparation of the draft of the main points of the Constitution was in full swing.

The USSR and the declarations on its formation. This was overseen by a Central Committee commission headed by Comrade Stalin.

In December, a Plenum of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) was held, where the draft Union Treaty and the congress declaration were reviewed. The Plenum also elected a commission to lead the First Congress of Soviets, headed by Comrade Stalin.
The plenum approved the drafts and, in view of Comrade Lenin's illness, approved Comrade Stalin as the speaker at the 10th All-Russian Congress of Soviets and the 1st All-Union Congress of Soviets.
The 10th All-Russian Congress unanimously adopted a draft resolution on the unification of the RSFSR, the ZSFSR, the Ukrainian SSR and the Belarusian SSR into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and elected a plenipotentiary delegation, entrusting it with the signing of the treaty on the formation of the USSR.
Closing the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, Comrade Kalinin pointed out the historic significance of the congress's decisions to form the Union State. His words rang with emotion: "Isn't the name of the RSFSR dear to us? It is dear to us. This name was won in the fire of military battles... I see the red banner bearing the five sacred letters of the RSFSR fluttering above us, and we, the delegates of the 10th Congress of Soviets, plenipotentiary representatives of the entire Soviet Russian Federation, bow this precious banner, steeped in battles and victories, strengthened by the sacrifices of workers and peasants, to the Union of Soviet Republics. We see the new red banner of the Union of Soviet Republics already rising. I see, comrades, the banner of this banner in the hands of Comrade Lenin. So, comrades, go ahead, raise this banner higher, so that all the toilers and oppressed of the world may see it."
On the evening of December 30, 1922, the First Congress of Soviets of the USSR opened. More than two thousand delegates attended.
Even the delegates' appearance alone made it clear that these were not "peaceful" parliamentarians gathered here, but glorious fighters of the Civil War, who had ended it victoriously and were now reaping the fruits of victory. The predominant attire was sheepskin coats, greatcoats, tunics, boots, and weather-beaten faces characteristic of men who had just left the trenches, factories, mills, and peasant fields. The combative, turbulent, and passionate reactions throughout the congress to the issues under discussion demonstrated that these were comrades-in-arms who had earned, with their blood and their participation in the October Revolution and the civil war against the White Army and foreign interventionists, the right to create a new, powerful state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

I remember the ceremonial opening of the First Congress of Soviets. With great enthusiasm and enthusiasm, the congress elected Vladimir Ilyich Lenin as honorary chairman.
Comrade Stalin's report to the congress, "On the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," was brief. Following speeches from delegates, including powerful speeches by Comrades Frunze, Kirov, and others, the All-Union Congress of Soviets adopted a resolution approving the Declaration on the Formation of the USSR.
The following points of the resolution show how democratically this entire decision was carried out:
“2. In view of the extreme importance of the adopted Declaration, the concluded Treaty, and the desirability of hearing the final opinions of all the republics comprising the Union on the text of this Treaty, submit the Declaration and the Treaty for further consideration to the Central Executive Committee of the Union Republics so that the opinions of the Union Republics are presented to the Central Executive Committee of the USSR at its next regular session.
3. To instruct the next regular session of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR to consider the received comments, approve the text of the Declaration and the Union Treaty, and immediately put it into effect."
One can be amazed at the statesmanship of the Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants', and Red Army Deputies, which, under the leadership of the Central Committee of the RCP(b), adopted this act of the greatest importance, and demonstrated such democratic and cautious attitude, ordering

that the Treaty be studied in detail once again at the local level, after which it would finally be put into effect—and here the Leninist school and the wisdom of the Leninist Central Committee came into play.

PARTY AND NON-PARTY ORGANIZATIONS

The leadership of the party over all non-party organizations of workers, peasants, and toilers is carried out not only through cells and other party organs, but also through communists elected by the worker-peasant masses to the governing bodies of their broad mass organizations: trade unions, cooperatives, Komsomols, and others, and most importantly, the Councils of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies.
Therefore, in its Charter, the party, along with chapters on the internal organizational structure of the entire party organism, allocated a separate chapter “On factions in non-party organizations.”

This means that all party members who come to congresses, conferences of trade union, Soviet, cooperative and similar organizations, who are elected to their executive bodies and who work in them, are united into factions-groups of communists.
The charter and general practice establish that party factions/groups are part of the party organization. While autonomous in discussing and making decisions on matters of the internal life and day-to-day work of the organization they represent, factions/groups, regardless of their significance, do not constitute an independent party organization, but are entirely subordinate to their respective party organizations: factions/groups of central organizations—to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union; in union republics—to the corresponding Central Committee of the national communist party; in territories and regions—to the territorial and regional party committees; in districts, cities, and rayons—to the regional, city, and district party committees; and in enterprises, villages, and hamlets—to the respective primary party organizations.
The Party Committee discusses issues related to the work of a given faction or group or the organization it represents, with the participation of a representative of that faction or group, who has an advisory vote at the Party Committee meeting. In cases of significant disagreement between the Party Committee and a faction or group regarding matters within its jurisdiction, the relevant committee is obligated to re-examine the matter with representatives of the faction and make a final decision, which the faction or group then immediately implements.
The Central Committee has repeatedly had to resolve conflicts between provincial executive committee factions and provincial party committees, and within provincial committees, between executive committee factions and district party committees, etc. This was especially true where Trotskyist and other oppositionist elements were present in the provincial executive committees. Sometimes this resulted in organizational consequences—the re-election of certain officials.
The Central Committee, its Organizational Instruction Department, provincial and regional committees, and the Central Committees of the national communist parties had to closely monitor the work of the factions, give them advice and instructions, including on such issues as the nomination of workers and the participation of faction groups in this important matter.
No less important, for example, was the question of violations by members of a faction-group of a strict party rule: on a question decided by the entire faction-group, especially by the party committee, a member

A member of a faction-group is obliged to vote for this decision at the general meeting of the elected body. Anyone who violates this rule is subject to disciplinary action by the party. Regarding individual violations of the Charter, including the absence of organized factions, particularly in cooperative bodies, the Central Committee issued specific instructions to correct these violations. Overall, it can be said that the procedure developed by Lenin and the Party for the substantive work of faction groups and their mutual understanding with Party organs ensured stability, firmness, and at the same time democratic Party leadership of communists in non-Party organizations. This, of course, was aided by the Party and the Central Committee's joint ideological and political struggle against anti-Party opposition movements by Trotskyists, the Workers' Opposition, Democratic Centralism, and the like. Their ideological defeat ideologically strengthened precisely those organizations in which the opposition was attempting to establish its strongholds: Soviet institutions, some trade unions, and cooperatives. It was here, and not in the industrial enterprises - among the proletariat, where the opposition did not meet with any serious support - that the party had to exert special energy to keep the communists on Leninist positions and to win back from the opposition those cells and factions of communist groups where they managed to gain a majority for a short time.

On a nationwide scale, there were few instances of disagreement between the factions of the central bodies of non-party organizations regarding party decisions and the Central Committee of the Party. In Soviet bodies, in the factions of the All-Russian, and later the All-Union Central Executive Committee and its Presidium, there was always complete unanimity with the Central Committee of the Party, especially on major state issues.

The "On Trade Unions" debate, which occupied a significant place in the history of our party, is well known in the trade unions. It was between Leninists and Trotskyists, along with their allies—the Workers' Opposition, Democratic Centralism, and others. The victory Lenin and the party achieved over Trotskyism and anti-party elements is well known. This entire debate originated in the trade unions with the faction of the Central Committee of the Transport Workers' Union (Tsektran), where differences with the party line arose, culminating in the aforementioned major intra-party debate "On Trade Unions" between Leninists and Trotskyists in 1920-1921.

After this, another major event occurred, again in the trade unions. At the Fourth Trade Union Congress (May 17-25, 1921), in addition to the overwhelming majority of delegates being Communist Party members, there were also non-party members and, incidentally, approximately one percent Mensheviks, Socialist Revolutionaries, and anarchists. This all the more demanded that the Communists be disciplined in adhering to the Bolshevik line. Despite this, the Communist faction succumbed to the demagogic anti-Party speech at the Congress by Ryazanov, known within the Party for his confused opportunist views, and adopted his incorrect anti-Party resolution, which distorted the question of the Party's relationship with the trade unions and led to a social-reformist line of "independence" of the trade unions from the Party. Despite the fact that we, some delegates loyal to the Leninist Party line, opposed it, Ryazanov's draft resolution was adopted by the majority. This happened primarily because many good communist trade unionists were misled by the silence of Tomsky, a member of the commission appointed by the Central Committee to lead the congress, and the absence of a draft resolution on the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions report prepared by the commission. Tomsky's silence was interpreted as agreement with Ryazanov's draft, which was true, as even then Tomsky did not fully agree with the party line on trade union issues. Moreover, Ryazanov's line was supported by Trotsky's supporters and the so-called "Workers' Opposition"—the Shlyapnikovites. The Central Committee of the Party and Lenin personally drew particular attention to this gross violation of party discipline, which essentially contradicted the party line in the trade union movement and separated it from the party. A plenum of the Central Committee of the Party was urgently convened to discuss this issue. After deliberating, it decided to reject the resolution adopted by the faction and the congress of trade unions. The plenum instructed

Lenin, Stalin and Bukharin to speak on behalf of the Central Committee at a meeting of the congress faction on the issue of the unacceptability of the adopted resolution.
The Central Committee Plenum attached such great importance to this fact that it stripped Ryazanov, as a communist, of his right to work in trade unions and removed Tomsky from the leadership of the Fourth Congress. (After which he was sent to work in Turkestan as a member of the Turkestan Bureau of the Central Committee.)
Lenin's speech at the Communist faction had a huge impact

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The impression it had on the delegates. The party members who had initially succumbed to the incorrect resolution were deeply distressed by their mistake; some literally wept, sincerely grieving their mistakes. After Lenin's speech, they became convinced that upholding Ryazanov's initially adopted resolution, with Tomsky's tacit consent, would have led to the demise of the revolutionary trade union movement in Russia. Lenin profoundly exposed the anarcho-syndicalist and social-opportunist nature of Ryazanov's resolution and sharply criticized Tomsky's behavior. The trade union movement in Western Europe, which initially had great historical significance for the unification and class struggle of the proletariat, later largely slid toward anarcho-syndicalism and trade unionism, abandoning revolutionary political struggle and embracing the so-called "independence" and "neutrality" of trade unions, although in reality they aligned themselves with the leadership of the social democratic parties that had descended into opportunism. The Communist faction, and subsequently the entire Fourth Trade Union Congress, gratefully accepted the lifeline offered them by the Central Committee of the Party and Lenin and successfully completed their work. One more characteristic point should be added here, pertaining to the question of the Party Central Committee's attitude toward the congress faction. The faction discussed two draft theses by Gubar and Holtzman on the organization of workers' supplies. The Central Committee approved Gubar's theses, while the Fourth Congress faction accepted Holtzman's theses, which were defended by Larin (who also often presented rather unclear and confusing proposals). The Central Committee, having considered this dispute, informed the faction that, not perceiving in Holtzman's theses and the faction's decision a demand for an immediate change in government policy, the Central Committee did not exercise its right to intervene in the decisions of the faction and the congress in this case.
This shows: firstly, how the Central Committee specifically dealt with and directed the work of the trade union congress, and, secondly, the differentiated approach and flexibility of this leadership - caution in the use of the Central Committee's right of intervention, which had a positive effect on those who were still sick with "neutralistism" and "independenceism".
It's impossible to think that this issue was as clear then as it is today, especially for non-party members or young party members who hadn't advanced that far. I remember how, while delivering reports and lectures during the Lenin Conscription, I had to dwell in detail on this question of the relationship.

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between the party and non-party organizations—trade unions, Soviets, etc.
Some workers asked questions or said in speeches: if I were elected to the factory committee or the union board, then I must independently implement what the voters ordered, not what the party cell proposed. I had to explain to my comrades in detail that one cannot pit one against the other, because the party and its cell, as the most advanced force of the working masses, express the will and desires of the working class as a whole or the workers of an entire enterprise, not just a single workshop or shop. The party organization nominates and supports candidates who will not surrender the overall class interests of the proletariat as a class for a nickel. The working class also contains backward elements; the party and its local party organizations do not play into these

backward elements, but rather focus on all the advanced forces of the class. This is what distinguishes the Bolshevik Leninist Party from the Menshevik-liquidator party, from the anarcho-syndicalists and other opportunists: our party goes ahead of the masses, sees further and deeper the entire ongoing class struggle and the ultimate great goals of the struggle for socialism and communism.
I did not simply tell the workers of the Leninist Appeal about work in trade unions, but most importantly, about the connection of this work with the party, because for me my trade union, my trade union work was the beginning of the most reliable path for a worker to the Bolshevik Party - the beginning of my path to Lenin, the only leader in the world who was faithful to the end to the leader of the world and Russian proletariat.
That is why, as a Bolshevik-Leninist, I love trade unions, the trade union movement, not as an end in itself, not as a narrowly utilitarian one, but as an integral part of the Great Movement of the Marxist-Leninist Party towards socialism-communism.

ON THE WORK OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND THE PARTY IN PERSONNEL REGARDING STAFFING

As a delegate to the 11th Party Congress, I'll forever remember the colossal impact Lenin's statement in the Central Committee's report on the results of the first year of the NEP made on all the delegates. "The retreat is over; it's now a matter of regrouping our forces," Lenin said. "We've reached the conclusion that the crux of the situation lies in people, in the selection of people."

Following the demobilization of the army, the party and government had to overcome serious difficulties in finding employment not only for demobilized Red Army soldiers and commanding officers, but also for newly freed party members. The New Economic Policy gave rise to a new type of state and economic organization—trusts, syndicates, and trade and commercial bodies—whose very functions were different, unfamiliar and unusual for the Bolsheviks. Initially, these new organizations were formed without proper guidance from party bodies; they were filled with a variety of workers. Many old officials and "commercial" specialists, who had either remained on the sidelines or worked in different, different jobs during the period of War Communism, found their way into them. Having found themselves in these trusts, enterprise directorates, syndicates, joint-stock companies, commercial firms, and party members, including former commanders, commissars, and political workers who had distinguished themselves on the front lines of the civil war, a significant number of them proved inadequately adapted to the new working conditions. Some of them were learning to work in a new way, others were despondent, and some were even ready to blame all their difficulties on the NEP with its trade relations and the market. They needed not only to accept this as inevitable but also to study and understand market relations in order to direct them to the benefit of their state. This knowledge was precisely what they lacked; they lacked the courage, inspiration, and dedication that were essential qualities at the front.
This is precisely why, during the first year of the NEP, the role of specialists in these bodies increased. Some worked honestly, while others, rooted in dreams of capitalism, performed poorly, or even caused harm, associating with NEPmen and speculators, and even drawing some ideologically weak, corruptible communists into these ties. It must be said that the party at that time had very few workers trained for trade and commercial work. Senior officials who had held responsible positions, including those previously in the army, showed no desire to take on this new and unfamiliar work, which was unfamiliar to their entire mentality. This is why, summing up the first year of the NEP, Lenin so urgently raised the issue of personnel and the task of learning, learning, and learning again. Lenin linked the entire issue of personnel not only to economic bodies but also to the task of general improvement.

and the simplification of our entire Soviet state apparatus and the fight against bureaucracy in it. The 11th Congress particularly emphasized the urgency of providing personnel to the outlying districts, especially the national ones. It should be noted that after the 10th Congress, the Central Committee began serious personnel work. The 11th Congress approved the Central Committee's efforts to transfer central workers from Moscow to the regions and proposed that the Central Committee ensure the transfer of at least a thousand comrades within two months.

The 11th Congress, in its resolution "On Trade Unions," emphasized that one of the most important tasks of trade unions is the promotion and training of administrators from among the workers and working masses. At the same time, trade unions must help attract veteran production specialists by providing them with favorable conditions, including adequate compensation for their work and knowledge. The question of attracting veteran specialists was a complex one, raising debate and objections. Some argued that through them, capitalists would retake the factories; others, that this would once again enslave people with the old skills of exploiting workers. Still others argued that we could manage on our own, as we had done on the front lines of the Civil War; others simply objected to the unusually high salaries of veteran specialists, and so on. All of us, Leninist party members, had to explain this issue to workers and rank-and-file communists, respond to their objections, and especially combat the demagoguery spewed on this matter by oppositionists, especially those from the unbridled Workers' Opposition. We argued that it was precisely to ensure that these old specialists worked for socialism, not capitalism, that Lenin advanced his slogan: "The key is in selecting people" from among communists who must be able to master the culture of management and party-style leadership in such a way as to prevent a return to capitalist exploitation. At the same time, Lenin demanded that communists, while mastering the culture of management, not be internally and ideologically conquered by the old culture of the overthrown capitalist class.

The Party and its Central Committee had accumulated a great deal, I would say, rich experience in working with personnel, and this made the task easier to accomplish.

From the very beginning of the organization of the workers' revolutionary Marxist party in Russia, Lenin tirelessly put forward the task of selecting and training people who would devote not only their free evenings, but their entire lives to the revolution.

Even then, long before the October Revolution, in disputes with economists and Mensheviks, Lenin developed a theory and practice

The training and selection of seasoned cadres, their development, and proper deployment, as required by the interests of the Party and the working class. Lenin linked the forging and selection of such permanent, stable cadres with the broader involvement of representatives of the working masses in the movement. Despite the difficult conditions of underground life, the repressions of Tsarism, and the loss of many party workers, the Party nurtured new ones; the Party's reserves often diminished, but never dried up, as new young forces emerged.

No matter how few of us there were at the time of the February Revolution of 1917, it was precisely this core of Bolsheviks nurtured by Lenin that were primarily the actual organizers of the working masses at the bottom.

If the Tsarist underground gave rise to Bolshevik cadre leaders, then Kerensky's "democratic" underground gave rise to tens of thousands of cadre leaders from among the workers and soldiers, and some from among the revolutionary peasants. They formed the backbone of the, so to speak, officer and non-commissioned command staff of the civilian and military organs of the new Soviet power, the new Soviet state apparatus we were building. It cannot be said that they were used in a disorganized manner: the Party, from the Party cell, city committee, and provincial committee to the

Central Committee and the corresponding governing Soviet bodies, took into account a significant portion of them and directed them to the appropriate work.
The councils of workers', soldiers' and peasants' deputies, factory committees, soldiers' committees, as well as land committees and other mass organizations nominated tens and hundreds of thousands of non-party leading activists to all areas of state, economic and military construction.
This, however, was not enough, especially with the development of the civil war and economic collapse. Therefore, the Party and the Central Committee increasingly centralized the rational use of personnel and mass mobilizations to the front and weak areas. The Central Committee demanded, above all, the proper distribution of Party forces.
At the 13th Congress, this issue was particularly acute, and after the 13th Congress, a certain organization of accounting and a more organized distribution of personnel began. Although a real system was not yet in place, a certain amount of order had been achieved. And most importantly, all local organizations became more disciplined in their execution.

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The Central Committee's assignments for personnel and mobilization to the front and the frontline zone. It was thanks to these incredible efforts of the Party and the Central Committee that the front and the frontline zone, remote outlying areas, and economic sectors (transportation, coal) were provided with communist cadres, which became the main factor in the great victory in the Civil War.
It must be said that, although accounting and distribution departments had already begun to be established at that time, there was little personal record-keeping and study of party workers. Accounting work accumulated meager personal data, which served mostly as basic reference and registration material. The Party sent people to the front, the army, the navy, food detachments, and breakthrough sectors of the economy, mostly through mobilizations and only partially through hand-selected workers, whom the Central Committee and its local party bodies knew personally as combative, loyal comrades. Between the 10th and 11th Party Congresses, the Central Committee accomplished a certain amount of work to improve accounting and distribution work. The number of party mobilizations sharply decreased, although the number of communists mobilized into the army increased: instead of the expected 10,000, 16,300 communists were actually mobilized under the general mobilization.
The Central Committee's Accounting and Distribution Department conducted a census of responsible workers.
This preparatory work enabled the Central Committee to begin implementing Lenin's instructions and the decisions of the 11th Party Congress, which I mentioned above. The first period was devoted primarily to the registration and organizational strengthening of the registration and distribution apparatuses in the Central Committee, regional and provincial committees, the Central Committee of the national communist parties, and only partially in the district committees. Work began on registering pre-revolutionary (underground) Bolsheviks (initially, about two thousand were registered, with instructions on the procedure for compiling characteristics of underground members, so as not only to register, but to study all materials for their best use). Work on issuing a single party card was completed. Work began on compiling a reserve of workers based on the registration data of workers who were being used improperly—below their capabilities, abilities, and experience. The registration system in the provincial committees was checked; where it was in a rudimentary and unsatisfactory state, appropriate instructions were given. However, it must be said frankly that all this cannot yet be assessed as the extensive implementation of decisions.

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The XI Congress, especially in regard to government and economic bodies, saw very little progress in personnel management. Hiring and firing were disorganized and haphazard, to the point that

those fired from one institution for unsavory activities were easily hired elsewhere. Appointments to positions of responsibility were still made without the approval or even the knowledge of party bodies, which themselves hadn't even gotten around to it.
Of all the measures taken, the most important was the mobilization of a thousand secret service workers from Moscow to fortify the outskirts, which was proceeding with difficulty. Thus, although the Central Committee's accounting and distribution work had intensified after the Eleventh Congress in the summer of 1922, the implementation of Lenin's instructions and the Congress's decisions remained unsatisfactory.
In the second half of 1922 and early 1923, the Central Committee adopted a number of measures to improve it. Lenin's brilliant articles "How to Reorganize the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection" and "Better Fewer, But Better" provided a particular impetus for this. The ensuing discussion revealed the acuteness of the state apparatus, its shortcomings, the necessary measures for its improvement, and the quality of the Party's leadership of the state apparatus, including the selection of its personnel. This issue of personnel registration and selection in state and business organizations became acute not only because the apparatus was cluttered with bad people, but also because the policy of attracting old, genuine, and not fictitious non-party specialists required simultaneously saturating the apparatus with communists, especially in positions of responsibility. And the Central Committee took up the task more decisively. This work was facilitated by studying the materials of the Central Committee's census of party members and the issuance of a single party card. Although the party card itself, which previously contained information about party members, was simplified, with unnecessary data being removed, this information was expanded in personal files, on the basis of which a personal registry of responsible workers was established and gradually implemented. At a special meeting convened by the Central Committee with the participation of local workers, instructions and a standard form for registering party workers were developed, establishing registration grids and assigning groups of workers with corresponding qualifications and positions to them. This work on registration and assignment

The registration of the relevant registration grids was carried out primarily in provincial, regional, and district party committees; some materials on a limited number of workers were sent to the Central Committee in accordance with the established nomenclature. The attempt to establish a registration of all party members in the Central Committee had to be abandoned as unfeasible and practically unnecessary. It must be said, however, that even the personal registration of responsible party workers, initiated according to new forms before the 12th Party Congress, was still extremely inadequate and largely formal and incomplete. Firstly, it very poorly reflected the qualifications and quality of workers in essence, and secondly, the registration and characterization of workers in state and business organizations was extremely weak.
A survey of a number of departments and economic agencies conducted by the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission revealed that many, if not most, of their leaders were unaware of their personnel resources, did not keep records, and could not even determine their needs. This resulted in the appointment of people who were often unsuitable from a business and political standpoint, and the suppression of Party and honest non-Party workers. This situation not only failed to ensure the Party's influence over the command centers of state and economic work, but also failed to protect them from the abuses of crooks, careerists, and money-grubbers.
The commission chaired by Kuibyshev conducted a significant amount of valuable work to inspect the trusts. The commission assessed the situation as unsatisfactory. Here are the board composition figures for 293 trusts: of the 875 board members, only 325, or 37%, were communists, and 550 were non-party members. In terms of social status, 203, or 23%, were blue-collar workers; 183, or 21%, were employees; 209, or 24%, were peasants; and 280, or 32%, were other. Needless to say, even these figures confirm the extremely unsatisfactory management situation in these trusts.

The years 1923-1924 marked a new stage in the development of the Party and Central Committee's accounting and distribution work. This work was carried out on a broad front—in breadth and depth—beginning with the final approval of a unified system of personnel accounting and evaluation, the transition from indiscriminate mass mobilizations to the personal selection of workers not only in Party but also in government and economic bodies, and ending with the strengthening of the accounting and distribution bodies themselves, the unification of the Organizational Instruction and Accounting and Distribution Departments into a single Organizational and Distribution Department—Orgraspred.

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An important and innovative development was the shift from the prevailing routine distribution of people arriving spontaneously at the Central Committee (similar to a labor exchange) to the planned selection of responsible workers based on preliminary records and personnel assessments. Local organizations handled the ongoing placement of communists in need, while the Central Committee received those who complained and provided them with the necessary assistance. In 1923, a unified system for registering responsible party workers was finally developed and approved.
The Central Committee attached such great importance to the establishment of accounting on a scientific basis that in 1923 it convened a special meeting of the heads of the accounting and statistical subdepartments of local party organizations with the participation of party statistics specialists to develop not only a general accounting system, but also detailed schemes, forms and instructions on accounting techniques and especially on the personal study of responsible management workers of various levels.
The corresponding accounting forms were developed.
After review and approval by the Central Committee Secretariat, all new accounting documents were compiled for the first time and published in a single brochure, distributed to local leadership.
This is not to say that these were simply technical instructions: it was a complex and challenging process, based on the grid system, its attachments, and especially on the documents providing guidance on the substantive study and characteristics of workers and their quality assessment.
Regarding registration, for example, instructions were given to provincial and regional committees, and so on, to consider not only the positions held by workers, but also their abilities, practical experience, the scope of their previous work, and even their inclinations. This was to be ascertained through personal interviews with workers, and the scale of their work determined accordingly—national, republican, provincial, regional, district, and so on—and assigned to the appropriate network.
In order to be assigned to the appropriate network group and to determine the scale of the worker, it was necessary to accumulate the specified materials in the personal file, and also to first discuss and agree on the group of assignment to the network and the determination of the scale with the relevant bodies (for example, with the factions of the TEC, TSPSP, etc.), and then review and approve at the presidium or bureau of the relevant party committee.
It was a difficult job, and therefore filling out personal files

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The process was difficult, protracted, and plagued by delays. Local disputes and even squabbles often arose over grievances, dissatisfaction with grid assignments, and the determination of scale. Sometimes the Central Committee apparatus had to address local conflicts and complaints from those dissatisfied with the assessment.
There were also certain groups of employees for which special clarifications had to be provided. For example, professors at higher education institutions were assigned as employees at the provincial, regional, and national levels, depending on their personal assessment based on their academic experience, existing works, etc.

What was new and important in all this work was not only the systematization and streamlining of accounting, but also the personal study of each leading responsible employee - from the all-Russian to the volost and cell scale.
This was the subject of a separate "Regulation on the Study of Responsible Personnel," developed and approved by the Central Committee. It emphasized, first and foremost, that the transition from mass transfers and appointments to planned selection of workers was only possible on the basis of a comprehensive, objective study of the employees being monitored. The Central Committee emphasized that this study of workers was not a campaign, but a long-term, ongoing effort. The purpose of the study was to determine the following categories of responsible personnel: those assigned to their current jobs; those suitable for promotion; those subject to replacement as weak; those subject to training; those subject to transfer to a machine or plow, or to mass work, or to another organization without downsizing, etc.
This work enabled the Central Committee and the Party to improve all accounting and distribution work in its main areas:
— selection of personnel based on their actual quality, without allowing nepotism, patronage, sycophancy, etc.;
- strengthening the position of the party - increasing the number of communists and improving the quality of their work in all organs, especially in economic apparatuses that come into contact with the negative aspects of the NEP, NEPmen, merchants and kulaks;
— ensuring the business qualities of employees when appointing them to a particular position;
— the utmost saturation of the state apparatus, as well as the apparatuses of other bodies, with workers, achieving the workforce of the state apparatus and party cadres.

This was especially important and necessary not only from the point of view of implementing the general line of the party in building the Soviet workers' state, but also for fulfilling the immediate task of fighting the dominance of the old bureaucracy and the NEP-era, fraudulent and careerist elements that had infiltrated the state, especially the economic apparatus.

Chapter 9

FIGHTING THE OPPOSITION AND OTHER PROBLEMS OF PARTY LIFE 20s

AT THE XI PARTY CONGRESS

Between the 10th and 11th Congresses, the Party and Central Committee significantly enhanced Party work and strengthened the Party's leadership role. The steadfast and firm implementation of the 10th Congress resolution "On Party Unity" led to a reduction in factionalism and splits, although, as Lenin said in his closing address at the 11th Congress, "I do not wish to boast that everything factional in our Party has disappeared." Anti-Party groups that emerged during the trade union debate and undermined Party unity and its leadership role in a workers' state—Trotsky's supporters, including the "bufferists" of the so-called "Workers' Opposition" and "Democratic Centralism"—are far from eliminated. Even after the 10th Congress resolution on the elimination of factionalism, they retain their connections and could again rise up against the Party and its Central Committee in difficult times. We saw at the 11th Congress that some of Trotsky's supporters and even comrades continued to fight against the Central Committee, while Preobrazhensky and others spoke out directly against Lenin and the Central Committee at the 11th Congress.

Shlyapnikov, Medvedev, and other counterfeiters from the so-called "Workers' Opposition" pursued their line particularly "consistently" and actively. Although, compared to the 10th Congress, this was already a "remnant" of the former "Workers' Opposition." Exercising their right to appeal to the Comintern, they even issued a "Declaration of the 22" (including Kollontai), in which they slandered our party and its Central Committee. The Comintern, having discussed this "Declaration of the 22" in detail, not only did not support them, but condemned them and warned that if they continued their struggle against the policy

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The All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), which is fully supported by the Comintern, will be expelled from the Comintern and thereby from the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks).
The 11th Party Congress appointed a special commission of 19 congress members, including Comrades Stalin, Dzerzhinsky, Kirov, Kaganovich, Yaroslavsky, and others. I remember how, despite Medvedev's cynicism and Shlyapnikov's cunning, they seemed ideologically shattered and exposed on this commission, especially when we on the commission uncovered their connections and support for Myasnikov, who had slid into counterrevolutionary Menshevism and demanded freedom of speech and the press for all counterrevolutionaries—"from anarchists to monarchists." Lenin even initially tried to dissuade him and wrote him a letter. But, convinced that he had hopelessly slid into Menshevism, the Central Committee expelled Myasnikov from the party. Among the ranks of the Workers' Opposition was a certain Panyushkin, who left the party and even formed his own "Workers' and Peasants' Labor Party." But soon, seeing that both workers and peasants had failed to take the bait of this unfortunate fisherman, he himself dissolved his party, which hadn't even had time to take shape. Both Myasnikov and Panyushkin were nursed and supported by the Shlyapnikovites and Medvedevites. However, many honest old Bolshevik workers abandoned the Workers' Opposition, seeing its Menshevik tendencies.
The Eleventh Congress, on the proposal of the "Commission of Nineteen," adopted a special resolution "On Certain Members of the Former Workers' Opposition." In this resolution, the Eleventh Congress pointed out that the Central Committee had done everything possible to implement the resolution of the Tenth Congress: the Tenth Congress elected two members of the former Workers' Opposition to the Central Committee, and the Central Committee promoted a number of comrades from the former Workers' Opposition to important leadership positions, without permitting persecution for their former factionalism and exercising a considerate and cautious attitude toward them. Despite all this, former members of the Workers' Opposition, repeatedly violating the resolutions of the Tenth Congress, maintained and supported an illegal factional organization within the Party. As a result, their factional actions, both centrally and locally, undoubtedly contributed to disunity within the Party. The speeches of members of the former Workers' Opposition at meetings often pitted themselves against the rest of the Party: "us versus them." It was precisely these kinds of protests against party resolutions that forced the Central Committee of the RCP(b) to raise the question of expelling Central Committee member Comrade Shlyapnikov from the party on August 9, 1921. The expulsion failed only because it fell one vote short of the required two-thirds of the Central Committee members and candidates.

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The Central Committee's decision provided detailed coverage of Shlyapnikov's anti-party behavior and issued a warning that if he did not change his behavior, the question of his expulsion from the party would be considered again.
The "Commission of Nineteen" proposed (and the Eleventh Congress adopted) condemning Comrade Kollontai's pamphlet "On the Workers' Opposition," which was reprinted and distributed abroad by the press hostile to us and by a group seeking to create the Fourth International.

The Eleventh Congress stated that "Comrade Kollontai's anti-Party speech at the Comintern Congress was unanimously negatively assessed by the Congress." The "Commission of Nineteen," elected by the Eleventh Congress, established that "factional meetings were held at various times, at which secret resolutions were passed, the implementation of which was entrusted to the leaders of this group, Comrades Medvedev and Shlyapnikov." Comrade Myasnikov, who had been expelled from the Party, was invited to the factional meeting that resulted in the appeal of the former Workers' Opposition group to the Comintern and participated. The commission established that, "according to the admission of some of those who signed this statement, they were not even fully aware of the document's contents, but merely signed out of group solidarity." The Eleventh Congress, in its resolution, stated that the former "Workers' Opposition" group was condemned not for the fact of submitting an application to the highest organ of "our class communist organization —the Comintern," but for violating the resolution of the Tenth Congress, maintaining a factional grouping, and continuing the factional struggle. "The Congress most decisively condemns the behavior of individual members of this group, who, in their explanations to the Comintern commission, provided false information about the party, distorting the true picture of the relationship between the RCP(b) and the entire working class." The "Commission of Nineteen" established that the "Workers' Opposition" group, contrary to the resolution of the Tenth Congress on party unity, continued its policy of splitting the party even after the Tenth Congress.

I must note here that we, the members of the Eleventh Congress commission, were, how shall I put it, uncomfortable "interrogating" and listening to Comrade Kollontai's speech, because, although we knew that she had been in the ranks of the Mensheviks for a long time before joining our party, after joining the party, her passionate speeches as a good, flamboyant orator, especially in 1917, and her active work in the women's movement aroused sympathy for her. But this, of course, had no effect —we all unanimously and decisively condemned her revived

A split of a Menshevik nature. The resolution of the Eleventh Congress specifically emphasized that Kollontai became the theoretical spokesperson for the split-minded behavior of the entire group, which had falsely appropriated the name "Workers' Opposition." "It was Comrade Kollontai," the resolution of the Eleventh Congress stated, "who, before the Tenth Congress of the RCP, had advocated in her pamphlet that a split was inevitable and that it was only necessary to choose the most opportune moment for it, did not abandon this line of conduct after the Tenth Congress and, in her explanations to the commission of the Eleventh Congress of the RCP, confirmed that she considered a split inevitable unless the Party changed its line—that is, unless the Party took the path of the erroneous and harmful to the working class views of Comrades Kollontai, Medvedev, and Shlyapnikov." Moreover, Comrade Kollontai even expressed regret at the commission that they had had few factional meetings.

The 11th Congress recognized the position taken by this group in relation to the party as completely unacceptable, especially in the current period of economic restructuring, a certain strengthening of capitalist elements, unprecedented famine, the threat of foreign intervention, the strengthening of petty-bourgeois sentiments, when the first condition for the victory of the working class is the unity of the party and the strictest discipline in its ranks.

On the basis of all this, the 11th Congress, having heard the resolution of the expanded plenum of the ECCI on the question of the "22", the report of the "Commission of 19" and the explanations of comrades Shlyapnikov, Medvedev and Kollontai, decided: "To adhere to the resolution of the ECCI with regard to comrades Shlyapnikov, Medvedev and Kollontai and to instruct the Central Committee, in the event of further manifestation of similar anti-party attitudes on the part of these comrades, to expel the aforementioned comrades from the party."

The Eleventh Congress, however, did not immediately resort to the extreme measure of expulsion from the Party, but instructed the Central Committee to expel them only if they continued their factional, divisive activities. It was necessary, on the one hand, to give the best of the former

"Workers' Opposition," among whom were honest worker revolutionaries, the opportunity to see into what kind of anti-Party, anti-revolutionary, anti-proletarian, Menshevik camp the position of their leaders was dragging them. On the other hand, it was necessary to give these leaders time and opportunity to fully prove themselves, to reveal their hand completely, or to change their positions. And that's exactly what happened in reality—while Kollontai defected to the Party, Medvedev and Shlyapnikov

They had finally slid into the camp of counterrevolution. Medvedev made the most disgusting impression of a Menshevik-type renegade. His entire demeanor was not simply cynical, but clearly hostile toward the Party, Lenin, and the Soviet state. Although he resembled Mephistopheles in appearance, one shouldn't insult Mephistopheles with the comparison, especially since Shlyapnikov was no Faust. Both men turned out to be men who had degenerated into true counterrevolutionaries.
At the 11th Party Congress, a profound analysis was given of the complexity of the NEP situation in which members of our party must work, and corresponding tasks were set.
The 11th Congress emphasized the specific difficulties created for the party and its members by the introduction of the New Economic Policy. "A workers' party, exercising the dictatorship of the proletariat, cannot under any circumstances permit the free organization of forces hostile to the proletarian revolution. At the same time, the party, considering the inevitability of a partial revival of capitalism, must take the most active part in regulating the relations arising from this fact." On the one hand, party members must learn to trade for the benefit of the state, forcing them to come into contact with capitalist relations. On the other hand, they must be connected to the working masses, combat capitalist relations, and show the masses an example of selfless work for the realization of socialism and the real paths to its victory.
In all party work, it is necessary to take into account that the NEP has given rise to new and complex phenomena: some peasant "communists" with petty-bourgeois ideology are beginning to abandon the party, as the party is restricting them as smallholders. This petty-bourgeois wave is dragging down certain other elements and even unstable workers.
The Eleventh Congress stated that the core of the party must devote special attention to combating and overcoming the still-observable decline among certain, predominantly non-proletarian, elements. The correct line of the party's truly Bolshevik forces must ensure that the party's composition becomes not less, but more homogeneous and proletarian. The congress emphasized that primary attention must be shifted to the working class, and that the situation where the number of communists in large enterprises is negligible must end.
The Congress showed particular concern for the materially disadvantaged situation of ordinary party members and activists, recognizing the need

The development and implementation of forms of mutual assistance for communists in need. The congress indicated that sources of mutual assistance include both general party funds and various contributions from party members. "Recognizing the urgent need to end the large disparities in pay between various groups of communists, the congress instructs the Central Committee to urgently resolve the issue of excessively high salaries for party members, establishing limits beyond which the remaining earnings will be used for party mutual assistance."
Some people think that explaining congress decisions to party members and non-party activists is primarily the job of agitprop, while our job is to organize, but this is an incorrect distinction. A party organizer, beginning with the party cell, organizes the study of congress decisions by party members as part of the organization of all party work, beginning with the cell meeting, linking all practical work for their implementation with the party decisions and Comrade Lenin's instructions.

DECISIONS OF 1923

The 12th Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) opened on April 17, 1923. Before the congress opened, delegates who had arrived from their respective regions anxiously asked us, the Central Committee workers, how was Lenin's health? Would he deliver a report at the congress? To our great regret, we had no reassuring answers for the delegates. We told them that the Central Committee had held out hope until the very last moment, even postponing the opening of the congress for a month in the hopes of our dear Ilyich's recovery. But in April, it became clear that Lenin's illness was protracted and that he would not be able to attend. This, of course, greatly distressed the congress delegates—especially those who had never heard or seen Lenin in person.
The Central Committee report presented by Zinoviev and Stalin at the congress was based on the Central Committee's written report, published in Izvestia and distributed to the delegates. Both Zinoviev and Stalin cited Lenin's instructions and the decisions of the Eleventh Congress, demonstrating with facts, figures, and reports how they had been implemented.
Zinoviev's report contained some erroneous points, such as the sweeping definition of the NEP as a system of state capitalism, as well as the erroneous position on the "dictatorship of the party", but since his report coincided on the main issues

with everything that the Central Committee did during the reporting period, expressed what the Central Committee instructed him to do, these individual mistakes then, at the XII Congress, were not highlighted and did not cause discussion at the Congress.
The report of Comrade Stalin, General Secretary of the Central Committee, was primarily an organizational report on the Central Committee's activities. It was not an ordinary organizational report, but a new type, in which Stalin concretized and developed Lenin's ideas: on the transmission belts linking the party to the masses and their mass organizations; on the unity of political and organizational leadership. It can be said without exaggeration that we, practical organizers, received in Stalin's report a remarkable summary and formulation into a single, coherent system of all practical organizational party work.
The Central Committee's report met with the full approval of the overwhelming majority of delegates to the Twelfth Congress. But among the speakers were also opposition speakers. Although they did not officially advertise themselves as representatives of any particular group, they in fact expressed the views of the former groups and factions to which they had previously belonged. These included Lutovinov, Vladimir Kosior, Osinsky, and Preobrazhensky. Each of them, in their own way, expressed the views of their former, shattered factions: Lutovinov—the former "Workers' Opposition," Kosior and Preobrazhensky—Trotskyism, Osinsky—"Democratic Centralism." I will not mention Larin, because, while not an oppositionist, he always, as a rule, spoke at congresses with one or another critical observation of a rather confused, often frivolous nature, despite being an educated economist. I will speak separately and in greater detail about Krasin.
Lutovinov defied not only the former Workers' Opposition but also its "miscarriage," the Workers' Truth, which had issued an anonymous platform. Criticizing the party's lack of democracy, he argued that this was the reason for the existence of illegal groups: abolish the exceptional law banning factions and groups, and then everything would be legalized (that is, grant freedom of speech and the press to all anti-party and, by extension, anti-Soviet oppositions, and then they would openly combat Leninism). In this way, Lutovinov aligned himself with the degenerate Myasnikov, whose proposals for freedom of speech and the press were so decisively rejected by Lenin and the entire party.
Lutovinov presented this to the congress in a more veiled form, but the essence was the same, and the congress, of course, rejected his claims. Lutovinov, like the entire former "Workers' Opposition," as well as the illegal

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The "working group" saw nothing positive in party life. He didn't want to see that the Central Committee, having announced the convening of the congress, sent members and candidates to the local levels to report on the Central Committee's work, or that the Central Committee organized the publication of a "Discussion Leaflet," in which party members critically analyzed the activities of the Central Committee and the government before the congress. This is the very manifestation of true intra-party democracy.

Vladimir Kosior spoke in a similar vein, the only difference being that while Lutovinov spoke directly about the existence of factions and groups and the need to legalize them, Kosior, playing it down, said that there were no factions, but that the Central Committee declared every action against it to be factionalism. Like Lutovinov, he spoke of the need to amend the party resolution banning factions and groups, reflecting the old Trotskyist position on this issue.

The anonymous platform issued a call for all elements grouped around Democratic Centralism, Workers' Truth, and the Workers' Opposition to unite under a single platform. Lutovinov and Kosior became the mouthpieces of this call.

Osinsky's speech was such that it gave reason to believe he was close, or at least not so far removed, from Lutovinov and Kosior. Osinsky, riding his old, worn-out hobbyhorse, which he had used more than once against Lenin, repeated this at the Twelfth Congress. He carried his proposal to separate the functions of Party and Soviet organs to the point of severing Soviet organs from Party ones. His statement that the Central Committee was not providing strong members to the Council of People's Commissars because it feared losing its power was the worst attack on the Party.

Comrade Krasin's most serious and significant speech against the Central Committee was his. It was, in parliamentary terms, the speech of a candidate for the post of prime minister (one could even say that in a bourgeois democratic republic, Krasin, with his abilities, could have replaced more than one prime minister). "You want to leave everything as it is," he said at the congress, "but it can't be left as it is, because the most important element of this old order—Vladimir Ilyich—has been out of work for quite a significant period. It is necessary," Krasin said, "that in the state and party leadership apparatus, production workers and business executives (and Krasin, as an experienced tactician, stipulated that he meant "party workers, of course") be assigned at least the same share of influence as journalists, writers, and pure politicians."

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The congress delegates immediately sensed that there was no trace of Bolshevism here. The inaccuracy of this is evident in the very formulation of the question. The Central Committee always considered it necessary to nominate communists with industrial experience, engineering, and other expertise, but in determining the composition of the leadership, it did not allow for a division between pure politicians, journalists, writers, engineers, and the like. Leaders were selected and elected by the party based on their knowledge and competence, but their most important quality had to be their alignment with political objectives and the party's political line, both in substance and content. Not divided by caste into "experts" and "ignoramuses" in production, communists decided the fate of the party, the revolution, the Red Army, the nationalization of banks, industry, and so on. Of course, the period of restoration and construction presented new tasks, and the party, Lenin, and the Central Committee sent communist workers to study and to educational institutions, and, in the process of self-education in the process of practical work, they promoted those who were more or less educated to the boards of trusts, enterprises, and central administrations, placing them alongside, and often above, the qualified old specialists whom the party used, but placed them under the supervision and leadership of communist workers.

Krasin's program of introducing proportions and replacing some politicians in the leadership with production engineers is linked to his views on the role of the communist in general and the role of

the party organization. He views the manager as a party member independent of the party organization. Krasin dislikes the party transferring workers from one institution to another, "slipping in a dozen or so party human material, sometimes unsuitable for the job." That there are significant shortcomings in the accounting and distribution work was also mentioned in the Central Committee's report to the congress. But is it really possible to speak in the language Krasin uses about communists who are being "foisted" on him, the Grand Master of Engineering, by the dozens as material by various independent party forces—party committees or the Central Committee? Is this the party's understanding of tasks? Although the selection process needs to be improved, an old Bolshevik cannot speak like that. This "organizational" position of Comrade Krasin is, in essence, a political error; It is closely linked to his erroneous political-economic program, which essentially reflects Lenin's party policy. He advocates increasing production—that's good and in line with the party's objectives. But, firstly, he talks about production in general, as if production

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Secondly, it separates the restoration of production from its social nature. While the Party and its Central Committee view the restoration of production and the Party's consistent political line as a single, inseparable, and interdependent whole, Comrade Krasin says: "A strictly consistent political line must not interfere with the restoration of production." What kind of production? If it's capitalist, it will certainly interfere; if it's socialist, it won't simply not interfere, but will decide, ensure, assist, guarantee, and strive to advance the restoration of socialist production in every possible way, and, under the conditions of the New Economic Policy, enable the development of those types of economics and management that can be called "state capitalism" under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

But this isn't enough. Krasin reveals the limitations of his political-economic platform when he approaches the issue of finding sources of funds for restoring production. Speaking correctly about our economic difficulties, about the necessary resources for restoring peasant farming, transportation, and industry, Comrade Krasin declares: "We desperately need outside assistance, because we cannot restore our economy with any speed by our own efforts." That we need foreign loans, that we were prepared to agree to concessions under certain conditions, was stated repeatedly by Lenin and the Party Central Committee, but not at any price and not at the price Comrade Krasin proposes. Having stipulated that we must not make fundamental concessions in the area of sovereignty, territorial concessions, or the abandonment of our legislation, Comrade Krasin sees a solution in the fact that "in the area of foreign policy, we need a kind of New Economic Policy."

It is known—the Central Committee already wrote about this in its written report—that it was at Lenin's demand that two agreements signed by Comrade Krasin, which contained elements of that "sort of NEP," were cancelled: namely, the agreement with the Italians and the concession agreement with Mr. Urquhart. Regarding the cancellation of the agreement with Urquhart, Comrade Krasin said that this would bring us great disaster. But, as is well known, no disaster resulted; what resulted was an "insult" to Mr. Urquhart. But we demonstrated to potential "benefactor-creditors" that we are not a colony and will not tolerate bondage. Comrade Krasin demonstrated that his correct words about not allowing violations of our sovereignty and legislation...

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Territories don't exhaust his approach. Wasn't the restoration of Urquhart's production concession in Kazakhstan for non-ferrous metals under his terms such a fundamental concession that it violated our principles? That's precisely why the Politburo tore up this agreement, already signed by Comrade Krasin. That's the crux of the matter. If we had followed Comrade Krasin's proposed "NEP in Foreign Policy" and concessioned half or more of our industrial and production resources under the terms dictated by the Urquhart gentlemen, production would have become capitalist, not socialist.

This doesn't mean we shouldn't have agreed to concessions. It does mean that we agree to attract foreign capital in the form of loans and concessions, but not on any "Urquhart-like" or even worse terms. When concluding agreements with foreign capital, we must remember that any production contract is linked to the fundamental principles of our Party—the struggle against capitalism for the predominantly socialist development of production. The Party has chosen the path: through the New Economic Policy—to socialism. Trade, agreements, and deals with capitalists are necessary; certain concessions to capitalists are permissible, but without ceding the power of the proletariat, its dictatorship, and without ceding the material and production base of this dictatorship.
Krasin proposed a different direction. If, against all odds, the party had accepted his path, it would ultimately have developed into a path of capitalist, not socialist, development for our Great Motherland. As a veteran Marxist, Krasin should have understood this well, but he didn't, and perhaps didn't quite want to. One important fact suggests this: Comrade Krasin presented himself as someone preoccupied with Lenin's legacy. Yet, regarding Lenin's proposal to reorganize the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and the Central Control Commission, he himself and all the economic leaders awaited these decisions with horror. This "horror" vividly demonstrates how far Comrade Krasin is from being a true Leninist—it is precisely this that underlies his false ideas. It is important to remember here that Comrade Krasin had been moving away from Lenin even before the October Revolution.
The 12th Party Congress fully approved the political and organizational line of the Central Committee, which ensured significant successes.
The Politburo and the Orgburo were heavily involved in issues of completing the construction of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

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In accordance with the directives of the 12th Congress on issues of Soviet Union construction, the foundations for the Basic Law of the USSR were developed in detail. At its second session, the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Republics adopted a revised declaration and treaty establishing the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—the Basic Law—the Constitution of the USSR.
The discussion of the draft Constitution was linked to the task of revitalizing and improving the work of the Soviets of Workers', Red Army, and Peasants' Deputies. The Plenum of the Central Committee of the RCP(b), convened in June 1923, approved the draft Constitution for approval at the Second Session of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR. After discussion and approval by the congresses of Soviets of the Union Republics, the new Constitution of the USSR was finally approved by the Second Congress of Soviets of the USSR, convened on January 31, 1924. This was a major and difficult undertaking, not only in the legislative sense—finding and formulating new provisions for the new state in accordance with the brilliant instructions of our teacher, Comrade Lenin—but also a major organizational and political undertaking by the entire party, its Central Committee, and its party apparatus.
In practice, a bicameral system of the highest organ of state power was implemented: the Union Council and the Council of Nationalities.
The Council of People's Commissars of the Soviet Union had already begun to work separately from the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR; the Council of Labor and Defense was reorganized into a body of the USSR, with the organization of an Economic Conference under the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR, as well as under all the councils of people's commissars of the union republics.
Thus, during 1923-1924, the enormous task of organizing the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was successfully completed. The Central Committee and Council of People's Commissars of the Union did not stop there, but carried out a major reorganization of the people's commissariats, including the Supreme Council of the National Economy, the People's Commissariat of Railways, the Council of Labor and Defense itself, and the commissions that existed under the Council of

People's Commissars and the Council of Labor and Defense, some of which were liquidated. The reorganization also affected Gosplan and the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR. Two commissariats—the People's Commissariat of Food, in connection with the transition to a cash tax, and the People's Commissariat of Nationalities, in connection with the organization of the Council of Nationalities—were abolished. The People's Commissariat of Internal Trade was recreated, and a major reorganization of the military department's rear apparatus was carried out, reducing its staff by 40%.

It goes without saying that the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection was radically reorganized in connection with the unification of its work

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With the Central Control Commission at the center and in the regions. In fact, it was necessary to create a new apparatus, unprecedented in the history of not only our Soviet state but of any state in general. The direction was provided by Lenin's brilliant plan, the decision of the 12th Congress, and the concrete implementation of the Central Committee of the Party.

This was a major organizational effort by the Central Committee, particularly its Organizational Instruction and Accounting and Distribution Departments, not only in recruiting personnel but also in organizing ties with trade unions and combating bureaucracy within the state apparatus. I recall this work with pleasure and satisfaction, which I performed primarily out of duty and, I won't hide, through my diligent assistance to the first chairman of the reorganized Central Control Commission, my friend Valerian Kuibyshev, whose support I received especially during my first period on the Central Committee. I was called upon to provide similar assistance to the Central Control Commission later, when my best friend Sergo Ordzhonikidze was its chairman, right up until I was elected chairman of the Party Control Commission in 1934.

The first and foremost difficulty in leading the Party and the Soviet country was that throughout this entire period, from the 12th to the 13th Congress, the Central Committee and the Party lived and worked without the direct participation and guidance of our dear and beloved leader and teacher, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. This was the first year that Lenin, confined to his bed by illness, was unable to participate in the consideration and resolution of fundamental questions of politics, economics, and organization. But the Party and the Central Committee were armed not only with Lenin's general theoretical propositions but also with specific instructions in his articles written for the 12th Congress, as well as other instructions throughout the year. The Party and the Central Committee were armed with a brilliant methodology for leading the Party and the country. Only by steadfastly adhering to Lenin's line, despite the Trotskyists and other oppositionists who undermined it, were the Central Committee and the Party able to successfully overcome many difficulties and achieve notable successes. The main course of development, factual and numerical data, are known from the history of the Party. It's important to emphasize here that development and forward movement were not smooth or linear, but rather zigzagged. Along with growth came great difficulties, which had to be overcome by all means at the disposal of the Party and the Soviet state—the proletarian dictatorship.

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In September and October 1923, serious economic difficulties became evident—a crisis in product sales, the main cause of which was the wide discrepancy between prices for industrial and agricultural products, a phenomenon known as the "scissors." In the spring of the previous year, industrial prices had risen sharply, or, as they said, ballooned, while agricultural prices had fallen below normal levels. As a result, sales of industrial products in the countryside plummeted—peasants were reluctant to buy goods that were too expensive. The cooperatives, which had purchased these goods in advance at high prices, found themselves in a particularly difficult situation. The economic authorities were primarily to blame for this, distorting the economic

policies of the Party and the Soviet government. Chasing high profits, they raised prices, but were met with a refusal from buyers, primarily peasants, to buy their goods at inflated prices.
The Central Committee and the government took the necessary measures to significantly reduce the prices of industrial goods, making them cheaper, and to expand the market for agricultural products. In this regard, the task of implementing currency reform was taken seriously and urgently. This extremely difficult and complex task became one of the most important tasks of the Party and the organs of Soviet power—a major economic undertaking, essentially encompassing many, if not all, aspects of the economic life and development of the Soviet state. It was necessary to sharply reduce the issuance of paper money and switch to a chervonets currency. This laid a solid foundation for further economic development, the normal restoration of large-scale heavy industry and trade, the normal economic functioning of Soviet economic bodies, and their successful struggle against the NEP capitalists. Currency reform strengthened the alliance between the working class and the peasantry, ensuring that the peasantry could sell its products for a stable chervonets currency, and thereby improving their economic situation.
In August and September, numerous irregularities with the wages of workers and employees emerged. A sales crisis and the resulting financial difficulties of the trusts led to late wage payments and the issuance of wages in surrogate forms (bonds, etc.). Workers, naturally, protested, and even conflicts arose at the local level, involving not only trade unions but also party organizations.

They dealt with these issues and reported on them to the Central Committee. These issues were largely submitted to the Organizational Instruction Department of the Central Committee. I often reported on them personally to Comrade Stalin, who took these pressing issues of workers' conditions to heart and, through Soviet bodies, took measures to eliminate specific abnormalities, presenting general conclusions at meetings of the Politburo of the Central Committee. The Central Committee ordered all communists working in economic organizations, despite financial difficulties, to meet other economic needs only after wages have been paid. The Plenum of the Central Committee proposed that the Central Control Commission of the RCP establish particularly close monitoring of the implementation of this resolution. The Plenum of the Central Committee proposed that the Wage Commission, together with the Central Control Commission of the RCP, study technical delays in wage payment in order to hold those responsible accountable, and propose general party, economic, and judicial measures to eliminate this intolerable phenomenon.
Having established that the 12th Congress's resolution on wage levels was generally being implemented, the Central Committee considered the wage increases achieved to be insufficient (60% of the pre-war level). Therefore, the Central Committee recognized the need to achieve wage increases in the near future, particularly in transportation, where wages are lower than those of metallurgists and miners.
At the same time, the Central Committee decisively rejected several proposals, including those from Trotsky, to close unprofitable enterprises that had an important general economic and political position, such as the proposal to close the Putilov Factory. The Central Committee emphasized the need to vigorously implement all measures to combat unproductive expenditures—staff inflation, the disparity between the number of employees and auxiliary workers and the number of primary production workers, and the like (which, incidentally, remains important today, 55 years later). One of the most important criteria in assessing the ability of enterprise and trust managers is the ability to rationally utilize the labor of workers and employees within the legally established working hours. Taking into account the facts occurring in certain economic bodies operating on a commercial economic accountability basis, especially in joint-stock companies with a predominance of state capital, where employee salaries have begun to exceed those of industrial workers, the Central Committee plenum pointed out the need to somewhat reduce the high salaries of these highly paid employees.

warned that abuses in the issuance of bonuses (additional compensation paid as a percentage of net profit) should not be allowed, and indicated that bonuses should be issued with the utmost caution and exclusively from net profit and only to persons who actually ensured the receipt of this profit through their direct work.

The difficulties that arose did not change the fundamental picture of our economic growth. Despite all the difficulties and twists in our progress and development, there was an undeniable, steady growth and strengthening of the economic strength of our Soviet country, which had now become a union state.

DISCUSSION WITH THE TROTSKYISTS (1923)

All organizational work of the party and its Central Committee during the first years of peaceful socialist construction under the New Economic Policy was inextricably linked to the party's struggle for unity within its ranks, based on Lenin's resolution of the Tenth Congress "On Party Unity." However, the opposition factions that had formed in 1920-1921, while remaining hidden in the trade union debate, effectively continued, in one form or another, to maintain their core in order to attack the party in difficult times. Trotsky, true to his unprincipled Menshevik methods of forging blocs against the Bolsheviks, as he did in August 1912, when he formed the August Bloc with the liquidators, and in 1920-1921 during the trade union debate—a bloc with the "Left Communists" and the anarcho-syndicalist "Workers' Opposition." In 1923, he again led a bloc of all opposition groups and forced the Party into a debate. Playing the role of a "noble knight," Trotsky in fact demonstrated his treachery during and immediately after the 12th Party Congress: while displaying outward loyalty, he was in fact preparing an attack on the Party and its Central Committee at a difficult moment.

Such a moment arrived in the second half of 1923. It manifested itself in economic difficulties, which also caused political complications among some sections of the masses, and, most importantly, in a difficult time for the party—during the period of the aggravation of the illness of our dear Vladimir Ilyich. Studying the course of the struggle, it is clear that Trotsky had far-reaching plans—to seize the leadership of the party and fundamentally

Changes in the theory and policies of Lenin, the party, and the country. Then People's Commissar for Military and Naval Affairs, Trotsky, freed from the civil war—which, as is well known, he had not handled very satisfactorily, as the Central Committee and Lenin had repeatedly pointed out—gathered around himself a group of military personnel and the remnants of the petty-bourgeois opposition groups defeated by the party and once again attacked the party.

Opportunists of all kinds are always inclined to belittle and downplay the role and significance of the party when it comes to positive results of work, while at the same time they are always inclined to exaggerate the guilt of the party and its leadership when difficulties and problems arise in economic and Soviet construction.

This is precisely what happened in the late summer of 1923, when difficulties arose in the republic's economy. Despite an undeniable increase in production in both industry and agriculture, difficulties in marketing industrial output arose due to the disparity in the pace of industrial and agricultural development, the inability of the state and cooperative trade apparatus to sell their products, and the perpetual distortion of the Party's pricing policy. This, naturally, led to unrest among the workers, and even isolated strikes at some enterprises. This revealed not only the breakthrough in economic work but also serious shortcomings in the work of trade unions and some Party organizations, their weakness in leading the masses, and even a certain isolation from them. Furthermore, a number of

organizations, carried away by their successes, decided to grant summer vacations to too many workers, weakening their leadership by the end of the summer. We were also to blame here, for failing to notice this and not curbing such a large number of vacations, weakening the Party cells, district, provincial, and provincial committees, while the remnants of opposition groups, especially the "Workers' Opposition," worked underground. Our Central Committee, in Lenin's style, knew how to draw general critical conclusions from important details, and already in August-September 1923, the Politburo, and especially the October Plenum of the Central Committee, exposed the fundamental shortcomings in the economy that had led to such a serious "sales crisis," as well as the serious shortcomings in Party and trade union work that had facilitated the work of the Party's opponents and led to unrest among some workers in some centers. The Central Committee developed serious general and specific measures, both in the economic sphere and in the sphere of internal Party life.

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The party's opponents, primarily those expelled from the party—the "Workers' Truth" group and the "Workers' Group"—launched anti-Soviet, anti-party activities, demagogically exploiting the difficulties and blaming them on the party and its Central Committee. However, these groups were relatively easily exposed by the party, as they so openly propagated Menshevik views.

A more serious matter emerged when intra-party opposition factions and groups emerged, attacking the party and the Central Committee. Their arguments weren't entirely consistent with those of the underground "Workers' Truth" group, but they were similar in many ways. While the Central Committee, its Secretariat, the Orgburo, and the Politburo, with their sleeves rolled up, were working diligently to resolve the difficulties, Trotsky, his associates, and allies from the camp of the defeated opposition groups, secretly and factionally prepared a response against the party and its Central Committee. At the September Plenum of the Central Committee, Trotsky even voted for the adopted resolution on economic and intra-party issues, and after the plenum, he issued a letter to the members of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission in which he discredited these decisions and the measures adopted by the Politburo, offering nothing serious or practical and exaggerating the difficulties.

His supporters secretly reprinted and distributed Trotsky's letter in local party organizations, primarily in Moscow. In the spirit of Trotsky's letter, his associates, along with other leaders of opposition groups, concocted a platform—the "Declaration of the 46"—that deliberately exaggerated the existing difficulties but made no serious practical proposals, and what was correct merely repeated the decisions and measures already taken by the Central Committee. Their statement, however, was full of abuse directed at the Central Committee. Their platform was not permeated with concern for eliminating difficulties and improving the situation of workers and peasants, but with undermining the authority of the Central Committee, driven by a desire to change the leadership and the Leninist party line—this was the primary goal of Trotsky and his supporters. By exaggerating existing shortcomings and errors and distorting reality, they made party issues the focal point, the main weapon in their struggle against the Central Committee.

Despite all the factional tricks of the Trotskyists to cover up their underground factional work with the mask of offended and oppressed people, the Central Committee saw through their maneuvers, including Trotsky himself, who remained in the Politburo.

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He stayed away from meetings, sometimes even citing "illness." The Central Committee warned party organizations about the Trotskyists' unfolding struggle against the Party and the Central Committee. We immediately reported the information we received from the localities to the Central Committee Secretaries—Comrades Stalin and Molotov. After contacting the heads of provincial, regional, and industrial district committees, we learned of the distribution of the "Declaration of the

46" and a copy of Trotsky's letter. After reporting this to the Central Committee Secretariat, we received instructions to advise the secretaries of provincial and regional committees, especially in Moscow and Petrograd, to prevent their distribution, as they were considered factional documents. The Politburo majority sought a businesslike, calm examination of the contentious issues, avoiding broad discussion or, in any case, expanding the debate. Therefore, at first, the Politburo majority—eight members and candidate members—composed and circulated a letter to the members of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission, responding to Trotsky's letter and the "Statement of the 46," revealing the factional, non-partisan nature of their statement. In the letter, the eight Politburo members and candidate members, calmly pointing out the existing difficulties, incorrectly exaggerated by the Trotskyists, offered a profound critique of Trotsky's letter and the platform of his 46 "guardsmen" on inner-party development. The letter from the eight Politburo members and candidate members failed to bring Trotsky, his rabid supporters, and his allies to their senses. But this letter galvanized not only the members of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission to whom it was addressed, but also the leading figures of the party organizations, who were familiar with it, albeit cautiously and not very widely, as the Central Committee still sought to limit the scope of the discussion. However, the Trotskyist opposition increasingly disseminated Trotsky's letter and the "Statement of the 46" among local organizations. Having exhausted all avenues for unanimous resolution of contentious issues within the organization, the Politburo decided to convene a Joint Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission in the second half of October, with representatives of the ten largest party organizations (Moscow, Petrograd, Ivanovo-Voznesensk, Nizhny Novgorod, Kharkov, Donetsk, Rostov, Baku, Yekaterinburg, and Tula). Twelve representatives of the Trotskyist platform were also invited. A broad debate unfolded at the Plenum, with 44 people speaking, an overwhelming majority. condemning the speech of Trotsky and the Trotskyists. The majority of the Politburo, still striving for a possible peaceful resolution of complex issues, took a more reserved stance toward Trotsky,

than local comrades, and this was reflected in the resolution adopted by the Joint Plenum.
I must say that some members of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission, particularly a number of representatives of local party organizations, were inclined to more decisively condemn Trotsky himself, and especially his factional associates. I remember when I mentioned this to Comrade Stalin, he said to me: "It is necessary to explain to them and to all other comrades who are so inclined that the Politburo of the Central Committee is currently concerned with unity in the Central Committee and the Party. Therefore, at this stage, we are trying not to take our disputes outside the Central Committee and to reach agreed-upon decisions, even making some concessions that, of course, do not change our principles, such as, for example, the issue of banning factions and groups. If Trotsky and his factionalists violate these warnings from the Central Committee, then the Party will be finally convinced of their splitting nature, and then the Central Committee and the Party will take more decisive measures." It was in this spirit that the Central Committee and local committees explained the decision of the October Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission.
By December, the work of the commission on party building was completed and the famous resolution “On Party Building” was published.
Having united around a core of Trotskyist cadres, which included former members of the Central Committee, including former leading figures of the Moscow organization, they launched their struggle primarily in the weakest links of the organization: university cells, some military cells, and institutional ones.
The Central Committee Secretariat received regular information on the situation at the local level through the Organizational and Instructional Department, taking the necessary measures specifically for party organizations. In most provinces and regions, there were some weak

organizations that succumbed, especially initially, to the Trotskyist demagogy. There were many such organizations in the Urals and Siberia. In the national republics—Ukraine, Belarus, Transcaucasia, and Central Asia—Trotskyists united with nationalist deviationists to fight the party and its Leninist line.
The Central Committee dispatched members of the Central Committee and other responsible officials to the local level. The Organizational and Instructional Department of the Central Committee maintained daily operational contact with regional and provincial committees and major industrial centers, providing them with necessary advice and informing them of the progress of discussions in other party organizations, especially those that had successfully repulsed the Trotskyist factionalists. Tensions became particularly acute.

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The situation in the Moscow organization, where Trotsky created a factional center led by Serebryakov, was deteriorating. Having failed to secure support from the main proletarian factory cells, the Trotskyists, in the first days and even weeks of December, gained support from a significant number of university, institutional, and some military cells.
I reported to the Secretariat of the Central Committee and personally to Stalin about the unfavorable situation in Moscow. To Comrade Stalin's question: "What is the Moscow Committee doing?" I replied that, in my opinion, the Moscow Committee is weak in mobilizing forces to fight the Trotskyists, not because its workers are ideologically wavering, but because they are simply weak organizationally and propagandistically. In particular, the agitprop department is currently without leadership, since its head, Comrade Likhachev, is ill.
Comrade Stalin proposed immediately summoning the secretaries of the Moscow Committee to the Central Committee. After listening to them and establishing that my information was correct, Comrade Stalin said to the secretaries of the Moscow Committee, specifically addressing the First Secretary of the Moscow Committee, Comrade Zelensky: “You, Comrade Zelensky, although you are taking the correct line in the struggle against Trotskyism and all oppositionists, you are poorly organizing the battle of Leninism against Trotskyism; you are poorly leading the district and especially the cell organizations. It is no wonder that the Trotskyists have seized a number of cells. This way, they can seize the districts as well, as almost happened in the Khamovnichesky District. You need to drastically change the entire style and practice of the Moscow Committee’s work to a militant Bolshevik spirit. We, the Secretariat of the Central Committee, must closely engage with Moscow. I propose,” said Comrade Stalin, addressing the Central Committee secretaries, "Send Comrade Kaganovich to the Moscow Committee's aid, who will also be able to lead the Central Committee's Organization. Together with Comrade Kaganovich, you, Comrade Zelensky, must immediately organize and achieve a turning point in the Moscow organization."
After the meeting with the Muscovites, Comrade Stalin left me and added, "Don't engage in diplomacy there; take charge of the leadership. It's best for you to sit in Agitprop right now, since there's no leadership there. As head of the Organizational and Instructional Department of the Central Committee, you can give direct instructions to the MK's organizational instructor—so you'll take charge of the MK's two main departments, combining their efforts. Organize, first and foremost, an ideological offensive against the rampant opposition in those cells they've managed to seize, taking advantage of the Bolsheviks' inaction, which failed to muster enough forces to fight back. Contact not only the districts, but also the cells."

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And so we did. At the Moscow Committee Bureau meeting, Comrade Zelensky objectively reported on the Central Committee's criticism and, as he put it, the "reprimand" given to Muscovites by the Central Committee Secretariat, and on the dispatch of Comrade Kaganovich, well known to the Moscow organization in the Zamoskvoretsky district, to assist the Moscow Committee.

It should be noted that the MK Bureau and the MK members present responded very well, in a Bolshevik manner, to the Central Committee's criticism and instructions and put forward additional proposals, firmly declaring that they would recapture the wavering cells and prevent the Trotskyists from attacking other cells. I proposed hearing reports from the district committee secretaries, in which they would truthfully, without embellishment, report on the state of affairs and the measures being taken. I recall that some districts—Zamoskvoretsky, Krasnopresnensky, and others—confidently reported that Trotskyism would not succeed there, although in some cells, such as the Plekhanov Institute, the situation was tense, but even there they would not allow a Trotskyist victory. Other districts were less confident, and the Bauman district was even somewhat disconcerted, since the Trotskyists had gained the upper hand over the Bolshevik-Leninists in a number of cells there.

In general, the MK Bureau recognized the situation in the organization as unfavorable, extremely tense, and the struggle intense. At my suggestion, the Bureau decided to rely on the best proletarian cells to attack the Trotskyists in cells that had shown inconsistency and instability, some of which had accepted Trotskyist resolutions. At a meeting convened afterward by the MK Bureau, consisting of heads of organizational and instructional departments and heads of agitation and propaganda departments, district committee instructors, and some cell secretaries from large enterprises (Trekhgorka, Mikhelson, Postavshchik, Bromley, Dynamo, AMO, and others), measures were developed, specifically to dispatch representatives of the MK, district committees, and large, staunch cells to grassroots Party organizations at weak enterprises. These measures began to be implemented that same day.

The next day we called a meeting of the Old Bolsheviks of the Moscow organization, including some people's commissars, members of the board, trade unions, and other leading figures. "The Central Committee," I said, "calls on the Old Bolsheviks to rush into the struggle for Leninism against Trotskyism, which they fought gloriously under Lenin's leadership in pre-revolutionary times and in previous discussions—and defeated it." The Old Bolsheviks who spoke reproached the Moscow Committee for not having gathered them earlier and mobilized them.

He did not organize them to fight Trotsky and Trotskyism. Comrades Vladimirsky, Skvortsov-Stepanov, Litvin-Sedoy, Shkiryatov, Solts, and others spoke out with particular fervor and Bolshevik militancy.

We distributed the Old Bolsheviks among districts and cells, but some of them, including those mentioned, were retained by the Moscow Committee, as they themselves put it, as a shock force to be dispatched as needed to various points of the ideological struggle against the Trotskyists. It is no exaggeration to say that the Old Bolsheviks provided invaluable assistance to the Party, the Central Committee, and the Moscow Committee in defeating the Trotskyists in the Moscow organization.

Comrade Stalin's report "On the Tasks of the Party" at an expanded meeting of the Krasnopresnensky District Party Committee, attended by the bureau of the cells, members of the discussion club, and others, had a profound, self-critical, and calmly confident impact on the discussions in Moscow and throughout the Party, and on the ideological defeat of the Trotskyists. This profound, self-critical, and calmly confident report by the General Secretary of the Central Committee made a colossal impression and, one might say, brought about a turning point in the mood of the activists not only in Krasnaya Presnya, but throughout Moscow, and the entire Party. This shift further developed after the publication of the resolution of the Politburo of the Central Committee and the Presidium of the Central Control Commission "On Intra-Party Development." It was compiled by a Politburo commission that studied extensive material from the field, submitted to the commission by local party organizations and the Organizational and Instructional Department of the Central Committee. It is no exaggeration to say that the Central Committee resolution, published on December 5, was received by the entire party with great satisfaction and full approval. Even organizations that had wavered in favor of the Trotskyists, and especially those cells in

Moscow that were Trotskyist-minded, were forced to agree with the correctness of the Central Committee resolution. The only criticism the Trotskyists initially added was why the Central Committee had issued the resolution so late? Why was Trotsky being suppressed within the Central Committee? and so on, but in essence no new additional provisions were put forward, and the situation in the Moscow organization already improved in the first two or three days after the publication of the resolution, and the consolidation of the entire organization around the Central Committee proceeded at a rapid pace.
But this apparently worried the Trotskyists, and then Trotsky himself came to their aid with his letter "To the Party Conferences," later published in Pravda. It was crude.

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Trotsky violated the basic principles of party collectivism by voting for the Politburo resolution and then issuing the aforementioned letter two days later. This letter, while verbally expressing agreement with the Central Committee's resolution, actually undermines it. The very fact that this letter was distributed to Moscow districts and local organizations constitutes an undermining of basic party discipline and an expression of extreme factionalism. Upon receiving Trotsky's letter, the oppositionists revived their spirits, became more active in Moscow districts and other party organizations, and the debate became even more heated, as Trotsky and the Trotskyists had hoped.
I reported this new intensification of the struggle within Moscow's cells to the Central Committee Secretariat and personally to Comrade Stalin. Comrade Zelensky was summoned again. I reported on the measures being taken and immediately proposed a gathering of Moscow propagandists, who needed reinforcements after Trotsky's letter. I requested that one of the Central Committee secretaries speak at this meeting. Comrade Stalin said sharply, "And why did we send you? You will speak." So it was decided. Before speaking, I received advice from Comrade Stalin, as well as from Comrades Molotov and Kuibyshev. The difficulty of this speech of mine was that, along with a general explanation of the Central Committee resolution and criticism of Trotsky's letter, it was necessary to give specific answers to questions that raised doubts, bewilderment, and even hesitation, in order to repel the malicious attacks of the opposition. I combined some of the answers with the general report, and for others I gave answers separately. In these answers, I was especially guided by the grassroots Bolshevik propagandists who angrily and skillfully attacked the Trotskyists, but who lacked the knowledge to justify the anti-party and factional nature of the Trotskyists.
Thanks to the efforts of the Central Committee and the Moscow Committee, the entire core of the Moscow organization rose up with renewed vigor to fight the opposition. It can be said that for ten days, an intense, relentless, ideological, and deeply principled battle raged between Trotskyism and Leninism. There were almost no remaining workers' cells in Moscow in which Trotskyists had a majority or even a significant presence. Most of the university, military, and Soviet cells turned their backs on the Trotskyists.
On December 11, 1923, a meeting of the Moscow organization's activists was held, at which Kalinin delivered a remarkable speech. On December 14, the Plenum of the Moscow Committee of the RCP(b) was held. As with the meeting, the Plenum rejected the Trotskyists, rejecting their demands, and endorsed the line of the Central Committee of the party.

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This is precisely how the fight against the opposition was waged in all party organizations.
The Petrograd Bolshevik organization stood out as the leading one, having already issued an appeal to the party to repel Trotskyism at the outset of the debate. This appeal had a significant impact on the course of the struggle within the party. By the end of 1923, not only the leading party organizations but also those wavering at the outset of the debate had adopted Lenin's position of supporting the Central Committee and decisively condemning Trotskyism.

The Secretariat and the Organizational Bureau of the Central Committee heard reports, including from the Organizational Instruction Department, on the progress of the discussions at the local level and made a proposal to the Politburo to convene a party conference in mid-January 1924, having assembled a Plenum of the Central Committee of the RCP(6b) before the conference.
This was a very important Plenum because it summed up the results of the struggle against Trotskyism and preliminarily examined the issues of the 13th Party Conference.
At this Plenum, a number of members of the Central Committee spoke from the localities, who sharply condemned Trotsky, Pyatakov, Radek, Preobrazhensky, Osinsky, Sapronov and the entire opposition for their anti-party factional struggle.
Trotsky was not present at the 13th Party Conference that opened on January 16 due to illness, but he, of course, still remained the leader of all the opposition speakers, and they spoke at the conference on all issues, defending their position, albeit unsuccessfully.
The most prominent oppositionists spoke on Rykov's report, which defended the Central Committee's resolution "On the Immediate Tasks of Economic Policy": Preobrazhensky, Pyatakov, V. Kosior, Radek, Sapronov, Smirnov, and others. On economic issues, the oppositionists chewed over, albeit with less gusto, what they had said during the discussion. They defended their position on high prices for manufactured goods, while Pyatakov advocated a broader acceptance of foreign "commodity intervention," which would supposedly force domestic private traders to lower prices. But the conference delegates countered that such an influx of goods from foreign capitalists would primarily hit state-owned socialist industry and further exacerbate the sales crisis. Pyatakov's position was even more absurd when, in response to Rykov's order for maximum profits, written by Pyatakov, he declared at the congress that he was prepared to sign such an order today. Pyatakov spoke at length.

On the importance of managing state enterprises and on the plan, but, in essence, what was correct was borrowed entirely from the Central Committee resolution, while his "add-ons" represented nothing serious and even distorted Lenin's understanding of the plan. Pyatakov continued to defend his slogan of maximum profits against the Central Committee's slogan of moderate profits. As for the oppositionists' rhetoric about the struggle between socialist and capitalist tendencies in the national economy, it sounds "leftist," but in fact, as the delegates, particularly Molotov, correctly pointed out, all their justifications and proposals demonstrate that behind these leftist phrases are petty-bourgeois ears sticking out, as we have seen more than once with the so-called "left communists." The opposition's defeat was so obvious that Pyatakov, at the end of his second speech, declared that he was a sufficiently experienced man and knew that his proposals would not be accepted by the conference. The conference responded to this "insight" with laughter. The Central Committee’s resolution “On the immediate tasks of economic policy” was adopted unanimously by the conference.
The conference's focus, of course, was on party building and the results of the discussion, on which Comrade Stalin delivered a report. The speaker stated from the outset that he did not intend to begin with the history of the discussion, as this would introduce elements of infighting and mutual accusations. He wanted to emphasize, first and foremost, that the Party had greeted the Politburo's resolution on democracy with unanimous approval.
In his report, Comrade Stalin spoke of two conditions that ensure the normal development of intra-party democracy: first, the development of industry, the improvement of the working class's material situation, its quantitative and qualitative growth, and, of course, the corresponding growth of the working class's vanguard—the party, primarily through proletarian elements. And, second, external conditions that ensure peace and peaceful development, without which democracy in the party is unthinkable. Comrade Stalin then spoke of the internal obstacles that must be overcome for the development of democracy—primarily the remnants of the old war period, when our party was militarized, and the pressure exerted by the bureaucratic state apparatus on the party apparatus.

Comrade Stalin further pointed out the third obstacle to the development of democracy: the low cultural level of a number of organizations and cells, especially in the outskirts. It is essential to know

and remember these obstacles and be sure to overcome them in order to honestly and completely carry out intra-party democracy.

Comrade Stalin then, on the basis of a Politburo instruction, read out the clause of the Tenth Congress resolution adopted at Comrade Lenin's suggestion, which had not been made public at the time. "This clause," Comrade Stalin said, "which has remained secret until now, must be made public and found a place in the resolution we will adopt on the results of the discussion. It reads: 'In order to implement strict discipline within the Party and in all Soviet work and to achieve the greatest possible unity while eliminating all factionalism, the Congress authorizes the Central Committee to apply, in the event of a breach of discipline or the revival or tolerance of factionalism, all measures of Party discipline, including expulsion from the Party, and in relation to members of the Central Committee, their demotion to candidate status and even, as an extreme measure, expulsion from the Party.' The condition for the application of such extreme measures (to Central Committee members, Central Committee candidates, and Control Commission members) must be the convening of a Central Committee Plenum with the invitation of all Central Committee candidates and all Control Commission members. If such a general meeting of the most responsible party leaders, by a two-thirds vote, deems it necessary to demote a Central Committee member to a candidate or to expel him from the party, then such measures must be implemented immediately."

In his report, Comrade Stalin not only summarized the discussion but also provided a number of crucial theoretical and practical conclusions that served as a tool for further strengthening the Party's monolithic nature and unity.

Following Comrade Stalin's report, Preobrazhensky, Radek, Sapronov, and Vrachev spoke on behalf of the opposition. Comrades Yaroslavsky, Lakshevich, Tarkhanov, Kubyak, Ryndin, and others spoke against the opposition. The speeches of the oppositionists were, of course, not the same as those we heard during the discussion. Preobrazhensky objected to the reminder and revival of the cited point of the Tenth Congress resolution. He concluded his speech by proposing to implement the resolution of December 5, condemning the methods of struggle demonstrated during the discussion. However, in the essence of his ideas, he, like the other oppositionists who spoke, showed that he was defending his positions in a softened form and was not laying down his arms in the struggle against the Party. Therefore, no matter how sweet and melodious Preobrazhensky's voice was (it must be said that he outwardly appeared soft, one might say "blissful"), it did not soften the souls of the conference delegates, who unanimously

adopted resolutions on party building, on the results of the discussion, and on the petty-bourgeois deviation in the party.

It can be said without exaggeration that this All-Union Conference played a gigantic role in consolidating the victory of Leninism in the discussion with Trotskyism and in all the subsequent work of the Party in preparing for the 13th Party Congress and after it - in strengthening the unity of the Party and the gigantic growth of its ranks due to the entry of workers from the machine tool and their education on the basis of victorious Leninism.

In 1923, I was fortunate to work in close proximity to the Central Committee of our party and, again and again, learn the great ideological spirit and integrity of the struggle for Lenin's party. I learned the art of organization from members of the Politburo and the Orgburo, and especially from daily contact with the secretaries of the Central Committee and its General Secretary, Comrade Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin. Every orchestra, even the best one, needs a conductor. And I can say with

complete objectivity that even then, in this qualified Bolshevik orchestra, a talented conductor—Comrade Stalin—was already evident. I saw and felt daily how he, paying attention to the slightest fact, never panicked, never fussed, never vacillated in his decisions or actions. Instead, he confidently and thoughtfully presented his viewpoint on any given decision or measure, and after a group discussion, he firmly and steadfastly implemented the decision and the planned actions. He made fewer speeches than others, but when he did, he articulated his views and proposals with precision, clarity, precision, and precision. And that is precisely why, even when the Politburo and the Orgburo had such authoritative members for that time as Zinoviev, Kamenev, Kalinin, Rykov, Tomsky, Bukharin, Dzerzhinsky, Molotov, Kuibyshev and others, I do not remember a single case when Stalin's serious proposals were not accepted, especially since, after listening to various comments and doubts, Stalin showed flexibility and often modified his proposals himself.
It can be said that it was from this ideological starting point in this discussion—the struggle for Leninism—that Stalin's greatness as the future leader of the party began to unfold. His boundless ideological loyalty to Lenin, as he repeatedly repeated—his teacher—his selflessness and steadfastness in the fight against the enemies of Leninism, despite the slanderous attacks against him, evoked

Already at that period, there was deep sympathy and deep respect for him on the part of the Leninists – the party activists, including me, who worked directly under his leadership, observed and daily felt his ideological commitment, selflessness, fearlessness and dedication in the struggle for the Leninist party.

THE DEATH OF LENIN. THE EDUCATION OF THE LENIN CALL

On January 21, 1924, the Great Man of Peace died. A terrible tragedy befell the Party, the working class, and all working people of our country and the world.
It's impossible to convey the emotions, the bitterness, the suffering that gripped all party members and non-party members. Everyone was shocked, young and old.
I saw the oldest Bolsheviks—the Leninist core of the party leadership, members and candidates of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection—when we gathered at two in the morning for the Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission to commemorate the death of Ilyich. Their faces were pained, their eyes red from tears. They met intently until dawn, drafting and adopting the Central Committee's appeal "To the Party. To all working people."
On Tuesday, January 22, all members of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission traveled to Gorki. In the remaining hours before their departure, they visited Moscow factories. Workers' Moscow was in deep mourning; a feeling of grief and profound suffering gripped millions of workers not only in Moscow but throughout the country.
Early in the morning of the 22nd, I went to my cell at the Krasny Supplier tannery in the Zamoskvoretsky district. There I saw a heartbreaking scene: the workers, especially the women, were literally sobbing, and the only words I could hear were, "What will happen? How will we live without Lenin?"
At an open meeting of the cell, workers spoke, calling for the Party to respond to the great loss by joining its ranks, by working better, by rallying around the Central Committee and the government, so that the enemies would feel and see that Soviet power was strong and the alliance of workers and peasants was indestructible.
The meeting sent condolences to the Central Committee of the RCP(b), Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya, and Maria Ilyinichna Ulyanova. In the adopted resolution, workers, communists, and non-party members, swore

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to rally even more closely around the RCP(b). "Lenin will live among us forever," the workers wrote, "his teachings will forever remain a beacon in the struggle for communism!"
Following this, a general meeting of two thousand workers was convened. At the meeting, leading non-party workers began announcing their membership in the party. The workers of the Red Supplier resolved to contribute money from their earnings to the wreath and the Lenin Library.
That same day, the 22nd, the members and candidates of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission set out for Gorki. It's four kilometers from the station to Gorki, and there weren't enough sleds for everyone, so we, the younger ones, walked. The bitter cold made it easier to move, and we, on foot, arrived in Gorki almost at the same time as those traveling by sled.
Lenin lay on a table in a large room with an open balcony, surrounded by flowers and pine branches. At first, we all stood around Lenin, then an honor guard of members of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission was organized.
Early in the morning of January 23, preparations were made to remove Lenin's body from Gorki for its journey to Moscow. Members of the Politburo, Nadezhda Konstantinovna, and Maria Ilyinichna carried it from Lenin's house, then members and candidates of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission, Old Bolshevik delegates to the Second Congress of Soviets, and the arriving delegations of workers and peasants carried it to the train station.
Along the sleigh ride to the station, as well as at the station itself, there were many peasants, men and women, railroad workers, laborers, and teenagers. Paveletsky Station, when Lenin's body arrived, was full of Moscow's working men and women. Along the entire route to the House of Unions, especially on Pyatnitskaya Street, despite the bitter cold, there were many workers and citizens, including their children, many of whom were crying bitterly.
For several days there was a continuous flow of people, not only Muscovites, but also from many other cities and regions of the country, and from national republics.
On the day of the funeral, January 27, it was -26 degrees Celsius, but none of us, nor hundreds of thousands of workers, felt the cold. Everyone was eager to get to the square or at least its surroundings, so they could then pass by the Mausoleum. The Mausoleum was designed and built in an exceptionally short time.
Before Lenin's coffin was carried into the Mausoleum, a crowd of thousands of people bared their heads and sang "You fell as victims," and then there was a dead silence that shook the souls of all of us - from the workers, peasants, and Red Army soldiers to the leaders of the party and government.

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The Second All-Union Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants', and Red Army Deputies, which was meeting in Moscow at that time, dedicated a special session to the memory of Ilyich, the organizer of the Soviet state, at which the leaders of the party and government, representatives of the Comintern, and Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya spoke.
What a powerful Leninist force Lenin's comrade and friend, Nadezhda Konstantinovna, displayed in her speech! She set a worthy example of how a Bolshevik should bear grief. "In those days," she said, "as I stood at the coffin of Vladimir Ilyich, I reconsidered his entire life, and this is what I want to tell you. His heart beat with ardent love for all workers, for all the oppressed. He never said this himself, and I probably wouldn't have said it at another, less solemn moment. I say this because he inherited this feeling from the heroic Russian revolutionary movement. This feeling drove him to passionately, ardently seek an answer to the question: what should be the path to the liberation of the workers? He found the answer to his questions in Marx. He didn't approach Marx as a bookworm. He approached Marx as a man seeking answers to tormenting, pressing questions. And he found those answers there. With them, he went to the workers... We now talk a lot about the bond between the workers and the peasants... Only as the leader of all working people can the working

class win. Vladimir Ilyich understood this when he worked among the St. Petersburg workers. And this thought, this idea, illuminated all his subsequent activities, his every step. He wanted power for the working class. He understood that the working class needed this power not to build a cushy life for itself at the expense of other workers; he understood that the historical task of the working class is to liberate the oppressed, to liberate all workers. This fundamental idea left its imprint on all of Vladimir Ilyich's activities." Nadezhda Konstantinovna concludes her speech with a remarkable appeal: "I am addressing you and asking you to take this idea of Vladimir Ilyich especially to heart..."

The speeches of all the other speakers were imbued with the deepest respect for Lenin, all calling for others to follow his path. Stalin's speech stood out among all the others. It was shorter than the others, which were also heartfelt and meaningful, but it was distinguished by the fact that Stalin answered not only the question of who the great Lenin was and why he was dear to the masses of workers and the party. He, as General Secretary of the Party Central Committee, focused on this difficult time.

The focus was on the tasks of the Party, the Soviets, and the people, on worthily continuing Lenin's work and achieving the complete victory of Leninism. Stalin not only called for this, but on behalf of the Party Central Committee, he swore an oath of allegiance to Lenin and Leninism, and the delegates to the Second Congress of Soviets, all communists, and the non-party working masses of the Soviet people joined him in swearing this oath.

During the days of mourning, Lenin's Conscription into the party was announced. Even then, a fascination with the quantitative aspect of party growth emerged, not only in local organizations but also among some in the center. Zinoviev, for example, put forward the slogan: to achieve an accelerated increase in party membership to one million, of which 900,000 should be factory workers. First of all, it must be said that this was clearly unrealistic at the time: we had about 300,000 factory workers in the party at the time. This meant we had to recruit another 600,000 factory workers—a task that wouldn't take months. Moreover, if we had 900,000 out of one million party members—that is, 90 percent of factory workers—that meant only 100,000 members of all other categories in the party: peasants, Red Army soldiers, office workers, students, and so on. By the summer of 1924, we already had over 300,000 of these categories in the party. This meant that if we accepted the proposal of Zinoviev and others, we would have to automatically expel approximately 300,000 communists from the party. Meanwhile, the 13th Party Congress, along with the task of further recruiting factory workers, issued instructions for the admission of not only factory workers but also peasants, Red Army soldiers, office workers, and students, strictly observing all the conditions established by the Party Charter. This means that the issue was not the expulsion of approximately 300,000, as would have resulted from Zinoviev's proposal, but the admission of advanced peasants and other non-working elements into the party.

It is perfectly clear that the Thirteenth Congress could not and did not accept such a proposal, the true anti-Party nature of which was revealed in 1925, when the so-called "Leningrad Opposition," led by Zinoviev and Kamenev, came forward with its opposition platform. However, even before that, the Party had exposed the incorrectness and un-Leninist nature of such proposals. Stalin made this particularly clear in his report to the Moscow Assembly, "On the Results of the Thirteenth Congress of the RCP(b)," without, however, directly arguing with Zinoviev and others, in the interests of unity.

The 13th Party Congress did not accept the existing proposals for an extension

campaign of the Lenin Conscription, and declared this campaign completed so that the party could move on to normal organizational and propaganda work to further involve workers from the machine tool and the best elements from the revolutionary peasants into the party.
At the first meeting of the newly elected Plenum of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) at the XIII Congress, the issue of educating the Leninist conscription was the subject of serious discussion. The Central Committee Plenum instructed the Central Committee's Organizational Bureau to pay special attention to the education of the Lenin Conscription and to create a special commission to organize this work. The Central Committee's Organizational Bureau and Politburo approved a commission for the political education of the Lenin Conscription, which included 15 Central Committee members and candidate members and representatives of major industrial organizations: Moscow, Leningrad, Tver, Tula, and others. The commission included Comrades Stalin, Molotov, Kaganovich, Kuibyshev, Kalinin, Uglanov, Dogadov, Bubnov, Syrtsov, and others. Comrade L.M. Kaganovich, elected Secretary of the Central Committee after the 13th Congress, was confirmed as the commission's chairman. The commission began its work in mid-June 1924.
In the debate about where to begin the education of the Leninist conscription, Leninism's struggle for the unity of theory and practice found its vivid expression.
Stalin called for a rebuff to be given to opportunist bureaucrats who were delaying the involvement of workers in practical work, and at the same time for a rebuff to be given to opposition elements in the party and for the prevention of deviations by those Leninist party members who underestimated the importance of theory, its study and the training of workers in party schools in the Fundamentals of Leninism.
The Central Committee, its commission and the apparatus of the Central Committee ensured that the work of party organizations to involve young members of the Leninist Conscription Party in party, state, trade union and other public organizations was carried out not on an ad hoc basis, not in a shock campaign, but in a planned and systematic manner.
At the end of 1924, during re-elections, 20-25% of the cell bureau members were elected to the new bureau. In a number of cells, cell secretaries were also elected from among the new members of the Leninist Appeal Party, and in some districts, these same members were also elected to the district leadership bodies. An even higher percentage of newly elected party members were elected to the leading trade union organizations, especially at the lower and middle levels.

By the end of 1924, approximately 75% of the Lenin Conscription Party's members were involved in public and government work. (In some places, they even overextended themselves in their public duties, forcing the Central Committee to intervene.)
In 1924, the party not only grew in numbers but also strengthened in quality. This impacted internal party life not only on the organizational side of its work but also on its ideological and political content.
Suffice it to point out that Trotsky's new attempt at a fundamental revision of the foundations of Leninism at the end of 1924, in his famous speech "Lessons of October," was immediately met with a more unanimous and decisive rebuff than in the 1923 debate. This reflected not only the experience of the ideological struggle and victory over the opposition in 1923, but also, undoubtedly, the strengthening of the party by the workers of the Leninist Conscription, who had been raised by the party and its Central Committee to the level of conscious party fighters for Marxism-Leninism!
On this basis, a new recruitment drive for workers into the party was launched. The Lenin Enrollment merged with the general mass of new party members and candidates. Incidentally, this is why our commission ceased to be called the Commission for the Education of the Lenin Enrollment and became known as the "Central Committee Commission for Work Among Workers Who Have Joined and Are Re-joining the Party." We operated in this capacity, with these functions, until April 1925.

In April, at the Central Committee Plenum, a report was heard from the commission's chairman, Comrade L.M. Kaganovich, on the work completed. The Central Committee Plenum approved the commission's work and resolved to consider its work complete. Since April, I have already begun working as General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine.

13th Party Congress. Lenin's Testament

The congress heard a report by the General Secretary of the Central Committee, Comrade Stalin, and considered the following issues: work in the countryside, domestic trade and cooperation, the work of control commissions, the immediate tasks of party building, the work of the youth congress, work among working women and peasant women, and others. I, of course, had the opportunity

to take part in the development of projects: on work in the village, on work among youth, on work among female workers and peasant women, but, naturally, I took the most active part in developing the decision on the issue “On the next tasks of party building.”

Since party building is inextricably linked to the overall economic and political situation in the country and the state of the party, the congress resolution, like the report, begins with the country's emerging economic upswing and the corresponding political upsurge, primarily among the working class, the rural poor, and the progressive middle peasants in the countryside. On the other hand, the inevitable strengthening of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois strata under the NEP was underway. The party, the congress stated, must take into account the growing activity of the kulaks in the countryside and the NEPmen in the city. This is all the more important and necessary given that it affects the party, which has been permeated by petty-bourgeois sentiments.

The entry of over 200,000 workers into the Party under the Leninist Enrollment led to a significant renewal of its membership. The Congress particularly emphasized the importance and urgency of sustained communist education for those who joined the Party and all Party youth, who will strengthen and renew the cadres of our Party and the state apparatus. The recruitment of workers who have joined the Party to practical state work cannot be postponed. Reiterating the task of attracting workers from the factory floor to the Party, the Congress pointed out the need to simultaneously organize the admission of advanced peasant farmers, Red Army soldiers, students, and well-established employees into the Party, strictly adhering to the procedures and regulations established by the Party Charter, with some relief for peasants and farm laborers in the eastern national republics.

The 13th Party Congress elected a new Central Committee, expanding it to include new, young party members. During the discussion of the Central Committee's composition by delegation, Lenin's letter to the Congress, which became part of Lenin's last will and testament, was read and discussed.

In his "Letter to the Congress," Lenin, beginning with the question of increasing the number of Central Committee members, wrote that such a measure was necessary to enhance the Central Committee's authority, to undertake serious work to improve our apparatus, and to prevent conflicts between small sections of the Central Committee from becoming too significant for the overall fate of the Party. Lenin linked this reform with the surrounding

The Soviet Union was surrounded by hostile states. "Such a reform," he writes, "would significantly increase the strength of our party and facilitate its struggle among hostile states, which, in my

opinion, can and should become much more acute in the coming years. I believe that the stability of our party would benefit a thousandfold from such a measure." The party fully implemented Lenin's proposal: at the 13th Congress, 55 members and 35 candidates were elected to the Central Committee, many of whom were workers, and 150 members were elected to the Central Control Commission, most of whom were workers.

Lenin further writes in the second part of his "Letter to the Congress": "By the stability of the Central Committee, of which I spoke above, I mean measures against a split, insofar as such measures can be taken at all. I think that the most important factors in the question of stability from this point of view are such Central Committee members as Stalin and Trotsky. The relationship between them, in my opinion, constitutes a large part of the danger of a split that could be avoided, and which, in my opinion, should be avoided, among other things, by increasing the number of Central Committee members to 50, to 100." Thus, firstly, Lenin highly valued Stalin as one of the two most important members of the Central Committee. And, secondly, the facts of party history show that it was Trotsky who was the instigator and irreconcilable initiator of the attacks on the party, the Central Committee, and Stalin, who was then forced, only in self-defense, to lead a counterattack against Trotsky and, with the forces of the party, to crush Trotskyism, which opposed Leninism. This, incidentally, is nothing new, as even under Lenin, Trotsky sprang to the fore with his anti-Party, petty-bourgeois attacks on the Party and on Lenin. This was true not only before the Revolution, when he was a Menshevik, but also after the Revolution, when he was already a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee. This was true, for example, during the trade union debate, when he placed the Party in a critical situation, and only thanks to Lenin's great self-sacrifice was the Party's crisis overcome.

Lenin further, characterizing Stalin and Trotsky, writes: "Comrade Stalin, having become General Secretary, has concentrated in his hands immense power, and I am not sure whether he will always be able to use this power with sufficient caution. On the other hand, Comrade Trotsky, as his struggle against the Central Committee in connection with the question of the People's Commissariat of Railways has already proven, is distinguished not only by outstanding abilities. Personally, he is perhaps the most capable person in the present Central Committee, but he also boasts excessively of his self-confidence and excessive

"[Trotsky's] preoccupation with the purely administrative side of things. These two qualities of two outstanding leaders of the modern Central Committee are capable of inadvertently leading to a split, and if our Party does not take measures to prevent it, the split may occur unexpectedly." This split did not occur only because the Party, united around the Central Committee, promptly exposed the non-Bolshevik methods and maneuvers of Trotsky's factional struggle against the Party and Leninism and crushed Trotskyism. In this struggle, Stalin rightfully took the leading place. In the same letter, Lenin also warned the Party about Trotsky's non-Bolshevism. "I," Lenin writes, "will no longer characterize other members of the Central Committee by their personal qualities. I will merely remind you that the October episode of Zinoviev and Kamenev, of course, was not accidental, but that it can no more be blamed on them personally than non-Bolshevism can on Trotsky."

Thus, Zinoviev and Kamenev did not make the October mistake by accident, and Trotsky is not a Bolshevik. Trotsky's non-Bolshevism, and this is stated generally, applies to both the past and the present, and should be understood as a consistent feature in Trotsky. At the same time, Stalin's assessment makes no mention of any fundamental deviations from Bolshevism on his part. Lenin considers Stalin a staunch Bolshevik, but Lenin adds an addendum to his letter of December 24, 1922, regarding Stalin. "Stalin," Lenin writes, "is too rude, and this shortcoming, quite tolerable in the circles and interactions among us Communists, becomes intolerable in the position of General Secretary." Therefore, I propose to the comrades to consider a way of removing Stalin from this position and appointing another person to this position who in all other respects differs from

Comrade Stalin in only one advantage, namely, he is more tolerant, more loyal, more polite and more attentive to comrades, less capricious, etc." Although here, in the addendum, there are no accusations of a fundamental political nature and Stalin is considered by Lenin as one of the two most outstanding leaders of the modern Central Committee, the criticism addressed to Stalin is, of course, very serious, therefore all of us, the delegates to the congress, treated it with the utmost seriousness. I know this not only as a delegate to the congress, but also as a Central Committee worker who was associated with the delegations. But when Lenin's letter was read out and discussed at the delegations, the comrades, with all their love, respect and loyalty to Lenin, first of all posed the question: is it possible to find a person who would possess, as Lenin himself writes, all-round

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Stalin's qualities and would have been distinguished by only one advantage—more tolerant, loyal, polite, etc. If Lenin had been confident that this would be easy to do—that is, to find a replacement for one of the two most prominent members of the Central Committee—he, with his characteristic directness, would have simply proposed removing Stalin and promoting someone else. Instead, he wrote cautiously, or perhaps tentatively: "I propose that comrades consider a way to remove Stalin from this position." It is well known how Lenin, through criticism, often very harshly, trained cadres, including his closest aides, counting on their improvement. One might think that Lenin, too, by posing the question this way, was counting on Stalin correcting his shortcomings. And it must be said that Stalin, during the Thirteenth Congress, promised that he would take into account the criticism of his teacher, Lenin, and eliminate the shortcomings he had pointed out. We, who worked with Stalin, can say that immediately after the Thirteenth Congress, Stalin especially observed the collegiality in his work, loyalty, and politeness that Lenin demanded.

All the congress delegates, like the entire party, saw and knew that Stalin played a leading role in the Leninist core of the Central Committee in the struggle against the factional and splitting attacks of Trotskyism, the Workers' Opposition, and other opposition groups on the Party and Leninism. In this struggle, Stalin demonstrated courage, theoretical and political insight, Leninist persistence, and intransigence. It is especially noteworthy that Stalin, like other Leninists, showed exceptional patience with the opposition leaders, including Trotsky personally, and later Zinoviev and Kamenev. It is enough to examine the facts: how many times the Central Committee warned them and tolerated their antics, retaining them on the Central Committee and Politburo during several years of their anti-Party work. It was only when they staged their anti-Soviet demonstration in Moscow in 1927 during the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the October Revolution that the Central Committee finally took more decisive measures. Stalin, as General Secretary of the Central Committee, organized the party cadres to implement the decisions of the Central Committee and its Politburo, thereby providing decisive assistance to the party in overcoming the most dangerous crisis within the party caused by the Trotskyists. In this way, the party ensured its unity and strengthened the alliance of workers and peasants, thereby strengthening the USSR's foreign policy position in its struggle against the imperialists, who were still seeking the restoration of capitalism in the USSR.

The delegates to the party congress, reflecting the mood of the party members,

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They said that Stalin's removal could harm the strengthened internal and external position of the party and the entire USSR.

They said that Stalin, who had already been an authoritative member of the Politburo of the Central Committee under Lenin, had gained even greater authority in the Party and the country during his brief tenure, during Lenin's absence due to illness and after his death. They currently saw no other person in the Central Committee who could replace Stalin. The congress delegates expressed

confidence that Stalin would certainly heed Lenin's instructions and would be a worthy General Secretary of the Central Committee. Therefore, the delegates of the Thirteenth Congress, and subsequently the Central Committee Plenum, voted in favor of re-electing Stalin as General Secretary of the Central Committee.
Even Trotsky did not object to this, especially since Zinoviev and Kamenev supported this very decision and voted for it.
The Central Committee and its apparatus, primarily the Organizational Instruction Department and then the Organizational and Distribution Department, accomplished a great deal in 1923-1925 in connection with the formation of several new autonomous republics: the Buryat-Mongolian, Karelian, Chuvash, Moldavian, North Ossetian, and Ingush regions, and the Nakhichevan ASSR. Particular attention was paid to the development of the peoples of the North and Northeast. In 1924, a special "Committee of the North" was created under the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.
The demarcation of Central Asia occupied a significant place in the Central Committee's work. On June 12, 1924, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) adopted a resolution "On the National Demarcation of the Republics of Central Asia—Turkestan, Bukhara, and Khorezm." This was a highly sensitive and complex issue, necessitating the establishment and delimitation of the territories of the newly formed republics: the Uzbek, Turkmen, United Kazakh, and Kara-Kirghiz republics, as well as the then-Tajik Autonomous Region, and later the Kirghiz Republic. Needless to say, as a former Turkestan official, I had to play a particularly active role in this work, although I tried not to officially emphasize it, lest I appear to be their special boss or plenipotentiary, as Comrade Stalin half-jokingly warned me. But representatives of all nationalities came to me with their doubts and disputes, which I reported to Comrade Stalin, and which he took into account in the final decisions on issues, especially regarding the demarcation of territories and, in particular, in the heated disputes between the Uzbeks and Kazakhs over Tashkent and Chimkent. Each demanded Tashkent for themselves, and the Uzbeks demanded

leave them Tashkent and Chimkent. The issue was resolved so that Tashkent remained, of course, in the Uzbek SSR, and Chimkent in the Kazakh SSR. I won't hide the fact that I also played a certain role in this correct decision of the Central Committee.
In February 1925, congresses of the Soviets of the Uzbek and Turkmen SSRs took place, which formalized themselves as Soviet Socialist States and proclaimed their voluntary desire to join the USSR. Thus, from the former republics of Turkestan, Bukhara, and Khorezm, the Uzbek and Turkmen SSRs and the Tajik ASSR (initially within the Uzbek SSR), the Kirghiz Autonomous Region within the RSFSR, and the Kara-Kalpak Autonomous Region within the Kazakh ASSR were formed first.
At the III All-Union Congress of Soviets, the Uzbek and Turkmen SSRs were admitted to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

AGAINST TROTSKY AND TROTSKYISM IN 1924-1925

The destruction of the capitalist system in Russia by the October Socialist Revolution led to the collapse and defeat of the ideological exponents of that system—the bourgeois-landowner parties and the petty-bourgeois counterrevolutionary parties of the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks who supported them. However, neither party completely disappeared from the scene of struggle. With the help of agents of foreign imperialism, the most rabid of them carried out underground subversive work against the Soviet socialist system, especially under the New Economic Policy.

History shows that in the immediate aftermath of the October Revolution, the Soviet government of the dictatorship of the proletariat did not eliminate the legal existence of these would-be socialist parties; they had their own deputies in the Soviets and in the supreme organ of the Soviet state, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, and even made speeches against the Soviet government. But the complete and final fold of these Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties into the White Guard and interventionist camp, their participation in the Kolchak government and counterrevolutionary actions led these once influential parties to complete disintegration and collapse, to the complete abandonment of even the petty-bourgeois masses, not to mention the workers. Nevertheless, under the conditions of the NEP, they were revived.

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in one form or another, Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik elements, who, sometimes under the guise of “non-party members,” sometimes under the guise of “free” anarchist individualists, sometimes under the guise of “loyal” Soviet workers who supposedly had the right to criticize, sometimes under the guise of “left-wing” shouters, supposedly simply dissatisfied with the NEP, etc., carried out their subversive work: openly - at meetings and rallies and secretly - at conspiratorial “evenings.”

The Party and Soviet power did not allow for illusions and called on Party members to be vigilant, remembering that the stinking corpse of a defeated enemy could spread its stench and poisonous venom to those around it, relying on our internal class enemies and external imperialists.

The struggle against ideological deviations arising from economic difficulties and the shortcomings revealed in the work of state, business, cooperative, party, and trade union bodies was not over—Trotskyism emerged as a leading aggressive force. Following the ill-fated "Workers' Truth" and "Workers' Group" groups, which had failed to gain widespread popularity, a broader debate unfolded within the party and the country. This, as is well known, occurred in 1923. The debate encompassed all our party organizations and assumed acrimonious forms. Trotskyist opponents of the party and the Central Committee were stronger than the aforementioned "Workers' Truth" and "Workers' Group" groups, having their own representatives in the Central Committee and even in the Politburo. Moreover, the Trotskyist bloc adopted insidious methods of struggle: the Trotskyists disguised their prickly, sharp thorns and poisoned petty-bourgeois arrows, directed against the party, its Central Committee and Leninism, with outwardly acceptable positions, fraudulently taken from the theses and resolutions of the Central Committee and Politburo, passing them off as their own, and thereby misleading some honest members of the party.

However, as a result of this internal party struggle, the Trotskyist bloc suffered a complete defeat. It's impossible to think that victory over Trotskyism was so easy. At that time, Trotsky was in a high position, and the main thing was that he had the support of petty-bourgeois elements, so he even counted on victory, taking advantage of Lenin's illness. Therefore, speaking about the role of the entire Central Committee and Lenin's old guard, which played a decisive role in debunking Trotsky and defeating him, we must say, with complete objectivity and without exaggeration, that Stalin deserves great credit for this victory, who,

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As General Secretary of the Central Committee, he not only organized a successful counterattack against Trotskyism, but also proved himself to be a party theorist who, relying on Marx and Lenin, was able to expose the falsity of Trotsky’s theoretical constructions against Lenin and Leninism and defeat his attacks.

Following the Party's victory in the 1923 debate, and following the resolution of the 13th Party Conference on Comrade Stalin's report "On Party Building" and "On the Petty-Bourgeois Deviation in the Party," many believed that the Trotskyists and other opposition elements would heed these decisions and enable the Party and the Central Committee to concentrate all their efforts on

fulfilling all the tasks set before the Party: Party, Soviet, and economic socialist construction, and the further improvement of the conditions of the worker and peasant masses.
Great and difficult tasks have also arisen in the international sphere in connection with the well-known stabilization of capitalism and the defeat of revolutionary actions by workers, especially in Germany.
The Fifth Congress of the Comintern, held in June 1924, set the Bolshevization of the Communist Parties of capitalist countries as one of its primary objectives. The Fifth Congress specifically heard a report on the discussions within the RCP(b) and fully endorsed the decisions of the XIII Party Conference on the petty-bourgeois deviation of Trotskyism. The Fifth Congress of the Comintern supported our Party and the Central Committee in the struggle for Leninism and the development of socialist construction. Trotsky drew different conclusions for himself and his faction: since his direct attack on the Party and Central Committee line had failed, he, especially in light of the Fifth Congress's decision to Bolshevize the Communist Parties, decided to launch an attack on Leninism through a detour, a "cunning" maneuver, veiled—through a supposedly historical digression on the October Revolution, calling his speech "Lessons of October." But with this very title, and even more so with its content, he revealed his disguise and demonstrated, firstly, that this was essentially once again a platform for the struggle of Trotskyism against Bolshevism, and secondly, that it was already a platform for struggle not only within the RCP(b) but also within other parties of the Comintern. Thus, with his "Lessons of October," Trotsky seemed to be saying to the parties of the Comintern: you are being tasked with Bolshevising the parties; so learn this Bolshevisation from my platform, "Lessons of October."
The scale is grand—an attack on Lenin and Leninism, which had endured many a real battle. But the Menshevik knight of "Don Quixote" is indifferent to the sea; he has once again set out on a campaign.

Although this modern "Don Quixote"'s sword is rusty, it's ancient—Menshevik. But our Party and Central Committee recognized that poisonous rust can poison the existence and development of a healthy organism, especially given the presence, under the NEP, of significant swamps and thickets teeming with all manner of reptiles and wild animals actively hostile to the proletarian, party organism. That's why, when this platform—"Lessons of October"—was published as an "innocent" introduction to the book "1917," our Central Committee, with ample experience in combating revisionism, paid serious attention to it and launched a thorough explanatory campaign to expose this new foray by Trotskyism.
Our newspaper Pravda spoke out on this issue, and all the leading figures of our party spoke at party cells. Comrade Stalin dealt a particularly profound and powerful blow to the anti-Marxist, anti-Leninist Trotskyist theory of "permanent revolution" in his work "Trotskyism and Leninism" (an edited speech given to the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions on November 19, 1924).
Many of us, including myself, of course, had to deliver reports to more than one party cell. Particularly etched in my memory is the general meeting of student communists at the Plekhanov Institute in the Zamoskvoretsky District, where, on behalf of the Moscow Committee and the Zamoskvoretsky District Party Committee, then led by the unforgettable Zemlyachka, I delivered a lengthy, detailed report. The auditorium was overflowing, as student communists from other universities also attended. This meeting, like others, was tense. There were comments, questions, and speeches from Trotskyist-minded elements. They were opposed by student communists, anti-Trotskyist Leninists. I remember a remarkable speech by a young student, the future People's Commissar of the Metallurgical Industry, Tevosyan. The meeting dragged on, and I had to deliver the closing remarks the following day. In general, I must say that I prepared my report diligently for this and other meetings, studying historical facts and previous speeches by our leading party figures. I was greatly helped by the fact that I attended the Communist faction of the All-Union Central

Council of Trade Unions on November 18 and 19, 1924, and listened to the speeches of Comrade Stalin, as well as Kamenev.
At a meeting of the plenum of the communist faction of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions

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On November 19, 1924, Comrade Stalin began his speech primarily with facts about the October Uprising, refuting numerous myths aimed primarily at proving that there was no majority in the Central Committee supporting the uprising, that a split was imminent, and so on. All these fabrications were exaggerated to make it appear that Trotsky was the "savior" of the situation.
Stalin decisively refuted the legend of Trotsky's special role in the October Revolution. "I am far from denying Trotsky's undoubtedly important role in the uprising," Stalin said. "But I must say that Trotsky did not and could not have played any special role in the October Uprising. As Chairman of the Petrograd Soviet, he merely carried out the will of the relevant party authorities, who guided Trotsky's every move."
Stalin admits that Trotsky fought well during October, but that people like the Left Socialist Revolutionaries also fought well. “A true revolutionary is not one who displays courage during a victorious uprising, but one who can simultaneously display courage during a period of revolution’s retreat. The Socialist Revolutionaries fought well during October, supporting the Bolsheviks. But who doesn’t know that these ‘brave’ fighters panicked during Brest? It is extremely sad that Trotsky, who fought well during October, lacked the courage during Brest, during the revolution’s temporary setbacks, to show sufficient steadfastness in that difficult moment and not follow in the footsteps of the Left Socialist Revolutionaries... Revolution is not exhausted by October. October is only the beginning of the proletarian revolution. It is bad to cower in the face of a rising uprising.” It's even worse if they drift during the difficult trials of revolution, after taking power. Retaining power the day after the revolution is no less important than taking power in the first place."
There is no need to now prove the full tragedy and severity of the situation of the young Soviet state during the Brest-Litovsk period – its fate would have been decided if Lenin had not insisted on concluding a peace, although difficult, but necessary for a country exhausted by war.
But at the critical moment, Trotsky spoke out against Lenin and supported the “left communists” who went together with the Left Socialist Revolutionaries against the Brest Peace.
The Party and Lenin, despite the chatter about the cruel “Leninist regime,” not only did not disavow Trotsky, but gave him a new

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The high post of People's Commissar for Military Affairs helped him in his positive activities, creating his authority and at the same time correcting his serious mistakes, especially on the Southern and Eastern Fronts.
This demonstrated the extent to which Lenin and the Party were demonstrating an objectively political, partisan, and at the same time generally tolerant attitude toward Trotsky. But Trotsky responded to this, one might say, gentle and noble attitude by resuming his attacks on the Party and Lenin.
In the face of new, major, and difficult tasks associated with the new stage of the civil war's end, new difficulties that found their extreme expression in events such as Kronstadt, Trotsky forced the party to debate trade unions, counting on the support of military cadres and diverse opposition groups. The results are well known: Lenin and the Central Committee were forced to plunge into this debate, with all of Lenin's theoretical and party-political force and acuity, exposing the Menshevik-petty-bourgeois and anarcho-syndicalist essence of the Trotskyist bloc. Having received the support of the overwhelming majority of the activists and the entire party, they crushed Trotskyism and its allies.

It would seem that now Trotsky, with his broad outlook and being a member of the highest governing body of the party, the Politburo, could and should harness himself, together with all the members of the Politburo, into the common chariot, the difficult chariot of building socialism, and realize, not in beautiful phrases, but in practical work, his remarkable abilities, which no one denies him.

But Trotsky acted differently. Taking advantage of our beloved leader Lenin's grave illness, which left him bedridden, Trotsky decided to fight for the leadership of the party, and probably not so much for his own personal advancement as for the realization of his unchanging, and at times only hidden, old Trotskyist views.

Trotsky and his followers chose a moment of well-known difficulties in the summer of 1923 and once again attacked the party, directing their main attack at its Central Committee and the old Leninist guard. They demagogically distorted the facts, exaggerated the danger and difficulties, and asserted without evidence that the Central Committee was leading the country to ruin. We, the old Bolsheviks, have long been familiar with this Trotskyist-Menshevik method: Trotskyism has always been distinguished by the fact that in times of upsurge, it flees.

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He runs ahead, shouting "Hurray!" to look braver than everyone else, and in difficult moments, he too runs ahead, but backwards, panickingly shouting, "Help, we're dying, save us." And then the savior appears—Trotsky, offering his quackish, opportunistic remedies.

And in 1923, when Trotsky and his associates launched a new discussion, supported by Trotsky’s “speculative” “New Course,” the Party and the Central Committee ideologically routed the entire bloc of the Trotskyist opposition.

The Central Committee demonstrated how Trotsky, using his old methods, took the Central Committee's decision on intra-party democracy and the revitalization of party life and presented everything positive as his own "invention," adding his Trotskyist fly in the ointment (and not just one), such as freedom for factional groups, attacks on the old Leninist party cadres, who were supposedly capable of degeneration, the juxtaposition of youth and old age, and so on. The entire course of this new debate is well known—the result is the same: Trotsky and his bloc are defeated by the party.

Defeated in open battle in 1923, Trotsky in 1924 adopted a method of "quiet," "legal," indirect, but more profound attack on Leninism. This found expression in a new debate on the "Lessons of October." Thus, during his tenure in our party since the summer of 1917, he went less than six months without speaking out against the party, against Lenin, and then, beginning in 1918, he forced four debates on the party.

What is it? Perhaps it stems from Trotsky's own personal, quarrelsome nature? No, the underlying causes are deeper. They lie in the very nature of his un-Marxist ideas, in the principles, or rather, in the unprincipled nature of Trotskyism, its empty, phrase-filled rhetoric, and its fondness for wit, which includes insolence and, at times, lies, not hesitating to resort to insults in his supposedly ideological struggle.

Trotsky came forward with his Trotskyist ideology in 1924 so boldly, counting on the fact that Lenin, who for more than 20 years had been striking blows at and smashing economism, Menshevism and its offshoot, Trotskyism, was no longer there.

But he miscalculated in his self-confidence in impunity; he did not know or understand the nature of our party and the ideological and theoretical strength of the disciples trained by Lenin, who had previously helped Lenin and now confidently took on the task of exposing Trotsky’s revisionism.

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First of all, it was explained to the entire party and the workers that Trotsky was not telling the truth when he portrayed his speeches as literary performances for the purpose of studying history:

Trotsky chose this form of discussion to discredit the party, its cadres, Lenin, and to replace Leninism with Trotskyism.
'The Party exposed Trotskyism and its attitude towards the Party and Party building long ago and proved that Trotskyism, no matter what leftist words it hid behind, was in fact an agent of Menshevism in the Party and in the working class.
In the new conditions following the October Revolution, Trotskyism, having concealed its overtly Menshevik views, replacing open attacks on the party with attacks on the old Bolshevik guard, and pitting the old cadres against the young, established unity with all opposition elements within the party. In opposition to the genuine unity of the Bolsheviks, Trotskyism preached and organized factions and groups. The party crushed these new manifestations of Trotskyism, defending and firmly entrenching the Leninist principles of party structure and work based on democratic centralism, internal party democracy, discipline, and the active participation of each party member. There were still some doubters who sympathized with Trotsky, who had suffered another defeat, but the vast majority of organizations stood firmly on the position of Leninism.
On January 15, Trotsky sent a statement to the Central Committee explaining why he had not defended himself during the discussion. He cited his reluctance to deepen the controversy and exacerbate the situation. But this explanation is unconvincing. If he truly cared about preventing tensions within the Party, then why had he once again, not for the first time, spoken out against the Party, and now issued his "Lessons of October," designed to exacerbate relations?
As is well known, a Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission was held from January 17-20, 1925, at which a report was heard and the question of "Trotsky's Speech" was considered. Trotsky himself did not appear at the Plenum, citing illness.
Party organizations adopted resolutions condemning Trotsky's new statements. They put forward various proposals: some demanded Trotsky's expulsion from the party; others, his removal from the post of Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council and his removal from the Politburo; still others, to which the Moscow, Leningrad, Ural, and Ukrainian organizations belonged, demanded Trotsky's removal.

from the post of Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council and his conditional retention in the Politburo. In this spirit, a draft resolution was drafted for the Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission, which was to choose between these proposals.
Members of the Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission actively spoke out on this issue.
Everyone equally condemned this new foray of Trotsky against Leninism under the guise of “historicism”.
The Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission, assessing Trotskyism in its general form, wrote: "The sum total of Trotsky's statements against the party can now be characterized as an attempt to transform the ideology of the RCP into some kind of 'modernized' 'Bolshevism'—a 'Bolshevism' without Leninism—as Trotsky himself conceived it. This is not Bolshevism. This is a revision of Bolshevism. This is an attempt to replace Bolshevism with Trotskyism, that is, an attempt to replace Lenin's theory and tactics of the international proletarian revolution with that variety of Menshevism which represented the old Trotskyism and which is now represented by the resurgent 'new' Trotskyism."
The Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission, summing up the results of the discussion on Trotsky's "Lessons of October," strongly emphasized the need to end such anti-Party, anti-Leninist statements by Trotsky, as well as his attempts to force the Party to debate the fundamental questions of Marxism-Leninism, Party policy, and the leadership of the Party and the Central Committee. Trotsky's revision of the past is merely a disguise for substantiating his platform for fighting the Party and changing its leadership. Trotsky needs a revision of Leninism regarding the driving forces of the revolution to justify his non-Bolshevik views on the Party's current policy

toward the peasantry. Trotsky's views on this issue are particularly harmful and dangerous at the present time, when the Party is turning all its organs "towards the countryside," when the Party and Soviet organs are working diligently to strengthen the economic bond between city and countryside, between industry and agriculture, when serious work is underway to involve the peasantry in Soviet construction and to revitalize the activities of the Soviets.
The Plenum of the Central Committee accepted the following proposal from the party organizations: without applying to Trotsky the extreme measure of expulsion from the party and even from the Politburo, the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission gave Trotsky a categorical warning in the sense that belonging to the party requires more than just verbal submission.

party discipline, but a complete, unconditional rejection of any struggle against the ideas of Leninism.
The plenum declared his continued service in the Revolutionary Military Council of the USSR impossible. The plenum acknowledged that the question of Trotsky's future employment would be postponed until the next Party Congress, with the warning that if Trotsky attempted to violate or fail to implement Party decisions again, the Central Committee would be forced to declare Trotsky's continued membership in the Politburo impossible.
The discussion was declared closed.

Chapter 10

IN UKRAINE. 1922-1928

The intensification of the struggle against Trotskyist opposition currents in connection with new manifestations of anti-Leninist opposition on the part of Zinoviev and Kamenev and the so-called Leningrad opposition, the exacerbation of nationalist deviations and parochial groups (the provincial district "atamanshchina") required an improvement and strengthening of the leadership of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine itself, which at this new stage had revealed certain weaknesses. This is precisely how the issue was posed at a meeting of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) with the visiting representatives of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine. Comrade Molotov, Secretary of the Central Committee of the RCP(b), was nominated as a candidate for the post of new General Secretary of the Central Committee of Ukraine. After Molotov's refusal, Comrade Kaganovich, Secretary of the Central Committee of the RCP(b), was nominated. I stated that I agreed to go to Ukraine, but was not sure whether I could handle such a large-scale task. My doubts found no support. In particular, Comrade Stalin proved their inadequacy, and representatives of the Ukrainian Central Committee promised me every support. Thus, the matter was resolved.
I arrived in Kharkov, the capital of Ukraine, for the Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine, which took place on April 5-7, 1925. The Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission of Ukraine elected me to the Politburo and the Organizational Bureau of the Central Committee and General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine.
I spoke at the Central Committee Plenum, including on the issue of Ukrainization, on which there was far from unanimity. I also spoke on general party issues, about work in the villages, independent peasant committees, work among the working masses, and especially about strengthening party organizations and combating opposition movements.

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who continued to undermine the party's policies. My comrades told me that this first speech of mine made a good impression.
In connection with the upcoming XIV All-Russian Party Conference at the end of April, it was necessary to immediately get involved in preparing for the conference.
The 14th All-Union Party Conference (April 1925) was of great historical significance. It convened amidst a significant increase in political activity in the country. The Party faced a number of serious challenges, which were resolved at the conference: measures to further boost agriculture, cooperatives, a single agricultural tax, the metal industry, transportation, revolutionary legality, the Party's organizational tasks, and the tasks arising from the last plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. Most importantly, all these issues were considered, discussed, and resolved in line with the fundamental general line outlined by Lenin: "This third Russian revolution must ultimately lead to the victory of socialism."
During the 14th Party Conference in 1925, the question of building and achieving victory in our country, surrounded by capitalist countries, became acute. Lenin's Central Committee, Stalin, and his comrades—Lenin's disciples—defended and upheld Lenin's teaching on the possibility of building socialism in one country, surrounded by capitalism, while the world communist revolution was slow in its advance. The Party and its Central Committee's slogan—to build socialism in the Soviet Union—captivated the entire Party, the working class, and the millions of working people in both cities and villages.
At the same time, by rejecting the Trotskyist position, the party did not allow the demobilization of the revolutionary internationalist militancy and vigilance of the party and the working class in relation to the dangers from external enemies.
In preparation for the 14th Congress, the party received a clear and precise Leninist direction from the 14th Conference and the decisions of the Plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). In combating the neo-Trotskyists and Zinovievites, who in the period between the 14th Conference and the 14th Congress had retreated to anti-Leninist, Trotskyist positions, the party decisively rejected Trotskyist-Zinovievist positions. The seasoned Leninist party organization of Ukraine was at the forefront of the struggle against them.

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The Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine organized a field trip for members of the Politburo, including my own to Kiev, Donbass, and Yekaterinoslav. Politburo members were instructed not to limit themselves to reports but to take practical measures at the local level to improve and strengthen national and Party discipline in the implementation of the national and Party decisions of the Central Committee and the Soviet government.
The Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine launched a struggle to overcome elements of factionalism not only at the local level, but also in the central organs of Ukraine, including the Central Committee itself and the Council of People's Commissars, where various unprincipled groups were operating that reflected the "principles" of the opposition.
Following the 14th Party Conference, which declared the country's industrialization to be the key to building socialism, the Party launched a massive effort to complete the restoration of the national economy. This was especially true for Ukraine; Ukrainian industry had emerged from the civil war with greater losses than that of other parts of the USSR. Therefore, the pace of industrial recovery, particularly in heavy industry, in Ukraine had to outpace the Union's overall rate.
At the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, held at the end of July 1925, a report by General Secretary of the Central Committee Kaganovich on the work of the Politburo and the Orgburo of the Central Committee was heard. In this report, issues of economic and political work were self-critically examined: the state of the national economy

(growth of trade turnover, industry, stability of the ruble, etc.), the state of the harvest and the main measures, including grain procurement, the financial situation - the budget, taxes and our measures, etc. The mood of the peasantry and the tasks of our political work in the countryside, the situation of workers, wage increases, housing construction, unemployment, improvement of the work of trade unions, etc. were discussed. In the same report, issues of the state of the party were raised and highlighted. They discussed such ugly phenomena as the "Dymovshchina" and "Khersonshchina," which revealed, on the one hand, kulak aggression and the murder of Soviet workers, and, on the other, elements of decay in some Soviet and party organizations and their inability to combat the kulaks. Issues of the ongoing factional opposition work of old and newly revived opposition groups were discussed.

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and strengthening a deeper, ideological, principled and organizational struggle against them; issues of improving the leadership of party organizations by the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine and district committees, about Ukrainization and the fight against nationalism, great-power localism.

The report was actively discussed at the Plenum. Along with members of the Politburo of the Ukrainian Central Committee—Petrovsky, Chubar, Zatonsky, and others—local officials—Postyshev, Kirkizh, Medvedev, and lower-level workers—spoke, offering criticism and making practical proposals. Following the discussion, the Plenum of the Central Committee adopted a detailed resolution to that effect.

The issue of committees of poor peasants was discussed separately, on which members of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine also spoke, including myself, who had to speak separately due to the special, specific importance of this issue for Ukraine.

Before my departure for Ukraine, Stalin spoke to me about the upcoming difficulties in my work and offered his advice. In particular, he half-jokingly mentioned that the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine had 14 opinions. To my puzzled remark—how could this be? The Politburo only has seven members, so how could there be 14 opinions?—Stalin replied: "First, one Politburo member disagrees with another, resulting in seven opinions. Then each Politburo member disagrees with himself, resulting in another seven opinions, for a total of 14 opinions. You must overcome this through your unwavering adherence to principle and your energetic work ethic, which the aforementioned members of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine are not particularly distinguished for."

It must be said that the capital's - then Kharkov - organization, where comrade Kirkizh was the secretary of the provincial committee, and the Kiev organization, where comrade Postyshev was the secretary of the provincial committee, provided invaluable assistance to the leadership of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine in uniting the party organization of Ukraine, in strengthening the state organs of Soviet power and in eliminating local factionalism (atamanism).

The 9th Congress of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine was of great significance for the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine. I believe this congress played a major historical role in elevating the Communist Party of Ukraine to a new, higher level. At this congress, in addition to issues of economic development, trade unions, the Komsomol, and organizational and party development, two general reports were at the center of the congress's work:

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1) a report by Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin, a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the RCP(b), on the activities of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party and

2) report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine - report of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine Lazar Moiseevich Kaganovich.
These two reports were essentially unanimous in their Leninist approach to the issues; the report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine complemented that of the Central Committee of the RCP (Bolsheviks). This is evident in the unified decision adopted on the reports of the Central Committee of the RCP (Bolsheviks) and the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine.
Of course, in the section on the party and internal party issues, both Kalinin and Kaganovich polemicized and ideologically defeated the oppositionists—Trotskyists and others—who expressed not only the views of the Trotskyists and the Workers' Opposition, but also a conciliatory attitude toward the new "Leningrad" opposition.
The 9th Congress of the Communist Party of Ukraine fully endorsed the political and organizational line of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) and the Central Committee of the Communist Party(b) of Ukraine. The 9th Congress resolutely condemned the opposition's attacks on the executor of the Leninist line—the Central Committee of our party. The Congress elected a new Central Committee, which included many new comrades, including outstanding Bolshevik workers and many Ukrainians, including, incidentally, Shumsky and Grinko, who, despite this, continued to slander that Ukrainians were not being nominated. The plenum elected a Politburo consisting of: Kaganovich (General Secretary of the Central Committee), Petrovsky (Chairman of the All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee), Chubar (Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars), Rukhimovich, Radchenko, Klemenko, Zatonsky, Skrypnik, and Kirkizh.
The Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine reviewed and adopted practical decisions on the implementation of the resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and measures to accelerate the full restoration of under-recovered enterprises, the reconstruction of some enterprises, and the further industrialization of Ukraine. This concerned all sectors of industry, including light industry, which, although it had already reached pre-war levels by 1925, demand for its products, especially in rural areas, grew faster and was not met. However, the main attention and efforts during this period were directed toward heavy industry, primarily coal, metallurgy, machine building, and, of course, power plants. The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Union Government increased capital investment in Ukraine's heavy industry, which had suffered the most during two wars—the imperialist and civil—and had still not reached pre-war levels. We particularly relied on savings from industry itself.

Ukraine and through the firm and strict implementation of the "austerity regime." As a result of the "austerity regime," the reduction of administrative and management costs, increased labor productivity, and the rationalization of production, significant savings were achieved. As I recall, over 100 million rubles were accumulated in 1926, a significant sum at the time. Efforts were intensified to secure loans and deposits from the population in savings banks, which generated tens of millions of rubles annually. Thus, the combination of appropriations from the Union budget with savings in Ukraine itself made it possible to increase capital investment in Ukraine's heavy industry, as well as in light industry, year after year. In 1928, compared to 1926, capital investments more than doubled; in 1926-1927, construction of about 400 enterprises was already underway; in 1926, the reconstruction of a number of open-hearth and blast furnaces began, the construction of new and the reconstruction of old mines in our glorious Donbass began; the first stage of the Shterovskaya power plant was completed; in 1926, the reconstruction of the Kharkov and Lugansk locomotive factories began, etc.
All this work on industry was connected with work on agriculture, the elimination of commodity shortages and other economic difficulties.

We were constantly forced to combine our energy and efforts in economic socialist construction with improving party work, particularly in the selection and training of cadres, organizing the masses, organizing new Soviet elections, and strengthening trade unions. At the same time, we had to combat the united opposition of all stripes that continued to attack the party, primarily the united bloc of Trotskyists and the "new" Leningrad opposition of Zinoviev and Kamenev, who reflected and expressed the savage resistance of capitalist elements—the kulaks, NEPmen, and speculators—to the industrialization and construction of socialism carried out by the party.
This wasn't just an ideological struggle in reports and speeches at meetings, but an organizational one. It's well known that, particularly in Ukraine, the opposition had developed a vast network of opposition factional centers, so the struggle was intense and difficult, especially since the opposition demagogically exploited our difficulties to undermine party policy and sow panic and petty-bourgeois sentiments, even within the party ranks.

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In July 1926, a Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) was convened to discuss the international situation, grain procurements, re-elections to the Soviets, housing construction, and a report from the Central Control Commission on the continued factional anti-Party activities of the opposition, particularly Zinoviev and Lashevich. The Central Committee resolved to remove Zinoviev from his position as a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee and to exclude Lashevich from the list of candidate members of the Central Committee. Incidentally, at this Plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), several new young comrades were inducted as candidate members of the Politburo, including L.M. Kaganovich and A.I. Mikoyan.
In Ukraine, alongside the fight against the general party opposition, we fought against nationalist uprisings against the Leninist national policy of the party and Soviet power by bourgeois nationalists of various Ukrainian nationalities—Russian, Ukrainian, Jewish, Polish, and German. This struggle was waged primarily through political means, by uncovering their conspiracies. We simultaneously waged an ideological and party-based struggle against groups that, to a greater or lesser extent, reflected and expressed the ideas of these bourgeois nationalists and, within the party, supported the Trotskyist opposition bloc.
In the fight against nationalists, the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine consistently and persistently, systematically carried out extensive work to develop and strengthen Ukrainian statehood, Ukrainian culture, science, art, and the Ukrainization of the state apparatus and public organizations of Ukraine.
We overcame the resistance to Ukrainization from great-power nationalist elements who opposed it. On the other hand, we had to fight against Ukrainian nationalist elements who demanded forced Ukrainization through the use of administrative and violent measures, including the Ukrainization of the proletariat, which, as Comrade Stalin rightly wrote in a letter to the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, "cannot be Ukrainized from above... it is a long, spontaneous, natural process." To attempt, Comrade Stalin wrote, to replace this spontaneous process with the forced Ukrainization of the proletariat from above would be to pursue a utopian and harmful policy.
This famous letter of Stalin, written on April 26, 1926 to “Comrade Kaganovich and other members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine,” played a major and important role in the practical implementation of the party’s national policy, in eliminating its own shortcomings and overcoming

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resistance to Lenin's national policy in Ukraine on the part of national deviationists.

The fight against Ukrainian nationalist deviations in the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine intensified as a result of Shumsky, who held the post of People's Commissar of Education of Ukraine and a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, becoming the leader of the nationalist deviationists within the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine. Instead of correcting his erroneous views, as outlined in Comrade Stalin's letter, he openly supported the ardent nationalist writer Khvilyov, who advanced the slogan of "the immediate de-Russification of the proletariat": "Ukrainian poetry must flee Russian literature and its style as quickly as possible," "we know the ideas of the proletariat even without Moscow art," and so on and so forth.

During the struggle against Khvylyov's views and the rallying of the best talents among writers and intellectuals, especially young ones (it was during this period that talented Ukrainian writers such as Korneichuk, Usenko, Pavlo Tychyna, Mykola Bazhan, Petro Panch, and others emerged), it became apparent that among some of the former Borotbists and other former social-nationalist parties, led by Shumsky, a dangerous group of nationalist deviationists had formed. The Bolshevik Party of Ukraine, led by its Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, waged a decisive struggle against this group. This struggle was waged patiently, with efforts to ideologically persuade and re-educate the best of these nationalist deviationists in an internationalist spirit.

At the same time, a struggle was waged against other national deviationists among former Bundists and Zionists, including Jewish communists and former PPS members, Polish communists, and others, not to mention the struggle against great-power, Great-Russian nationalism bequeathed by Lenin. This issue was repeatedly discussed at Politburo meetings and plenary sessions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, where national deviationist anti-Party views were exposed. At a Politburo meeting in the first half of May, in my speech, I emphasized the specific difficulties facing Ukraine in implementing Lenin's national policy, focusing on the following issues: 1) strengthening Ukrainian statehood as an integral part of the USSR, primarily the transfer of state and Party work to the Ukrainian language; 2) developing Ukrainian cultural development; 3) maintaining the Party's leadership of the Ukrainization process and involving the entire Party and the working class in active participation in this important process.

In the closing remarks, based on the issues raised in the debate, the following problems were raised: the communists' mastery of the dynamics of the social process of growth of Ukrainian culture; the Ukrainization of trade unions and a cautious approach to the Ukrainization of Russian workers and the natural course of saturation of industry with Ukrainian workers; deviations in the national question and, in particular, Khvylev; the promotion of new fresh cadres of Ukrainian workers and the "former" ones; the role of the leading bodies of the party and the Soviets in the struggle for the correct implementation of Ukrainization.

At the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine in June 1926, the question of "The Results of Ukrainization" was raised. Zatonsky delivered the report, and Comrade Kaganovich also spoke in the debate. This was a major, general discussion of the issue. Having thoroughly uncovered the errors of the national deviationists, we still had not lost hope of bringing their best interests to their senses. Considering the complexity of the national question, we sought to resolve it based on its content, on its essence, without resorting to "organizational conclusions." I can emphasize that I personally placed particular emphasis on convincing the deviationists in order to avoid "organizational conclusions." Here, for example, is what I said at the end of my speech at the Plenum: "Let us adopt the resolution truly unanimously, but not formally unanimously, but unanimously on its essence, based on the correctness of the line of the Central Committee of the Party, on the achievements and work that the Central Committee of the Party has carried out to date—this will provide us with an answer to all the discussions that have taken place so far." In this resolution, we clearly speak about the old Bolshevik cadres and the promotion of young ones; in this resolution, we clearly speak about the significance and role of our party and in

relation to Ukrainian statehood. This resolution should give us a real opportunity for practical work; it will help us abandon irresponsible criticism and engage in truly coordinated work in the interests of unity... Let us create an environment for coordinated work, at least for Comrade Shumsky himself... Much here depends on us—on the Central Committee and the Politburo, but much also depends on Comrade Shumsky personally... There is the party line, there is the Central Committee line, and, regardless of pressure from this or that comrade, it has moved, is moving, and will move only toward strengthening our party."

The discussions at the Politburo and especially at the Central Committee Plenum and the decisions taken regarding Ukrainization and national deviationists were of great importance in activating party organizations in pursuing the party's national policy. However, the most rabid national deviationists, led by Khvilyov and Shumsky,

They continued their subversive work, using the literary journal "Chervonyi Shlyakh" (Red Route – editor's note), which the Central Committee issued a special condemnatory resolution. This struggle continued into 1927, bringing the party an ideological victory over the nationalist deviationists. In place of the small group of workers, peasants, and intellectuals who had become disconnected from the growing and advancing Ukrainian masses, the party promoted hundreds and thousands of new young Ukrainian cadres, who linked the party even more closely with the Ukrainian revolutionary people. Naturally, this was the result of the general strengthening of party work among the masses and their support for the line of the Leninist Party.

The Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, without replacing the Council of People's Commissars of Ukraine in the specific management of economic and state bodies, exercised party leadership over all socialist construction. The Politburo considered economic and state matters at its meetings according to a specific plan, weekly, and sometimes more frequently, hearing reports on the political situation in the country and the struggle against class enemies. We thoroughly linked all these issues with the party work of the Central Committee and local organizations, systematically hearing reports from district committees and major district committees, and making decisions guided by the resolutions and instructions of our unified center—the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). We implemented a certain division of labor not only in practical work but also in reports and speeches: while reports and speeches by government and economic officials, along with general Party issues, addressed and raised issues of purely economic and Soviet activity in greater detail, reports and speeches by party workers, along with general Soviet issues and the tasks of socialist construction, specifically clarified and emphasized the issues and tasks of party building. I personally, for example, strongly emphasized the tasks of personnel selection and performance monitoring as the most important means of solving economic problems and mass Party work, particularly the development of socialist competition and improving the material well-being of the masses, linking these tasks with increasing productivity and strengthening conscious discipline—both state and labor.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine paid special attention and efforts to the following issues: the growth of the party through skilled workers and the increased recruitment of workers and Ukrainian Komsomol members into the party, including the poor and farm laborers in the village, which, in turn, was

Associated with improving the work of grassroots party cells. All this party work was carried out in a context of ongoing and intensifying factional underground struggles among the Trotskyist-Zinovievist bloc, the Workers' Opposition, and other dissenters, including nationalists.

It was in this context that the first All-Ukrainian Party Conference was prepared and held. The conference firmly adopted a position of full support for the Central Committee of the All-Union

Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and endorsed all decisions and measures of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine to strengthen party unity and decisively repel opportunist petty-bourgeois dissenters from the party.
We published in advance the main theses of my report, which outlined the practical tasks in detail, highlighted the opposition's main mistakes, and highlighted its fundamental disagreements with the party. The decisions of the first conference of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine played a major role in preparing for the 15th All-Union Party Conference, held from October 26 to November 3, 1926.
On the eve of the 15th All-Union Conference, a Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) was held, at which the theses for consideration at the conference were approved. The Plenum discussed the internal party situation in light of the new uprising and the intensification of factional activity by the Trotskyist-Zinovievist bloc. The Plenum adopted a unanimous decision to remove Trotsky and Kamenev from the Politburo.
The 15th All-Union Party Conference, along with other issues, discussed and resolved the central question of the opposition and the internal party situation.
The conference assessed the Trotskyist-Zinovievist bloc as a social democratic deviation within the party and unanimously adopted the theses proposed by Stalin. Following the conference, the Executive Committee of the Comintern heard Stalin's report and fully endorsed the decision of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) conference.
In 1927, the party's work unfolded in a favorable environment of improved economic conditions, increased political activity among the masses, and a shift from the feverish debate within the party to a more stable and businesslike mood. True, in 1927, the imperialists of England and its allies again attempted to exacerbate the Soviet Union's international position (a provocative raid on the Arcos joint-stock company, the murder of Voikov, the organization of terrorist acts within our country, etc.). This inevitably created new difficulties.

Especially in connection with the Trotskyists' intra-party struggle, but by 1927 our homeland was already strong enough to resolutely repel enemy provocations and prevent them from disrupting our socialist construction. From February 26 to March 3, 1927, the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine was held, where the Politburo report, delivered by General Secretary of the Central Committee Kaganovich, was heard and discussed. This report and the Plenum's resolution addressed and resolved questions about Ukraine's economic situation. Furthermore, issues of national policy in Ukraine were reported and discussed in detail: the Politburo meeting, which summarized the results of Ukrainization and work among ethnic minorities, in response to the sharp anti-Party statements by national deviationists led by Shumsky. The Politburo met several times and specifically addressed their grievances, their anti-Party nationalist attitudes, expressed most clearly and poignantly in Khvylevyi's slogan, "Get out of Moscow"—that is, away, down with it, decisively, completely, far, very far from Moscow. We patiently and persistently repeatedly attempted to explain this to the misguided and expose the known nationalists with party cards, while simultaneously uncovering, rejecting, and debunking anti-Ukrainian, great-power statements.
In August, a Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) was held, which was of enormous historical significance. The Plenum examined the international situation, economic directives for 1927-1928, and further violations of party discipline by Zinoviev and Trotsky. The resolution on this issue once again demonstrates the patience the Central Committee and Central Control Commission showed toward these active factionalists, deciding once again to "remove from discussion the question of expelling Zinoviev and Trotsky from the Central Committee of the Party and to issue them a severe reprimand

with a warning." We had to explain to party members who criticized the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) for its leniency. We explained that the Central Committee was doing this primarily in the interests of Party unity and to convince wavering members that the Central Committee was striving for Leninist unity of the Party and the unification of its best people on the basis of Leninism. But the hopes of the party and its Central Committee and the attempts to save the majority of the opposition from the slide into anti-Soviet counterrevolution did not yield results: although some were saved, the cadre opposition members broke all their promises, which they falsely gave to the party, they went so far that, having seen the full

Having failed to demonstrate their anti-Leninist "ideas" in the debate, they resorted to open anti-Soviet action, staging their own, separate from the general proletarian, oppositional, anti-Soviet demonstration in Moscow on the day of the Great Anniversary of the October Revolution, November 7, 1927. They, of course, failed, revealing their anti-Soviet nature to the entire proletariat.

They didn't hold a demonstration in Ukraine, but they did try to speak at meetings dedicated to the anniversary of the October Revolution. At the ceremonial meeting of Soviet and party organizations, Rakovsky, former chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of Ukraine and one of the Trotskyist leaders who suffered a complete defeat in Kharkov, spoke on my report "On the Tenth Anniversary of the October Revolution."

By the 10th Congress, the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the organs of Soviet power and public organizations it led had achieved significant achievements in industry, agriculture, and the entire Ukrainian economy. The year 1927 was remarkable in that the Party and Soviet government no longer limited themselves to restoring former enterprises but instead moved on to reconstructing old ones, primarily metallurgical and machine-building plants, and to constructing new ones on a superior, new technical basis. Construction of power plants in Kharkiv, the second stage of the Shterovska, Krivoy Rog, and Kiev power plants, as well as a number of smaller regional and municipal power plants, was particularly intense. Most importantly, in 1927, a long-held dream and plans were realized—construction began on the Dnieper Hydroelectric Power Station, the first powerful hydroelectric power station designed to supply Dnepropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Krivoy Rog, and part of the Donbas with electricity. The construction was under the special daily supervision of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine. I was there frequently, beginning with the inspection and determination of the construction site and the laying of the first stone of this great structure on the anniversary of the October Revolution in 1927. I often reported on the progress of the Dnieper Hydroelectric Station construction to the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and personally to Comrade Stalin.

All these issues were reported in detail to the 10th Congress in the report of the Central Committee of the Party, which I had the honor, as General Secretary of the Central Committee, to deliver to the 10th Congress in the Ukrainian language, which, in particular, acquired political significance and repercussions. This was an important historical congress of the Party, summing up

the results of the persistent work of the entire party from bottom to top and of all the workers, peasants and toilers of the freely developing sovereign Soviet socialist state - the Ukrainian Union Republic, part of the Great Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. |

I recently read the book "Ural-Kuzbass," in which the author, Matushkin, accuses me of being an opponent of Ural-Kuzbass. There's no evidence, not a single fact—it's all made up. He cites my speech at the 15th Party Congress and, without quoting anything from it, claims that Kaganovich

delivered a "justification" for developing only one coal and metallurgy base—in Ukraine. This is an absolute lie. Here's what I said at the 15th Congress: "Delaying the war was the most important achievement of our Party and the Central Committee in recent times. The test imposed on the Central Committee's policy by the military threat facing us fully confirmed the viability and correctness of our policy and tactics. If we take objective facts from the economic development of our country, from the data and figures cited on the general material situation of the masses, we must say again: here, too, we passed the test with honor. The last two years, compared to all the previous ones, have been years of the most normal, the healthiest development of our economy, without severe shocks and crises.

I think that in our further economic development we must concentrate our main state capital on the truly commanding heights, on our gigantic factories, on metallurgy, on mechanical engineering, for they are the main basis of our industrialization.

Comrades, please don't think I'm speaking here as a regionalist defending Ukraine's heavy industry. I'm defending our Party's line on advancing the development of heavy industry and mechanical engineering in all regions of our USSR. But when building new factories, we must consider the sources of raw materials and fuel, as well as the regions where industry has its base. In our work to industrialize the country, we must continue to focus primarily on metals, mechanical engineering, fuel, steel, cast iron, and rolled products. Without rolled rails, for example, we won't have railways, and we won't even be able to attend congresses.

This fully expressed the line and practical, concrete demands of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), which the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine carried out in its leadership of Yugostal, which united both metallurgical and coke plants.

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Attaching great importance to Ukrainian metallurgy, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) adopted in 1929 a special, detailed, large resolution, “On the work of Yugostal,” which stated: “Currently smelting 2/3 of the cast iron in the USSR, Yugostal is one of the main bases for the industrialization of the country.”

The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) simultaneously supervised the work and made decisions regarding the development of the Urals. In 1930, it adopted a detailed resolution, "On the Work of Uralmet," which provided detailed instructions on the development plan for the Urals, including the provision of raw materials, fuel, transportation, energy, and so on. Particular attention was paid to the construction of the Magnitogorsk plant and Kuzbass as a completely new region. The Ural-Kuzbass region occupied a crucial place in all the practical work of the Politburo, the Orgburo, and the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). Stalin, Molotov, Kaganovich, Ordzhonikidze, Kuibyshev, and others were particularly involved, visiting the site and assisting construction and production workers in fulfilling their plans. Molotov and Kaganovich traveled to the Urals and Siberia-Kuzbass more often than others (Matushkin excluded them from his list of comrades who traveled there. It's perfectly clear that this, like his entire fabrication about Kaganovich's relationship with the Urals-Kuzbass, was necessary for the author, who published his book in 1966, to diligently pander to the "conjuncture" that had developed around Kaganovich and Molotov after the events of June 1957).

The party leadership of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine, both then and subsequently, diligently, assiduously, and actively fulfilled the line of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) on the restoration and development of heavy industry in Ukraine. Never did this task conflict with the Ural-Kuzbass and the development of the coal and metallurgical base in all regions of our USSR. Even after Ukraine, I personally, as Secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), not only defended the Ural-Kuzbass but also assisted it in every way possible in construction, production, cultural

development, and the development of industrial centers and cities, primarily Magnitogorsk and Kuznetsk.
I must also note here that there are many such fabrications among other authors who published their brochures after 1957, this is especially noticeable among some who wrote "dissertations" claiming to be "candidates" or "doctors" of science, who tried with all their might to distort the work of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine in 1925-1928, when Kaganovich was the General Secretary of the Central Committee. I, for example,

I read the abstract of F.E. Sherstok's dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Historical Sciences, published in 1968, on the topic "Party Construction in Ukraine in 1926-1929," in which the author maliciously distorts reality and especially the role of Kaganovich.
The Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine and Kaganovich personally, both then and now, self-critically exposed the mistakes and shortcomings in party building, but the Trotskyist and nationalist opposition, then and now, hiding behind “orthodoxy,” so to speak, “critics,” found and find their strength in the fact that they make a mountain out of a molehill, exaggerate, distort the facts, bringing them to extreme, exaggerated proportions.
The 15th Party Congress occupied a large and important place in the history of the country's industrialization, the expansion of the commanding heights of the socialism being built in the city and village, pointed out the backwardness of agriculture, the need to strengthen the fight against the kulaks, and set the party's course for broad, mass collectivization of agriculture.
The 15th Congress laid out a guiding plan for the party's future work and struggle for socialism. The most important condition for moving forward was the complete ideological and organizational defeat of the Trotskyist-Zinovievist bloc, which had descended into a complete rejection of Leninism and anti-Sovietism.
The congress recognized the views of this bloc and their propaganda as incompatible with remaining in the ranks of the party and expelled Trotsky and Zinoviev and their supporters from the party, as well as Sapronov’s group of “Democratic Centralism”.
The Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine and all Ukrainian party organizations took specific measures to implement the decisions of the 15th Congress of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the 10th Congress of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, particularly on preparing for mass collectivization and the continued industrialization of the country; combating the failure of the Ukrainian kulaks to meet the grain procurement plan; and taking measures by the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine and the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR to ensure the fulfillment of the grain procurement plan. Grain procurement commissioners were appointed to take action on the spot. As a result, 30% more grain was procured in January and February than in the same period of 1927, while a quarter, and sometimes even more, of the surplus grain confiscated from the kulaks by court order was distributed to the rural poor.
At the Plenums of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine in March and June 1928, the issue of grain procurement was repeatedly discussed, with reports from the localities and debates on this issue. Along with business and political

The correct formulation of the questions was also reflected in the manifestations of panic and right-wing opportunistic sentiments among some of the comrades who spoke and those who did not.
I had to especially emphasize the inadmissibility of the excesses that had occurred in relation to the middle peasant. "The kulak," I said, "has grown strong; he's ready to grab us by the throat, ready to fight us—he demonstrated this with the grain procurement campaign. We, however, have launched and will continue to launch an offensive against him and demonstrate the power of the dictatorship

of the proletariat by protecting the middle peasant. During the campaign," I said, "many excesses, many outrages, have been uncovered. We must eliminate these excesses and outrages immediately, not limiting ourselves to a general resolution, but by studying the specific case of outrages, taking decisive measures to eliminate them and prevent them from happening again. In all our political and organizational work, we must forge an alliance between the poor and the middle peasants, based on the greater role of the poor and the strengthening of the leading role of the Party and the proletariat."

The new "right deviation" that had emerged, especially during the July Plenum of the Central Committee, showed no activity in the Party's struggle on the grain procurement front; on the contrary, it actually hindered grain procurement. At the same time, the "rightists"—Rykov and Bukharin—spoke out in the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) against expanding capital investment in metallurgy and mechanical engineering, against the course toward accelerated industrialization, and especially against the collectivization of agriculture. It cannot be said that during this first period of the "right deviation"'s development, all members of the Central Committee were clear-headed. We—active supporters of the Leninist course of the Party and the Central Committee—had to explain it even to some members of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) from Ukraine.

The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)'s accurate assessment of the intensifying class struggle in the country was confirmed not only on the grain procurement front, in the countryside, where kulaks, along with saboteurs—Petliura, Denikin, and the Socialist Revolutionaries—organized terrorist attacks and assassinations of communists and representatives of the Soviet government, but also in the cities, where NEPmen and some old bourgeois specialists, with the assistance of foreign intelligence services, organized sabotage in industry. The so-called "Industrial Party," uncovered by the GPU in the mining industry of the North Caucasus and Ukraine in May 1928, caused particular damage to industry. The saboteurs were brought to trial in the Soviet courts in the "Shakhty Affair."

At the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine on March 12-16, 1928,

The issue of “Economic counterrevolution and general political tasks of party organizations” was considered, and a decision was made on this issue.

In addition, we conducted an investigation of Donugol and discussed it at the Politburo. Significant decisions were made, particularly regarding changes to the structure of its apparatus to combat bureaucracy. An All-Ukrainian Miners' Production Conference was convened, where issues arising from the Party's decisions regarding the "Shakhty Affair" were self-critically discussed.

The opening of the 7th All-Ukrainian Congress of the Leninist Young Communist League (LKSM) took place at this time. The report of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, among many other issues, also highlighted the conclusions of the "Shakhty Affair" and outlined the tasks of youth "on the socialist construction project."

In April and June, at the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, and then at the Plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), the question of the "Shakhty Affair" and the practical tasks in combating the shortcomings of economic development were discussed. At the July Plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), the question of "The Training of New Specialists" was discussed as a consequence of the "Shakhty Affair." On both of these issues, the Plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) adopted crucial resolutions that were of paramount importance for all subsequent work by the Party to successfully build socialism and overcome the resistance of elements hostile to socialism and the wavering within the Party, which later took the form of a clear, open "right deviation."

At these Plenums of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), disagreements and the beginning of a "right-wing" struggle against the line pursued by the Central Committee under Stalin were already openly evident. The danger of a "right-wing deviation" became especially acute for the Moscow organization when the First Secretary of the Moscow Committee, Uglanov, and the "right-wingers" hoped to repeat the experience of the "Leningrad Opposition" and pit the Moscow organization against the Leninist Central Committee, which had taken measures to prevent this.
It was at this time that I returned to Moscow as Secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). In a conversation with me, Comrade Stalin said: "The need for your return to the Central Committee has become urgent. We face new organizational challenges, especially in the area of training and distributing personnel; the intensification of the political struggle in the countryside in connection with the resistance of the kulaks to grain procurements; the major tasks of collectivization require improvement."

"Work in the village. You now have new experience working in Ukraine, and your old Moscow experience will now be very useful in the fight against the right-wingers who have raised their heads, especially in Moscow, led by Uglanov—so go ahead, return to Moscow without resistance or reservations. The party organization in Ukraine is more stable—we'll send Comrade Kosior S. there." I, of course, agreed.

Chapter 11

AT WORK IN THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE CPSU(b)

The First Five-Year Plan and the Fight Against Right-Wing Deviation

The period from 1928 to 1934 (inclusive) was a period of heroic labor by millions of workers, peasants, and other toilers, including the Soviet intelligentsia, who, under the leadership of the Leninist Party and its Central Committee, ensured the fulfillment of the first Great Five-Year Plan for the socialist reconstruction of the Soviet Union. Expanded, powerful socialist competition and shock labor led to the fulfillment of the Five-Year Plan ahead of schedule—in four years. This was a great victory for the entire policy of the Party and its Central Committee, as a result of which a solid foundation for socialism was laid in industry and agriculture. It was during this period that the most difficult historical task of transferring millions of peasant households to the path of socialist collectivization and the beginning of the development of large-scale mechanized agriculture was accomplished.
During this period, I performed the following duties:
- Secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) (1924-1925; 1928-1939);
- First Secretary of the Moscow Party Committee (1930-1935);
- Chairman of the Party Control Commission under the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) (1934-1935);
- Chairman of the Commission for Verification of Party Ranks;
- Head of the Agricultural Department of the Central Committee (since 1933);
- Chairman of the Standing Commission of the Central Committee on Transport (since 1932);
- Head of the Transport Department of the Central Committee (in 1934);
- member of the Presidium of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions (1929-1933), in whose work

I had the opportunity to take a leading part, especially in connection with the struggle of right-wing deviators against the line of the Central Committee;
- Director of the Institute of Soviet Construction of the Communist Academy.
In all my work, I applied all my efforts to the practical implementation of the line and policy of the party and its Central Committee, and I fought selflessly, ideologically, politically and theoretically, against all the enemies and opponents of Marxism-Leninism, against the Trotskyists and right-wing deviationists, for the only true and Leninist-consistent line of the Central Committee and its Politburo, in which I was a candidate since 1926 and a member of the Politburo from 1930 to 1957.
I must especially emphasize that my experience working in Ukraine helped me fulfill the new responsibilities assigned to me in 1928—it was a profound training in working on a national scale. The entire practice of building the Soviet state of Ukraine—the Ukrainian Soviet Republic—overturned and refuted the slander of the White nationalist émigrés that Ukraine was not a state, but a "region," a "territory of Russia." In this, they aligned themselves with the great-power nationalists. Experience has refuted this enemy's slander: it is not a region, not a territory, but the Ukrainian Union Republic—a sovereign state, part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, with its own constitutional rights and obligations, its own national scale and borders. The Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine is an integral part of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), subordinate to it on the basis of democratic centralism. The Central Committee and Political Bureau of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine operated under the leadership of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and its Politburo. However, both the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine and the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) themselves always proceeded from the premise that, within the framework of the general Leninist line, it was necessary to always take into account the entire range of economic, governmental, cultural, and intra-party specific features of the Ukrainian SSR and the Communist Party (Bolsheviks). Strictly implementing the directives and resolutions of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine conducted its work as the guiding force of the Ukrainian Union Soviet Socialist Republic.
I had a conversation with Comrade Stalin in 1928 in connection with my return to work in the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). Stalin spoke with exceptional breadth, depth, and concreteness about the new scale and nature of the work of the Party and the Central Committee to ensure the fulfillment of the First Five-Year Plan; especially the unfolding

The collective farm movement and overcoming the resistance of the kulaks, Trotskyism, and the emerging "right deviationism." Comrade Stalin repeatedly emphasized that the Central Committee's line was now particularly clear and would be firmly implemented, despite the resistance of opponents. The most important things were personnel and monitoring of execution. At a meeting of the Central Committee's Orgburo, Stalin proposed that, as Secretary of the Central Committee, I be entrusted with oversight and day-to-day management of organizational and party work, the selection, registration, and training of personnel, as well as chairmanship of the Central Committee Secretariat and, from 1930, in connection with Molotov's transfer to the Council of People's Commissars, chairmanship of the Central Committee Orgburo. It should be noted that after Comrade Molotov's transfer to the Council of People's Commissars, my responsibilities in preparing issues and drafting decisions for the Orgburo and the Politburo by the Central Committee Secretariat expanded.
Naturally, all matters pertaining to the responsibilities of any given Central Committee Secretary, including mine, were decided collectively, not individually. The Central Committee Secretariat met

frequently—two or three times a week—to consider all specific proposals submitted by Central Committee Secretaries, department heads, local organizations, Central Committee members, and others. In addition to official meetings, there were almost daily conferences with Comrade Stalin, at which the most important, urgent, and contentious unresolved issues were considered and discussed. The Orgburo met once a week, sometimes more frequently, especially if people arrived from the field. Under the leadership of the Politburo, when discussing major organizational and political issues, the Orgburo often instructed Central Committee Secretaries and Orgburo members, regardless of the distribution of responsibilities, to develop or refine a particular issue or to travel to the field to verify and assist. Until 1930, I worked exclusively for the Central Committee Secretariat, but from that time on, I was given additional workloads part-time, beginning with my tenure as First Secretary of the Moscow Party Committee. I was forced to engage in the struggle for the party line against the "right-wing deviationists," who were particularly rampant in the Moscow organization at the time, from the very first days of my return from Ukraine to Moscow (1928).
In the Moscow organization, more than in any other, the offensive of the "right" against the party line and its Central Committee was felt. Although at that time it did not yet take the form of an open attack, the speeches of the first secretary of the Moscow Committee, Uglanov, and other members of the Moscow Committee Bureau effectively criticized the party's policies. At that time, we, fighters for the Leninist policy of the Central Committee, who already had extensive experience in fighting the Menshevik-Trotskyist

Anti-Leninists had to expose and reveal the essence and danger of the "right deviation" without naming its leaders (the Central Committee still hoped to overcome disagreements and patiently restrained open debate). In the first period, for example, in speeches about our reports, there were no direct, open objections, but the Central Committee's policies were effectively undermined by various hints and comments, resorting to a system of "little questions," both written and oral. Naturally, we answered these questions, exposing those that had a "right deviationist" nature.
Counterrevolutionary classes hostile to socialism and the proletariat, particularly the kulaks in the countryside and the new speculative merchant class in the city, responded to the advance of socialism with a renewed intensification of the class struggle against the Soviet state, which found its most acute expression in the disruption of grain procurements and bandit-terrorist acts against the rural peasant poor and their activists. "Right-deviating" spokesmen for the kulaks' interests within the party itself intensified the internal struggle against the party's policies and those of its Leninist Central Committee and openly presented their platform, opposing the five-year plan with their opportunistic two-year plan, aimed at socialist industrialization. The "rightists," led by Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky, organized their own faction and waged a factional struggle against the Central Committee. It was during this period that the "right" allied itself with the Trotskyist anti-Leninist forces to wage a joint struggle against the party and its Central Committee.
Since Trotskyists of all stripes had by this time been thoroughly battered and ideologically bankrupt, the Party, the Central Committee, and the Central Control Commission declared the "right deviation" to be the main danger and at that moment concentrated their efforts on combating it. All stages of this struggle are known from the history of the Party. The Central Committee of the Party, its Politburo, Orgburo, Secretariat, and Presidium of the Central Control Commission had to wage this enormous ideological struggle against the right-wing Trotskyist bloc, while simultaneously engaging in the practical work of drafting and implementing the first five-year plan and directing all the organizational and political work of the Party and the Soviet state. For example, one cannot compare the progress of drafting national economic plans in the current period with the progress of drafting the first five-year plan of that distant period. If at the present moment in Gosplan and in the ministries

While our Soviet, communist specialists, trained in our universities, are working on the plan, previously many specialists of the old school worked in Goslina, the vast majority of whom were far from sympathetic to socialism, and, on the contrary, sympathetic to capitalism. No matter how hard our loyal party planners and that small circle of specialists, communists and those sympathetic to them, tried to implement the party line in their calculations and plans, they were largely unsuccessful, and the work had to be redone, especially since even among the communist planners there were many "right" and "left" elements. The Central Committee and the Central Control Commission-Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate had to organize verification of the calculations and plans, uncovering errors, and sometimes even deliberate distortions and inconsistencies in the plan with the Central Committee's line. Our Central Committee, working on the five-year plan, imbued it with Leninist content.

In 1927, the Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) reviewed and approved the Directives for compiling control figures for 1927-1928.

The 15th Party Congress (1927) adopted the "Directives for Compiling the First Five-Year Plan" based on the implementation of Lenin's plan for building socialism, transforming our country from an agrarian to an industrial one, fully developing heavy industry, and creating the material basis for socialism. The 15th Congress emphasized that the level of agriculture remained extremely low. It was essential to prioritize the gradual transition of dispersed peasant farms to large-scale production (collective cultivation of land based on the intensification and mechanization of agriculture) through further cooperative peasantry, while fully supporting and encouraging the emergence of socialized agricultural labor.

I also remember that Comrade Stalin made a particularly important proposal to the commission drafting the resolution "On Directives for Compiling the Five-Year Plan," and it was recorded in point three: "Considering the possibility of a military attack by capitalist states on the proletarian state, it is necessary, when developing the five-year plan, to devote maximum attention to the most rapid development of those sectors of the national economy in general and industry in particular that play the main role in ensuring the defense and economic stability of the country in wartime. Regarding defense issues in connection with the drafting of the five-year long-term plan, it is necessary

"Not only to attract the attention of planning and economic bodies, but, most importantly, to ensure the tireless attention of the entire Party." This was the fundamental point for all subsequent five-year plans—after all, it was precisely this key factor that ensured the country's economic stability during the difficult wartime of the Great Patriotic War and brought the Soviet people the Great Victory over Nazi Germany.

Of the many points in the Directives of the Fifteenth Congress for the drafting of the First Five-Year Plan, it's crucial to note Comrade Stalin's crucial insertion into the section on tempo, which states: "In the question of the tempo of development, it is equally necessary to bear in mind the extreme complexity of the task. Here, we should proceed not from the maximum rate of accumulation for the next year or several years, but from such a correlation of the elements of the national economy that would ensure the most rapid tempo of development over the long term." The future leaders of the "right" deviationists were clearly dissatisfied with this addition, but they limited themselves to deleting the word "most." Comrade Stalin and we, who supported him, insisted on retaining the word "most," emphasizing the great importance of the question of rapid tempo, which later became the subject of heated debate.

From April 16 to 23, 1929, the Joint Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) met to review the issues of the 16th Party Conference, primarily "On the First Five-Year Plan." The Plenum approved the drafts for the

most part and submitted them for final consideration and decision by the 16th Party Conference. Particularly important and prominent at the Plenum was the consideration of intra-party disagreements and the "right-wing" struggle against the Leninist line of the party and its Central Committee. The Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission approved the resolution of the joint meeting of the Politburo of the Central Committee and the Presidium of the Central Control Commission on intra-party affairs of February 9, 1929, and condemned the factional, anti-party activities of "right-wing" deviators: Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky, and others. The Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission adopted, in addition to the resolution of the Politburo of the Central Committee and the Presidium of the Central Control Commission that it had approved, a special large resolution on internal party issues.
Having exposed Bukharin's attempts to forge a factional bloc with the Trotskyists, Stalin, with profound theoretical insight and a fundamentally political analysis of the facts, uncovered and demonstrated the existence of a right-wing, opportunist, anti-Party line of Bukharin's group, opposed to the revolutionary Leninist line of the Party. Stalin refuted the arguments of some of his comrades.

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Although they did not join Bukharin, Rykov, or Tomsky, they considered the "rightists'" disagreements with the party to be accidental and not so significant. Stalin demonstrated that "the disagreements within our party arose on the basis of those class shifts, on the basis of the intensification of the class struggle that has been occurring recently and which is creating a turning point in development. The main mistake of Bukharin's group is that it does not see these shifts and this turning point; it does not see them and does not want to notice them. This, in fact, explains the misunderstanding of the new tasks of the party and the Comintern, which is a characteristic feature of the "Bukharin Opposition."
The resolution of the Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission establishes that "right deviationists" are capitulating to the difficulties associated with the socialist reconstruction of the national economy and the intensification of the class struggle. Even more dangerous is the covert form of "right deviation," in which, under the guise of official agreement with Party decisions, opportunist elements distort the Party's class line. Therefore, exposing "right deviation" in practical work must be a necessary component of the struggle against opportunism in the Party.
I recall some doubts about the practical necessity of this emphasis on opportunism, but the vast majority, primarily in the Politburo itself and the Secretariat of the Central Committee, considered this instruction absolutely essential, and practice has demonstrated its full significance. I believe it will remain in force for many years to come, as long as opportunism persists.
The Plenum condemned the views of the Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky group and Bukharin's negotiations with Kamenev as a clear expression of factionalism, condemned the policy of resignations, and resolved to remove Bukharin and Tomsky from their posts (in Pravda, the Comintern, and the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions) and warned them that if they attempted to violate the Central Committee's resolutions, they would be removed from the Politburo. This resolution was not published in the press at the time, but by resolution of the Plenum, it was sent to all Party organizations and distributed to the delegates of the 16th Party Conference. I should note that among the members of the Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission, and even the Politburo, regret was expressed that Stalin's speech was not delivered at the 16th Party Conference. In one of the conversations in the Secretariat of the Central Committee, Comrade Stalin said that this was not accidental, but done deliberately, since we are now trying to restrain a broad discussion. "We," said Comrade Stalin,

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"We will instruct Comrade Molotov to deliver an informational report on the recent April Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission and its decisions. In this same report, Comrade Molotov will also discuss my speech."
Comrade Molotov's report at the 16th Conference was of great importance for the delegates and for all Party members. He substantiated the resolution of the Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and spoke in detail about Comrade Stalin's speech at the Plenum, "On the Right Deviation in the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)." Following Molotov's report, the 16th Party Conference adopted a brief resolution: "Having heard Comrade Molotov's informational report on the work of the April joint Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in connection with the departure of Bukharin's group from the General Line of the Party toward the Right Deviation, and having familiarized itself with the relevant decisions of this Plenum, the 16th All-Union Conference of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) fully approves the resolution of the April joint Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission on internal Party affairs, adopted on April 23, 1929."
The Conference calls upon the members of the Party to unite more closely around their Leninist Central Committee and strictly implement its decisions, giving a crushing rebuff to deviations from the Leninist Party line and, above all, to the right deviation and conciliation towards them."
This small-scale decision of the party conference “On Intra-Party Affairs” concluded all its decisions:
- on the five-year plan for the development of the national economy;
- on ways to improve agriculture and taxation of the middle peasant;
- on the results and immediate tasks of the fight against bureaucracy;
- on the purge and verification of members and candidates of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks);
- the conference's address "To all workers and toiling peasants of the Soviet Union."
The resolution "On Intra-Party Affairs" imbued these decisions with a new sense of Bolshevik, Leninist party spirit and uncompromisingness in the struggle against deviations from Leninist theory, political line, and practice, particularly right-wing deviations. The conference thereby emphasized that all its decisions, especially "On the Five-Year Plan," could be successfully implemented only when the Party was united around its Leninist Central Committee and, in a Leninist manner, fought not only direct class enemies but also their willing and unwilling representatives within the Party itself.

Decision of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) on Industrial Development. Trip to Donbass

In its leadership of the mobilization and organization of Party and working-class forces for the successful construction of socialism and the fulfillment of the Five-Year Plan in four years, the Central Committee reached down to the very roots of the masses, to enterprises and their grassroots primary party organizations. The Central Committee selectively reviewed and heard reports from enterprise cells, making decisions aimed at improving the situation and fulfilling their assigned tasks. This, for example, primarily covered those construction sites and enterprises that supported the socialist restructuring of agriculture—giants such as the Stalingrad, Kharkov, and Chelyabinsk Tractor Plants, the Rostov and Saratov Combine Plants, and others. I well remember how the Central Committee repeatedly sent its envoys to these construction sites, deciding on measures to accelerate construction and assist them based on their reports. And after the launch, the Central Committee again focused on developing capacity and organizing communists and the mass of non-party workers to produce the expected products from the collective farm fields. In the Central

Committee's resolution "On the State of Party and Mass Work at the Stalingrad Tractor Plant" (dated September 26, 1930), the Central Committee noted with satisfaction that "the party organization and the construction management, relying on the active participation of the broad masses of workers and key engineering and technical personnel, successfully completed the construction of the USSR's first tractor giant ahead of schedule. The masses of workers and the party organization at the construction site succeeded in forging genuine construction enthusiasts from among themselves (by conducting a 40-day assembly period and redeploying shock brigades to assist other construction projects: Chelyabstroy, Magnitstroy, Kuznetskstroy, and others)." While highlighting these high qualities of the entire Stalingrad team, the Central Committee simultaneously reproached the management, party, and trade union organizations for failing to channel the enthusiasm of the masses demonstrated during the construction period toward solving the new challenges of tractor production. The economic management and the VATO failed to prepare the workforce and were inattentive to the organization of experimental tractor production and the timely delivery of equipment and tools.

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etc. Party and trade union organizations failed to restructure themselves and failed to raise the initiative of engineering and technical workers to better utilize all the potential for mass tractor production. Likewise, the Lower Volga Regional Party Committee and the District Party Committee failed to pay due attention to management issues. The result was the disruption of the production program for the fourth quarter of 1929-1930 and the demobilization of the working masses. The Central Committee noted the weaknesses in party and mass work at the plant, particularly among American workers, and the insufficient attention to catering to their cultural needs not only on the part of local organizations but also regional and central ones (the Central Committee of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Moldova and the All-Russian Military-Turkish Army), which was clearly and dramatically demonstrated by the beating of a black man by Americans. The Central Committee demanded that the plant and regional bodies eliminate the current year's breakthrough and mobilize the entire mass of workers, engineering and technical personnel, to successfully expand production and fulfill the 1930-1931 plan. The Central Committee ordered the Lower Volga Regional Committee to intensify and expand political and cultural work, recruiting a group of skilled workers to strengthen all units of the plant. The plant's party, trade union, and Komsomol organizations were to shift the focus of all work to the shop floor and develop new forms of mass work, such as a counter-industrial and financial plan, cross-functional teams, and so on. All party and Komsomol members were to become genuine leaders in mastering new American technology and to widely engage in proletarian self-criticism throughout the work of the plant's organizations. The Central Committee demands that party and trade union organizations take effective and decisive measures to improve workers' welfare, public catering, and the work of the cooperatives; they also pay particular attention to strengthening and accelerating the pace of housing and cultural and community service construction. Due to the emergence of backward sentiments among certain groups of workers and engineering and technical personnel against the use of American specialists and the application of American methods of organizing technical processes, the Central Committee proposed conducting extensive educational work among the plant's workers regarding the role of Americans at the plant. Among the American workers themselves, cultural and educational work had to be brought to the required level, a recreational area, a cinema, literature supplies, etc. had to be organized, with special attention paid to international education. Organize work among them to explain

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five-year plan, the Soviet Constitution and other issues of socialist construction, to organize work to involve American workers in socialist forms of labor, the work of production conferences, socialist competition and shock work.
Subsequent experience has shown that the implementation of these Central Committee directives yielded positive results. In its resolution, the Central Committee particularly emphasized the completely unsatisfactory state and work of the Komsomol at the plant, which was all the more intolerable given that young people constituted half the workforce. The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) ordered the Komsomol Central Committee and local party organizations to take urgent, energetic measures to strengthen the Komsomol organization, revitalize and improve its work, and ensure that the Komsomol becomes a true champion of the production program. To achieve this, it is necessary to expand mass outreach, tailoring it to specific segments of the youth population, in particular by establishing services for nationalist youth. Of course, much has changed in the 50 years since this Central Committee resolution was adopted, but there are many aspects of this resolution that can and should be taken into account today. This resolution and others that followed at other plants ensured the successful development of the constructed tractor, combine and other agricultural machinery plants and the saturation of collective farm fields with them.
The Central Committee paid particular attention to the Kuznetsk Basin coal industry, without which the development of the Ural and Siberian metallurgy and, consequently, the resolution of the entire problem of the Ural-Kuznetsk Combine were impossible. Resolutions on the Kuznetsk Basin coal industry were developed and adopted within the Central Committee. The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) replenished the Kuznetsk Basin coal region with personnel, making extensive use of the old, experienced cadres from our glorious Donets Basin. Representatives of the Central Committee, the Central Control Commission, and the Council of People's Commissars visited the Kuznetsk Basin over a number of years. Politburo members Molotov, Kaganovich, Ordzhonikidze, Kuibyshev, and others made repeated trips to the Kuznetsk Basin. This particularly infuriated the saboteurs, who, as trials revealed, disrupted the development of the Kuznetsk Basin and the construction and operation of coal mines. But the efforts of the Party, the Central Committee, and the government overcame all obstacles, because the Central Committee raised this issue to a tremendous historical level before the people and the Party. I remember when we were drafting the Central Committee resolution "On the Situation of the Coal Industry in the Kuznetsk Basin," Comrade Stalin proposed

We need to preface this with a lengthy introduction about the significance of the Kuznetsk Basin, so that the entire Party and people know and understand the great significance of this matter. And the adopted resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) on Vostugol's report contains this profound, I would say, brilliant introduction.
It would be a mistake, however, to perceive the increased attention of the Central Committee and the government to the Kuznetsk Basin as a weakening of attention to the Donets Basin, which at that time remained the main base for fuel supply for our developing industry.
In 1933, coal production in the Donbass once again faltered: production plans were not met, and in the first quarter of 1933, production fell below the first quarter of 1932, despite the Donbass's growing technical capabilities and improved worker supplies. The Party Central Committee once again sounded the alarm and demanded an explanation and measures from the Supreme Council of the National Economy to improve the situation in the Donbass. The report and draft resolution submitted did not adequately address these pressing concerns. Comrade Stalin proposed conducting a more in-depth study of the situation on the ground, then summoning Donbass coal industry workers, including both low-level workers and shock workers, to consult with them, and then develop a draft resolution and specific measures. Stalin's proposal was accepted.

A group of senior officials from the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), the Supreme Council of the National Economy, the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, and the Central Committee of the Miners' Union was sent to Donbass. At Stalin's suggestion, Comrade L.M. Kaganovich, Secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), headed this team. We carried out extensive work in Donbass, naturally, in conjunction with the Donetsk Regional and District Party Committees, the Donetsk Regional Council of Trade Unions, and the Miners' Union. A number of mines, including all their nooks and crannies, and dormitories, were inspected. Not only official meetings and activist gatherings were held, but also discussions with miners, engineers, and technical personnel—not only with the leading shock workers, but also with those lagging behind and even retarded. Naturally, we obtained valuable and important material for drawing conclusions and making proposals.

The main conclusion was that the Donbas had grown, become significantly mechanized, and working conditions in the mines had changed; the work had become more complex, and the workers in the mines had become more skilled. These conditions required more qualified management in the mine itself, in the longwalls, and at the face, but this management had fallen behind. Meanwhile, the mine's needs had changed—it needed experienced engineers.

and technicians—trusts and mine administrations continued to retain qualified personnel, not releasing them to the mines. Moreover, engineers, technicians, and workers in the mines received lower wages than those in the trusts and mine administrations. In short, trust management of the mines continued in the old-fashioned way, as with manual mining, while the mines had transformed into enterprises with complex mechanisms and, naturally, required more sophisticated management. Our conclusions and practical proposals on most issues were coordinated with the Donetsk Regional Party Committee and, upon arrival in Moscow, were reported to the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). At a meeting of the Central Committee Secretariat, attended by Comrades Stalin, Molotov, and Ordzhonikidze, our work in Donbass was approved and our conclusions were deemed correct. We were instructed to draft a resolution for the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars, which, at Comrade Stalin's suggestion, was decided to be discussed at a meeting of the Central Committee with the participation of grassroots workers in Donbass. Comrades Kaganovich and Ordzhonikidze were tasked with establishing the composition of this meeting.

The convened meeting was one of the first in a series of such Central Committee meetings covering the entire coal industry, and beyond, and was extremely important for the development of not only a general resolution but also a number of specific provisions and measures to improve industrial management, wages, and other major issues. The meeting was more of a conversation between the Central Committee leadership, primarily Stalin, with the direct production workers and leading miners. Incidentally, it is important to note, and even emphasize, that no press reports were ever published on these meetings or discussions between Stalin and Politburo members with workers and engineers, nor on other similar matters, which were conducted as internal preparatory work for the Central Committee's decisions.

Donbas coal industry workers, mostly low-level mine workers and miners, were summoned to the Central Committee. Stalin chaired these meetings, with the participation of Politburo members. No general reports were given. When everyone had gathered, Stalin briefly, one might say in a nutshell, stated that the situation in Donbas was improving extremely slowly, there was no stability, and the Central Committee's decisions were being unsatisfactorily implemented. "So the Central Committee has decided to summon you, listen to you, and consult with you on how we can achieve a sustainable recovery in Donbas. I ask you, whoever is bolder, to be the first to discuss this issue." Of course, these were low-level people, attending such a high-level meeting for the first time.

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They didn't expect to have to begin. On the contrary, they were expecting a report from the centralist, and here, as one of them, Kasaurov, later told me, they were the first to "confess." But the miners are a brave people and responded actively, openly, and forthrightly in their statements. There were debates and refutations of accusations by local workers from the centralists, and conversely, accusations by local workers from the centralists, particularly regarding the competition over bureaucratic management methods and insufficient attention to the opinions and needs of the mines and miners. But, as Comrade Stalin summarized at the end of the meeting, "we all agree that things cannot go on as they are, that a new resolution is required, and perhaps more than one, in which, without beating around the bush, with all the directness and urgency of Bolshevik, Leninist directness, we must tell the truth as it is—about the latest shameful breakdown in the coal industry and the need for radical change and correction of the situation in the Donbas."

The Secretariat of the Central Committee and the Supreme Council of the National Economy, personally Kaganovich, Ordzhonikidze with the participation of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions (Comrade Shvernik), the Miners' Union, the Donetsk Regional Committee and some activists of the Donbass coal industry were instructed to finalize the draft resolution taking into account all the considerations expressed at the meeting.

On April 8, 1933, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR adopted a resolution "On the Work of the Donbass Coal Industry." In this resolution, the Central Committee didn't limit itself to a general analysis and a statement of common shortcomings and errors, but rather provided a specific analysis of their essence and specifically named the most prominent exponent of anti-mechanization and bureaucratic sentiments—Comrade Abakumov, the head of the Stalinugol trust. There were many like Abakumov, but the Central Committee singled him out because he was the most authoritative among them and, it must be said, a respected veteran and highly capable figure in the Donbass coal industry. Many looked up to him, so it was his negative aspects that needed to be addressed.

To Abakumov's credit, he later made a vigorous change, speaking well at the Donetsk coal miners' rally on my report on the Central Committee and Council of People's Commissars' resolution. When his cronies came to the defense of their Yegor Trofimovich, he, in his second speech, with his characteristic humor, told them, "Stop defending 'Abakumovism' here. Abakumov himself is no longer the same." And it must be said that he made the change not in words but in deeds, and I, who had known him for many years as a talented natural who had risen from miner to trust manager, was pleased to not only acknowledge this, but also to see it.

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but also invited him, with the consent of Comrade Stalin, to work on the construction of the Moscow Metro as the first deputy head of construction and the main manager of all underground work, for which he was awarded the Order of Lenin.

Our second trip to Donbass was not limited to reports on the resolution "On the Work of the Donbass Coal Industry" adopted by the Central Committee and Council of People's Commissars on April 8, 1933. Comrade Stalin proposed instructing Comrade Kaganovich and all those traveling with him to organize and implement, on-site, jointly with the Donetsk Regional Committee and with the participation of grassroots workers, further revision of the draft resolutions of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR on the reorganization of mine, quarry, and trust management in Donbass; on the wages of workers and engineering and technical personnel in the Donbass coal industry; and on additional measures to strengthen party, mass, and trade union work.

The Politburo accepted this proposal, and we, together with the Donetsk Regional Party Committee, did a great deal of work to finalize these projects, or rather, to revise them.

On May 21, 1933, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR adopted these two important resolutions.

Chapter 12

AT THE HEAD OF THE MOSCOW COMMUNISTS

Industrialization and Collectivization in the Moscow Region: The Struggle Against the "Right" and the "Left"

In April 1930, I was elected First Secretary of the Moscow Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). I took an active part in directing its activities on behalf of the Central Committee. Having been elected to the direct leadership of the Moscow Committee, I felt a great responsibility and even greater responsibilities.

I was acutely aware of the special significance and importance of the Moscow Bolshevik organization. Moscow and its Bolshevik party organization occupied and continue to occupy a special, prominent position within the party, especially after Moscow became the capital of the new Soviet state. Local party organizations listened attentively to the voice of the Moscow party organization, and all party organizations in the Land of Soviets respected its decisions. In the minds of party members and proletarians of our homeland, the Moscow organization always stood alongside the party organization of progressive, revolutionary Leningrad. But there were times when the party and its Leninist Central Committee had to help successfully overcome individual mistakes in both Leningrad and Moscow, which manifested themselves primarily at the top and only to a limited extent in the district party organizations.

The Moscow organization, with the help of the Central Committee, successfully fought against anti-Leninist deviations, for example, in 1918, when there was a struggle against the so-called “left communists” who opposed the Brest Peace.

I vividly remember the days when I arrived in Moscow from Petrograd together with the All-Russian Collegium for the Organization

The Red Army in March 1918. By then, the Moscow organization had already broken the very strong positions of the "leftists," but they were still very active not only on the issue of the Brest Peace, but also on other issues of domestic policy.

In 1921, when I was sent by the Central Committee to work as head of the organizational department of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, I had to devote a significant portion of my time to the work of the Moscow Tanners' Union, which elected me to the board presidium, and to the work of the Zamoskvoretsky District Party Committee, where the unforgettable Comrade Zemlyachka was then secretary. She firmly harnessed active party members, including myself, to the work of the district committee, as it was attached to one of the largest revolutionary enterprises in Zamoskvorechye—the "Red Supplier" tannery. This was a period of intense struggle against the resurgent anarchists, Mensheviks, and Socialist Revolutionaries, who were exploiting the Soviet state's grave difficulties in organizing production, especially supplying workers, to launch their anti-Soviet, counterrevolutionary activities. We, the Bolsheviks, mobilized all our forces in order to politically defeat these sorties and tear away from the enemy those groups and layers of petty-bourgeois-minded workers who succumbed to their influence.

But the problem was that there were splinters within the party organizations as well: Trotskyists, the Workers' Opposition (Shlyapnikovites), and other similar groups. At our factory, for example, there were many women, including activists, who succumbed to the influence of Comrade Kollontai, who

was then with Shlyapnikov. They spoke out against party policy at party cells more covertly than before the 10th Party Congress, but they effectively corrupted even some communists, turning them against the party, its Central Committee, and Lenin. This wasn't contained within the party framework, so our struggle against these internal opposition groups was intense and tense. I recall with satisfaction that one of the first grassroots party organizations in Zamoskvorechye to take a firm Leninist party stance and rebuff anti-party elements was the glorious party cell of "Red Supplier," where even non-party workers rebuffed the anti-Soviet elements (Mensheviks, Socialist Revolutionaries, anarchists, and others). "Red Supplier" became Zamoskvorechye's Leninist party fortress and remained so for decades. I witnessed this during my 35 years as a member of this cell. In 1922, after returning from Turkestan again, when I began working as the head of the Organizational and Instructional Department

After becoming a Central Committee department member, I rejoined the plant's cell. This was a tense period of struggle against the Trotskyists and all other forms of opposition. In the Zamoskvoretsky District, where the opposition was particularly active but failed to secure a majority or even substantial support, it was routed. At the Zamoskvoretsky District Party Conference in 1924, the opposition reached the point of fury and launched unseemly attacks against Zemlyachka and other activists loyal to the Central Committee line, including me, demagogically calling me "Commissar of the Central Committee in the Zamoskvoretsky District." Through the efforts of all Leninists in the glorious Zamoskvoretsky District, the Trotskyists and others were defeated, and the Leninist line of the Central Committee prevailed.

Although the Trotskyists, thanks to the weak organization of Lenin's forces, managed to seize leadership in a number of cells (student, Soviet, and others) and even the entire Khamovnichesky District Committee during the 1923 discussions, thanks to the efforts of genuine Bolsheviks, they were defeated in all districts of Moscow, including Khamovnichesky. Participating in leading this struggle on behalf of the Central Committee, I witnessed how Bolshevik forces, communists loyal to Leninism, especially Old Bolsheviks, rose up and, under the leadership of the Central Committee, defeated the Trotskyist splitters. The struggle against the insolent Trotskyists, the Workers' Opposition, the Sapronovites, and others in Moscow was often particularly acute because the entire opposition elite was concentrated in Moscow, and also because Moscow, like nowhere else, along with the bulk of seasoned revolutionary proletarians and communists, also harbored a large concentration of bureaucratic officials, NEP elements, speculators, and those seeking adventure and self-interest. All these elements influenced not only the general situation but also the communists within the party itself. After the Moscow organization repelled the attacks of the Trotskyists, although they continued their struggle in a single bloc with the Kamenevites-Zinovievites and even tried in 1927 to lead their supporters to an independent anti-Soviet demonstration, which failed miserably, they no longer rose to the level of influence in any region, nor even a solid cell, although they still had a considerable number of their supporters in institutions, educational organizations, etc.

This victory in the Moscow organization, as in the whole party, did not come easy: the Central Committee of the party, members of its Politburo, being in Moscow and giving the Moscow organization

Of primary importance, they directly participated in and led the Moscow Bolsheviks' struggle. A system of systematic speeches by members of the Politburo and the Central Committee to communists and non-party workers was established. Comrade Stalin spoke frequently, and his speeches, while not pretentious for the superficial oratorical "brilliance" of Trotsky, were always imbued with profound historical, theoretical, and practical content. Their iron logic, clarity of

thought, and precise Leninist formulations and conclusions reached the depths of the souls and consciousness of activists, ordinary communists, and workers alike.
Together with the entire party, the Moscow organization successfully implemented the course of industrialization of the country, although its leadership, represented by Uglanov, emphasized, with some boastfulness, that we are a Moscow of calico and, therefore, do not have any special “fantasies” about the development of heavy industry, including mechanical engineering.
When in 1927, and especially in 1928-1929, the party and the Soviet government encountered particular difficulties in the area of grain procurement, when the kulaks declared a strike to deliver grain to the state, putting the entire socialist reconstruction at risk of failure, during this period a right-wing grouping in the Central Committee and in the party, headed by Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky, emerged and showed intra-party resistance to the attack on the kulaks.
Bukharin, as is well known, put forward theoretical opportunist justifications for the "ingrowth of the kulak into socialism"—the ingrowth of this vehicle of capitalism into socialism. In fact, the "right" was leading not to socialism, but to capitalism. This right-wing deviationist position was adopted not only by Uglanov, the First Secretary of the Moscow Committee, but also by the majority of the bureaus of the Moscow Committee and the bureaus of some district committees. The Central Committee's attempts to change the minds of the then leading figures of the Moscow Committee and correct their line did not yield positive results. While in the first half of 1928, Uglanov limited himself to general statements against the rapid pace of industrialization, defending the need to primarily develop the textile industry in Moscow, unwisely and illogically contrasting it with heavy industry and mechanical engineering, in the second half of 1928, he and his comrades in the Moscow Committee more openly and decisively supported Bukharin's "right" positions, including his opposition to collectivization.
In the second half of 1928, after moving from Ukraine to work in the Central Committee, I, like other Central Committee employees, had the opportunity to actively

To collaborate with the districts of Moscow, especially those with which I had previously been closely associated—Zamoskvoretsky, Rogozhsko-Simonovsky, and Sokolnichesky. It was in the Rogozhsko-Simonovsky district that the "rightists" were most active and had launched factional work through the district committee secretary, Penkov. But many secretaries of grassroots party cells, especially those in the industrial sector, were outraged by the factional work of the "rightists" and their activist Penkov, and in October 1928, more than 50 secretaries of the district's cells sent a letter to the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) detailing Penkov's factional work, which he had done in concert with Uglanov. This letter became known to all districts of Moscow, and some of them, such as Sokolnichesky, took a more decisive stand against the "rightist" threat.
The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) addressed a letter to all members of the Moscow organization, exposing the "rightist" errors of the Moscow Committee and calling for unity. The Central Committee expressed confidence that, despite the fact that individual leaders had demonstrated a "rightist deviation," the Moscow organization as a whole had been and would remain a reliable support for the Central Committee.
That same October, Comrade Stalin spoke at the Moscow Committee's plenum, exposing the essence of the "rightist danger in the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)" and the mistakes being made in Moscow. The Committee adopted a resolution that included a crucial point about focusing the fire of the ideological and political struggle against the "rightist" danger and against conciliatory attitudes toward it (conciliationism was widespread at the time, and a significant portion of these conciliators were "rightists").
The Moscow Party organization subsequently expanded its struggle against the "rightists," and by decision of the November (1928) Plenum of the Moscow Committee, Uglanov was removed from his post as First Secretary of the Moscow Committee. Comrade Molotov was elected Secretary of

the Moscow Committee in his place. Some time later, due to his workload at the Central Committee, Molotov was replaced as First Secretary of the Moscow Committee by K. Ya. Bauman. The "right" suffered a defeat in Moscow. The Moscow Party Organization, as the Central Committee wrote in its appeal, was and remained a loyal supporter of the Leninist party line. This, of course, did not mean that the "right" threat had already been eliminated, especially since the "right" leaders maneuvered and, having suffered defeat, began to disguise themselves, verbally declaring their mistakes while in fact continuing their line throughout the Soviet Union, including in Moscow.
The Moscow party organization, which had replaced the party leadership, took up the implementation of the first five-year plan with renewed vigor. Together

Together with the entire party, the Moscow organization spearheaded the upsurge of the peasant poor and the best strata of the middle peasantry, which found expression in the development of a powerful collective farm movement in late 1929 and the elimination of the kulaks as a class. However, the Moscow organization, and especially the Moscow Committee, made grave errors in their political, organizational, and economic approach to the pace of collectivization, no less acute than in a number of regions and territories of the country. Here, the consequences of the long-term leadership of the "rightists" in the Moscow region were felt above all. While ostensibly advocating for the peasantry, the Uglanovites in fact ignored the countryside, provided no assistance to agriculture, and were cut off from the villages. The city of Moscow, especially the apparatus of the regional executive committee and the Moscow Committee of the Party (which was then not only a city but also a regional committee), had no connection with the villages. And when the collective farm movement unfolded, the apparatus, in which many Uglovites and especially conciliators remained, instead of leading with knowledge of life and reality, took up administration and command, and the new leadership of the MK practically weakly checked the matter and even succumbed to the spontaneous flow instead of leading it, not fighting the excesses that were happening on the ground.
Collectivization in the last four months of 1929 increased from 1.8% to 12.2%, and in the first three months of 1930 there was a gigantic leap: by February 1, 1930, it was already 36%, and by March 1 – 71.7%, and then... straight down: by April 1 – 12%, and by May 1 – 7.5%. While the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) decreed that the Moscow Region belong to the third collectivization group, with its completion by the spring of 1933, the Moscow Committee Bureau on February 13, 1930, issued an official decision to complete collectivization in the Moscow Region in the spring of 1930, that is, three years ahead of the deadline set by the Central Committee. Such a "command" could not but lead to tragic results. In his subsequent explanatory letter to the Central Committee, the First Secretary of the Moscow Committee, Comrade Bauman wrote: “In view of the fact that: 1) At the January Plenum of the Moscow Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), a fundamental error was made in the resolution on my report, which was expressed in the formulation, along with the task put forward by the Central Committee of eliminating the kulaks as a class, of eliminating the new bourgeoisie as a whole, which was subsequently corrected by the Moscow Committee at the proposal of the Central Committee, 2) the Moscow Committee adopted an incorrect position, which contradicted the Central Committee directives of January 6, on completing complete collectivization in the spring of this year, for which I, as First Secretary, bear primary responsibility.” Further

Comrade Bauman states: "These errors committed in the work of the Moscow Committee have been aggravated by the vagueness and incorrectness of a number of points in my closing remarks at the last Plenum of the Moscow Committee, which has provided grounds for glossing over the

mistakes made in the collectivization process, thereby hindering their decisive correction. I ask the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) to relieve me of my duties as Secretary of the Moscow Committee."
In its resolution, the Central Committee wrote: “Taking note of Comrade Bauman’s statement, the Central Committee considers it necessary to note that:
1) Comrade Bauman, as Secretary of the Central Committee and First Secretary of the Moscow Regional Organization, was obliged to stand at the head of those comrades of the Moscow Regional Organization who demanded a decisive, unconditional struggle against distortions of the party line and the covering up of mistakes, believing that only such a struggle could ensure a genuine Bolshevik education of cadres. |
2) Meanwhile, instead of fulfilling this task, Comrade Bauman, in his closing remarks at the March Plenum of the Moscow Regional Organization, began to gloss over errors, demonstrated a conciliatory attitude toward the "left" distorters, and indulged in polemics against those members of the Plenum who demanded a decisive fight against distortions and the rapid elimination of errors, thereby inadvertently disorienting the Plenum and complicating the proper training of cadres (see Comrade Bauman's closing remarks at the Plenum, where he denies the existence of excessive haste and administrative pressure in the practice of collective farm development in the region). The Central Committee resolves to grant Comrade Bauman's request to relieve him of his duties as Secretary of the Moscow Regional Organization."
It was under these circumstances that I found myself heading the Moscow organization. At the time, I was in Siberia, carrying out assignments from the Central Committee on collectivization and grain procurement. There, I received a telegram from Comrade Stalin informing me that, given the current situation in the Moscow organization, I, Kaganovich, was being nominated as First Secretary of the Moscow Committee. Did I agree? I replied that I did, and immediately left for Moscow.
Upon returning from Siberia, I first had a conversation with Comrade Stalin, who briefed me on the situation in the Moscow organization, explained why I had been nominated for the post of Secretary of the Moscow Committee, and outlined some of the most important tasks.
"MK," Stalin said, "has poor connections with the village and doesn't take into account its diversity, specificity, and complexity. Bauman is to blame."

The fact is that, without completing the work he had begun to purge the leadership of Uglovites and conciliators, he gave free rein to the "leftist crooks" who violated the Central Committee's instructions, and he himself violated them. He ruined what had been accomplished by the Central Committee and by the former First Secretary, Comrade Molotov. The Moscow Party organization proved steadfast and took the correct line, but these are, for now, general resolutions. The most dangerous thing now is that a significant portion of the activists, especially in rural areas, are disoriented, or, to put it more bluntly, in a state of disorganization and disarray. The "rightists"—the Uglanovites—are exploiting this, inciting them against the Central Committee, corrupting the cadres. They eagerly provoked "leftist excesses," and are now trying to find support among the "leftists." Your primary task, Comrade Kaganovich, is to launch a major and profound ideological, political, and organizational effort to unite the activists who fight for the party line, purge the leadership of the "rightists"—the Uglanovites, re-educate the best of those who have committed "leftist excesses," as well as the conciliators, and replace the incorrigible and those incapable of correcting their mistakes, so that collectivization can be driven forward with renewed vigor. To achieve this, we must vigorously and boldly promote new, honest, and capable workers, of whom there are many in the Moscow organization. "The shared tasks in Moscow and the Moscow region are enormous. "I," said Comrade Stalin, "am confident that you, as Secretary of the Central Committee, will ensure party leadership worthy of Moscow and the region." Naturally, I promised Comrade Stalin I would do everything to justify his trust.

The Moscow Committee and I, as First Secretary, carried out these and other instructions from the Central Committee and Comrade Stalin: first and foremost, eliminating the distortions that had occurred in the process of eliminating the kulaks as a class, restoring the improperly dispossessed middle peasants, and at the same time preventing the reinstatement of kulaks and speculators under the guise of middle peasants, as was practiced by the "right-wing" deviators who remained in the leadership of a number of party bodies. While exercising the necessary restraint in dismissing workers, we replaced the obviously incorrigible and unfit, especially those who persisted in their mistakes and hobnobbed with the "rightists." Most importantly, the Moscow Committee, with the assistance of the Central Committee, boldly promoted dozens and hundreds of grassroots workers, especially from the working class and poor peasant classes, to leadership positions in the Party and Soviet Union.

Immediately after the April (1930) Plenum of the Moscow Committee, at which I was elected Secretary of the Moscow Committee, meetings were held in all districts of the region, to which speakers were sent

From the Moscow Committee. They did not, of course, limit themselves to just reports, but, having the appropriate authority from the Moscow Committee, they, together with the district party committees, took all necessary measures to implement the party line and, above all, to clarify its ideological and political position and unite the activists and the entire party organization on this basis.

Moscow district party conferences were held, at which, on behalf of the Central Committee, a number of Politburo members spoke. As a Politburo member and secretary of the Moscow Committee, I personally had to speak at nearly all the city and district conferences, at a number of large enterprises, and at some district conferences in the region. The Politburo members who spoke at the district party conferences not only outlined the Central Committee's positions but also debated and refuted anti-Party and conciliatory statements. All these speeches played a significant role in uniting the Moscow party organization around the Central Committee and its line. In May and June, the Moscow Committee sent a large number of worker propagandists from Moscow to the villages, establishing and strengthening vital ties with the countryside. In Moscow and locally, practical measures were taken to strengthen the stability of those collective farms that remained after the ebb, to strengthen their organizational and economic structure, provide them with logistical assistance, particularly with seeds, and to ensure the successful completion of the spring sowing season not only for collective farms but also for all individual farms. The Moscow Committee instructed local organizations to close the gap with the individual middle peasantry that had developed after their ebb from the collective farms and, through the completion of the spring sowing season and assistance to the middle peasants who were not collective farmers, to reestablish connections, communication, and mutual assistance between the collective farms, the Soviet authorities, and individual peasants, many of whom were poor and were the most likely candidates for joining the collective farm on a more solid basis.

As a result of all the organizational and economic measures, and the extensive assistance provided by the Central Committee and the government, the spring sowing of 1930 in the Moscow region was carried out successfully, fulfilling the most important task of Moscow organizations. Following the Second Regional Party Conference and especially after the historic Sixteenth Party Congress, the Moscow City Committee and the party organization launched a powerful, unprecedentedly energetic campaign by the party organization, trade unions, and soviet bodies to ensure the success and victory of the full-scale offensive.

socialism on all fronts, for the implementation of complete collectivization based on the complete elimination of the kulaks as a class.
The Moscow Bolsheviks launched a struggle to fulfill the First Five-Year Plan in four years; socialist competition and shock work among the working masses expanded; the work of the party, trade unions, and Soviets to improve the material and cultural level of workers and the poorest peasants, especially collective farmers, intensified.
The construction of new machine-building plants, metallurgical plants and coal mines began, as well as the reconstruction of existing enterprises based on the introduction of new technology, including in the textile industry, leather and footwear and other branches of light industry.
New work on the reconstruction of Moscow's urban infrastructure began on the basis of the resolution of the Plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), adopted in June 1931 based on Kaganovich's report "On the reconstruction of the city of Moscow and the cities of the USSR," in particular the construction of the metro and the Moscow-Volga Canal.
In accordance with the resolutions of the 16th Party Congress, the work of party organizations was restructured. Party and Soviet work was elevated to a new, higher level, particularly mass trade union and cultural work in the city and countryside among women, whose role had grown enormously, and among young people, who were occupying an increasingly important place in industry, collective farms, and educational institutions. The Komsomol, whose leadership the Party improved, played a major role in increasing youth activism.
The Moscow Bolsheviks worked diligently and painstakingly to boost the region's agriculture under the slogan of transforming the Moscow region from a consuming to a producing one. It is important to keep in mind that at that time the Moscow region included not only the former Moscow province, but also the former Ryazan, Tula, Kaluga, and Tver (Kalinin) provinces.
To achieve all these objectives, it was necessary to achieve the victory of the Leninist line of the party and the Central Committee over all forms of opposition, primarily over the Trotskyists and "right" deviationists, to purge the party of those who had attached themselves to it, and to strengthen its ranks and the Leninist unity of the party. A key factor in strengthening the party was a creative, mass-based method of leadership based on internal party democracy and the broad involvement of party and non-party members.

The masses' involvement in party leadership and state governance, the monitoring of implementation with the participation of the broad masses, and the frequent convening of party and trade union meetings, at which leading figures, including members of the Politburo, spoke, with the broad participation of non-party leaders, and in rural areas, collective farm and Soviet activists. This could not but have a fruitful impact on the construction of socialism.
During the last four months of 1930, the Moscow Organization ensured that over a hundred large enterprises exceeded their annual plan. However, since about a hundred enterprises underfulfilled the plan, the overall fulfillment rate was around 100 percent. I recall that among those that exceeded the plan were such plants as Dynamo, the Lepse Electric Plant, the Vladimir Ilyich Plant, AMO, Goznak, Hammer and Sickle, the Frunze Brake Plant, the 24th Plant, Krasny Bogatyr, Kauchuk, and others. The Tula Arms Plant, the Podolsk Mechanical Plant, the Lyubertsy Plant, the Moscow Coal Basin, and others lagged behind. The Moscow Committee reviewed the situation at all of these plants and took the necessary measures to improve their performance.
The Moscow Committee was particularly focused on the Moscow Region Basin. I personally traveled to the Moscow Region Basin, Tula, Podolsk, Bobrik, and elsewhere on numerous occasions. I studied the basin's characteristics and its differences from the Donbass, took appropriate measures on the spot, and reported my findings at MC meetings. The Moscow Committee took steps to improve production, supply workers, and strengthen party and trade union work, particularly in the Moscow Region Basin. This was difficult work and a struggle to overcome

the backwardness and disorganization of the workers and the weak party and trade union organization.
The MK paid special attention to the military industry, which was lagging behind and was still suffering from the consequences of uncovered sabotage. Likewise, the MK took a close look at the railways.
Back in 1930, the Moscow Committee of Workers (MC) emphasized the need for decisive improvements in the work of railway workers, particularly strengthening the fight against the dominance of kulak and saboteur elements in transport. The MC paid particular attention to issues of supplying industry with raw materials, which were primarily imported, due to delays in supplying metal, for example. They focused not only on deliveries but, above all, on accurately recording and identifying metal deposits in warehouses and factories, and revised the plan for distributing available metal.

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Leather and footwear factories were short of raw materials, and central authorities took steps to fulfill the raw hide procurement plan. In the textile industry, the situation in 1930 was better than in 1929 due to a better cotton harvest.
The Moscow Committee devoted exceptional attention to public utilities, although in 1930 these issues had not yet been addressed with the same breadth as in 1931 and 1932. Capital construction occupied a huge place in the work of the Moscow organization. In the Moscow region, construction had already begun on the Bobrikov, Voskresensky, and Ugreshsky chemical plants; the so-called reconstruction of the AMO automobile plant, which in reality was the construction of a new automobile plant, had begun; the construction of bicycle, tool, and machine-tool plants; the largest —the first in the USSR—First Ball Bearing Plant and a number of new mines in the Moscow Basin, etc. Energetic measures were taken to ensure the development of this construction, as well as housing, public utilities, and social-cultural construction, which absorbed almost half of all capital investment in 1930. In its instructions, the Moscow Committee demanded that government and economic bodies prepare well in advance for the new economic year, including ensuring that industry is provided with economic and technical personnel. The Moscow Committee considered the decisive condition for fulfilling all these tasks to be the effective restructuring of party, trade union, and economic bodies based on the decisions of the 16th Party Congress, the 2nd Regional Conference, and the appeal of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of September 3.
In its decisions on agriculture and the Moscow countryside, the Moscow Committee of Ministers (MK) primarily proceeded from the fact that Moscow Oblast's agriculture did not represent a single, compact entity. Along with grain crops, the former Tula and Ryazan districts also produced flax, vegetable and dairy farming, and livestock farming, although in many districts these sectors overlapped. Hence the need for differentiated and specific leadership. The MK pointed out that this applied not only to the management of agricultural production but also to the management of political life and all Party and Soviet work. Recalling the excesses that had occurred, the MK pointed out that the greatest disregard for regional specificities had manifested itself during the spring period of collectivization.

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While reviewing the MK bureau and making the necessary decisions on the implementation of the autumn sowing campaign, autumn plowing, grain procurement, vegetable-flax-hay-meat procurement, the MK pointed out that in the conditions of the intensification of the class struggle in the village, the kulak, taking advantage of the excesses of the previous year and the weakness of the party, soviet and patronage work, seized certain positions in a number of villages and hamlets and, due to the weak organization of the poor, maintains these positions.

Regarding collectivization, the MK demanded that district organizations, along with continuing to strengthen existing collective farms, intensify their efforts to organize new collective farms, improve work among the poor, and intensify the fight against the kulak. Meanwhile, the MK noted, despite the fact that the further development of the collective farm movement required a decisive intensification of the fight against the kulak, a number of party organizations resorted to generalities and often adopted a "rightist," conciliatory stance toward the fight against the kulak.
When considering procurement issues, the MK pointed out that this weakness in the fight against the kulaks had an impact on grain and vegetable procurement. The MK repeatedly addressed the issue of collectivization, the organizational and economic strengthening of collective farms, the organization of machine and tractor stations, and especially procurement, taking a differentiated approach across districts.
The Moscow Committee was particularly concerned with strengthening district and village party organizations. It wasn't afraid to state outright that village party organizations in the Moscow region were weaker than in any other region of the Union, that there were districts with only 60 communists, 50 of which were in the district center and only 10 in the villages—out of a population of 80,000-90,000.
The Moscow Committee demanded that city organizations not formally oversee the villages, but that each city cell set the goal of creating a village cell, providing it with systematic assistance; that city cells, together with village ones, be responsible for organizing the poor and for successfully combating the kulaks. The Moscow Committee demanded this of Moscow organizations, which were to become a model for work in the villages, primarily employing workers with ties to the villages. This decision by the Moscow Committee played a major role. In connection with the abolition of districts, the Moscow Committee implemented its decision to strengthen district centers. The Moscow Committee emphasized that many district workers conscientiously wanted to solve the tasks facing them, but they still lacked sufficient experience and knowledge.

The MK's duty is to help them develop into true leaders. At the same time, the MK noted, some workers sent to the districts from the regional and district levels whine, complain about difficulties, and instead of bringing vigour, bring elements of laxness and uncertainty to the organization. The MK pointed out that the regional organization as a whole and the Moscow city organization in particular have not yet grasped the importance of turning their attention to the districts, to the villages.
The Moscow Committee emphasized the particular urgency of this task, as during this period, the region experienced not just an intensification of class struggle, but also the uncovering of a number of counterrevolutionary organizations composed of former landowners, merchants, counterrevolutionary clergy, former police officers, gendarmes, and kulaks, as well as Socialist Revolutionary counterrevolutionary organizations. This played a significant role in our struggle. In the months since the 16th Congress, facts have confirmed the Congress's warning that opportunists of all stripes, especially those on the right, formally acknowledge their mistakes and formally agree with the general party line, but fail to back this up with their actions, which signifies their shift from open struggle to covert action, to waiting for more favorable conditions for new attacks on the party.
In Moscow, the "right" struggle assumed an active, yet covert, nature. MK exposed Uglanov's closest associate, the former secretary of the Krasnopresnensky District Committee, Ryutin. This Ryutin organization essentially propagated Menyshevik-White Guard assessments of the situation in the party and the country. The Moscow organization conducted serious ideological outreach and struggle in connection with the Ryutin affair and the increased activity of the group led by Slepkov, Maretsky, and others, which was linked to the duplicitous behavior of the "right" leaders—Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky.
In October and November, two factional groups that had formed a single bloc were exposed—the first, led by Syrtsov, and the second, led by Lominadze. Syrtsov openly advocated "right-wing"

positions, while Lominadze veiled his speeches with leftist phrases. The united bloc they formed was called "right-left," but in reality, they had formed a bloc on the "right" in opposition to the pace of industrialization and collectivization. This bloc mirrored the Trotskyist-rightist bloc, aimed at attacking the general party line. The issue of this bloc was discussed at the Politburo.
MK carried out a major ideological campaign in the Moscow organization

work, exposing the duplicitous factional activities of this right-left bloc, which strengthened the Moscow organization, as well as the entire party.
Summing up the results of the ideological struggle within the party in November, the Moscow Committee particularly emphasized that, by expelling from its ranks opportunists, double-dealers, all those who, in their struggle against the party's policies, allied themselves with the outright bourgeois-kulak ideologists of the counterrevolution: Kondratiev, Groman, Ramzin and others, we must further develop genuine Bolshevik self-criticism, root out the shortcomings in our work, and rally even more closely around the Central Committee to implement the general line.
The Moscow Committee developed practical instructions for district committees and cells on strengthening ideological and educational work among party members and non-party workers, on a more intimate and direct approach by district committees to the work of each cell and each enterprise, and on promptly responding to attacks by anti-Party and anti-Soviet elements. In the resolution "On Improving Mass and Intra-Party Work," the Moscow Committee outlined a comprehensive program for the disaggregation of Moscow district committees, the restructuring of grassroots party cells, the transfer of party work to the workshop and team level, the expansion of the network of workshop cells, and the overall improvement of party work in factories.
Of great importance for the development of the organization were the frequent meetings at which Politburo members Stalin, Kalinin, Molotov, Kaganovich, Ordzhonikidze, Voroshilov, Kuibyshev, Rudzutak, Mikoyan and others spoke.
The Party, its advanced Moscow organization, practically organized the struggle and work of the multi-million masses of workers, peasants and intellectuals to implement these general slogans and tasks.

MASTER PLAN FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF MOSCOW

Of all the branches of the national economy, the most effective and direct lever for improving the living conditions of workers and restructuring their way of life on socialist foundations is the urban and rural economy.
The Soviet state, as written in the Party Program adopted at the VIII Congress, “expropriated all the houses of capitalist homeowners and transferred them to the city Soviets;

"This resulted in the mass resettlement of workers from the outskirts into bourgeois houses."
However, the urban economy, extremely backward under tsarism, declined even further during the imperialist war and counterrevolutionary intervention. After victory in the civil war and over the interventionists, the Party and Soviet power focused their efforts primarily on restoring industry, transportation, and agriculture. The urban economy was, of course, also being restored, but at an insufficient pace. From 1928 onward, the Party and Soviet power were able to more actively address urban economic issues, particularly in Moscow, Leningrad, Kharkov, and other large cities. By 1931, the period of urban economic recovery was essentially complete.
However, the rapid growth of industry and urban population placed new and significant demands on cities. We felt this particularly acutely in Moscow. From 1931 to 1935, Moscow's population grew

by almost 1 million, outpacing the growth of its municipal services. In 1930-1931, Moscow's municipal services became the city's greatest bottleneck, hampering the further development of industry and the city's needs for water, sewerage, transportation, electricity, heating, and especially housing, schools, and hospitals. The situation became extremely acute. It reached the point where water did not reach the third and fourth floors of buildings, creating massive traffic jams on public transportation. Workers grumbled.

The state of Moscow's municipal economy was discussed not only by the Moscow Committee but also by the Politburo of the Central Committee. I remember Comrade Stalin's speech at the Politburo. He said it was necessary to broaden the scope of the issue and undertake a radical reconstruction of Moscow and, along with it, all major cities of the USSR. The Politburo created a commission, comprising Politburo members, including Stalin. L.M. Kaganovich was elected chairman of the commission, and he was also appointed speaker at the June Plenum of the Central Committee, where the question of Moscow's municipal economy and the development of the USSR's municipal economy was raised.

Local workers, numerous specialists, and competent individuals, primarily from Moscow itself, were involved in the project's development. A significant amount of work was carried out by the Moscow Committee and the Moscow City Council.

The Moscow Committee and the Moscow City Council developed a large number of measures that were approved by the Politburo and the Plenum of the Central Committee and included in the appendix to its main resolution.

The Central Committee didn't limit itself to general instructions; it issued a series of specific, numerically defined targets. For example, regarding housing construction in Moscow, the Central Committee set the target: within three years, using the Moscow City Council and industry budgets, to build new housing for at least half a million people, not counting cooperative and other construction, as well as to build additional floors (which we were then undertaking on a large scale). The Central Committee also emphasized the extreme urgency of renovating Moscow's housing stock. Throughout construction, the Central Committee emphasized, it was necessary to consider new public amenities: mechanized public laundries, hospitals, orphanages, kindergartens, playgrounds, and crèches, which were becoming especially important due to the increasing involvement of women in production. "The network of kindergartens, playgrounds, and crèches," the resolution stated, "must be expanded to cover all the children of workers employed in production within two years."

The Central Committee Plenum's resolution defined targets for the construction of stores, the development of public catering and bread baking, with the goal of largely mechanizing Moscow's bread-baking industry by the end of 1932, and also for the development of the city's energy sector. There was not a single sector of the city's economy for which the Central Committee Plenum did not issue instructions.

The Central Committee Plenum decided to build a metro in Moscow and to divert the Moscow River by connecting it with the Volga via a canal.

It's no exaggeration to say that the June 1931 Plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) opened a new page and set a new historical milestone in the development of cities and urban infrastructure in the USSR, especially in the capital of the Soviet Union—our native Moscow. Following the Plenum of the Central Committee, a massive effort was launched in all major cities of the USSR, especially in Moscow, where I, as Secretary of the Moscow City Committee, along with other leading comrades Bulganin, Khrushchev, Kaminsky, Malenkov, Filatov, and others, played a direct and leading role in this work. Key resolutions and plans were adopted jointly with the Moscow City Council, while more specific economic and administrative measures were carried out by the Moscow City Council itself and its Presidium. Naturally, party-political activities were supported by the Moscow City Committee, the Moscow

City Committee, and the district committees of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). Of great practical importance was the joint resolution of the Bureau of the Moscow Regional Party Committee, the Bureau of the Moscow City Party Committee and the faction of the Moscow Regional Executive Committee and the City Executive Committee of the Moscow City Council on practical measures to improve

and the development of Moscow's urban economy. This resolution was approved by the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). To illustrate the concreteness and practicality of this resolution, I will highlight the most important issues and measures contained in it, which were practically implemented:
1. General economic issues, particularly regarding the budget and control figures for the city of Moscow. This was crucial, as Moscow's creation as a separate administrative and economic entity occurred after the unified regional budget and control figures had been compiled.
2. Housing and the immediate prospects for housing construction, including renovation of housing stock, new housing construction, organizational issues and issues of building management.
3. Providing Moscow with fuel and energy sector.
4. Development of Moscow urban transport, including improvement of the motor transport sector, freight traffic and garage facilities, and measures to reconstruct urban transport.
5. Measures for the radical reconstruction of Moscow’s road and underground infrastructure, construction of bridges and embankments.
6. Improvement and development of water supply and navigation, including capital construction and reconstruction of sewerage.
7. Cleaning Moscow, ensuring the sanitary condition of the city and green spaces.
8. Layout of the city of Moscow.
The mere listing of the problems and tasks posed shows the scope that all this work on implementing the resolution of the June Plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) has acquired.
Without romantic exaggeration, I can say that I recall this with a special sense of emotional excitement. This is especially true for the construction of the Moscow Metro, the Moscow-Volga Canal, the planning of Moscow, its architectural design, and the development and implementation of the General Plan for the Reconstruction of Moscow.
The June Plenum of the Central Committee ordered Moscow organizations to begin developing a serious, scientifically sound plan for the further expansion and development of Moscow. It stated that when planning Moscow as a socialist city, as opposed to capitalist cities, the excessive concentration of large population centers, businesses, schools, hospitals, theaters, clubs, stores, cafeterias, etc., in small areas should be avoided.

In my speeches at Moscow party activist meetings, at the Plenum of the Moscow City Council, and at meetings with architects convened by the Moscow City Council, the Moscow City Committee, and the Moscow City Council, I developed the Plenum's decisions primarily to properly clarify and understand the fundamental principles of the upcoming practical work on developing the Moscow General Plan. During the development and consideration of the Moscow plan, there were disputes and various points of view that had to be sorted out, some rejected, others sifting out the unacceptable and accepting the best. We essentially fought on two fronts: against the ideologists of urban gigantomania and against the proponents of the disaggregation of Moscow and the immediate withdrawal of certain large enterprises from it, etc. We rejected various proposals: to eliminate Moscow's radial-ring system, because it was supposedly characteristic of a feudal city and was in "irreconcilable" contradiction with the socialist city (these "leftists" did not want to take into

account the historically established reality, which must be improved, changed, but not destroyed); On the creation of a checkerboard city plan on the site of a radial-ring system. Proposals from the "right" wing of architects were also rejected—to leave old Moscow intact in its noble-merchant, clerical appearance, with new construction to be carried out only on a new site; the "leftists" partially aligned themselves with them. There were informative and interesting meetings with Moscow architects and builders, among which the following stand out: a meeting in Moscow convened by the Central Committee, the Moscow City Committee, and the Moscow City Council in 1932, attended by several hundred people, at which I delivered a lengthy speech; and a meeting in 1934 at the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), attended by party and government leaders, representatives of Moscow organizations, and more than 50 architects and planners. This was the meeting at which we presented the basic outlines of the plan. These outlines were approved by the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars, and Comrade Stalin, in his speech, gave the most important instructions regarding the final version of the plan. In my speech at the Moscow City Council Plenum (July 1934), I outlined these guidelines as follows: "In our plan for Moscow, we rejected extremes. Comrade Stalin, noting that the position taken by Moscow organizations in planning Moscow was correct, pointed out that in rebuilding the city, we must wage a struggle on two fronts. Also unacceptable to us is the position of those who deny the very principle of the city, who are pushing us to leave Moscow as a large village,

And the position of those who advocate excessive urbanization, those who propose building the city on the model of capitalist cities with excessive population density. History shows us that the most economical type of settlement in industrial areas is the city, which saves on sewerage, water supply, lighting, heating, and so on. Therefore, those who propose sprawling the city and turning it into a village, depriving it of all the benefits of public services and cultural urban life, are wrong. We must build at least 6-7-story buildings and allow for the construction of 15- and even 20-story buildings. The development of the Moscow General Plan took over three years. We must not forget that this was the first experience of socialist planning for such a great city as our Moscow. Today, 40 years later, all of this is, of course, much easier. We learned from each specific construction site, street, and neighborhood.

With the approval of the Central Committee, the Moscow City Council and the Moscow City Council formed a permanent architectural planning commission of the Moscow City Council, Moscow City Council, and the Moscow City Council (abbreviated as Arkhplan). This commission included leading figures from the Moscow City Council, Moscow City Council, and the Moscow City Council: Kaganovich (chairman), Bulganin, Khrushchev, Filatov, Kogan, Melbard, Perchik, Bulushev, and others, as well as a large group of prominent architects: academicians Zholtovsky, Shchusev, and Shchuko; professors Chernyshev, Vesnin, Barkhin, and Gelfreich; and architects Kryukov, Alabyan, Mordvinov, Iofan, Nikolaev, and Kolli, among others. This commission met weekly, and sometimes more frequently, considering not only issues related to the preparation of the plan—for highways, sections, junctions, and districts—but also projects for individual important structures, including large buildings, about which the designers reported, justifying and defending their project, and the commission members gave their comments, advice, and sometimes even rejected the submitted project entirely.

Of great significance at the time was the resolution of the Moscow City Council, the Moscow City Council, and the Moscow City Council on a new organizational form for the association of architects—Architectural Design and Architectural Planning Workshops. This was a good and fruitful initiative, since until then Moscow architects had worked alone or in small groups. We called them, half-jokingly, half-seriously, following the example of the villages, "individualists," or, as they called them in the villages back then, "inaduvals," and most often, artisans and home-based workers. At first, some "individualists," especially the "fashionable" ones, were stubborn, but the vast majority of architects

We eagerly accepted this proposal. Experience has shown that, far from leading to depersonalization or the suppression of individual creative abilities, as some predicted, it actually helped architects develop their creative potential. Today, I cannot help but express a feeling of great satisfaction that our proposal at the time proved so viable—architects' creativity flourished. One cannot help but rejoice that we, old Bolsheviks, who had never previously dealt with such issues, combined our efforts with the knowledge of veteran specialists who had imbued the Soviet system with the best aspects of their old culture. We studied foreign experience, particularly that of the Frenchman Haussmann in redeveloping Paris, but one cannot compare this work, however serious, with the Moscow General Plan, given the insurmountable difficulties the Paris redevelopment encountered regarding "sacred and inviolable" private property.

As a result of extensive collective effort, the first General Plan for the Reconstruction of Moscow, a scientific, fundamental plan that would radically transform the city's appearance, was developed and officially adopted by the government. This first plan was completed by the end of 1934, and in early 1935, it was presented by Moscow organizations to the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Council of People's Commissars. After reviewing it and receiving the approval of the relevant government bodies, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Council of People's Commissars adopted the historic resolution "On the General Plan for the Reconstruction of the City of Moscow" on July 10, 1935.

Yes, the June 1931 Plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), its decisions on Moscow's municipal economy and the development of the USSR's municipal economy created a radical, abrupt turn, primarily in Moscow. In order to provide for the working class in Moscow, especially due to such newly built factories as the Stalin Automobile Plant, the Kaganovich Ball Bearing Plant, Frezer, Kalibr, Velozavod, Stankolit, the expanded and reconstructed Dynamo Plant, Elektrozavod and others, it was urgently necessary to accelerate the development of Moscow's municipal economy. In four years, about 2,500 residential buildings were built, in which more than half a million workers moved in; hundreds of factory barracks were liquidated and radically converted into separate comfortable apartments for textile workers of Trekhgorka and others; more than 10 thousand houses were repaired; 100 kilometers of tram lines were built; in three

The length of improved pavements more than doubled; the water supply to Moscow doubled, reaching nearly 950 million buckets; 140 new large schools were built; the number of hospital beds increased by one-third. The number of factory kitchens increased from three to 26; canteens – from 537, where 870,000 people ate, to 2,241, where 2.5 million people ate; 1,200 new stores were opened, etc.

Of course, modern growth figures have surpassed those I cited, but that was in the early 1930s, 45 years ago! What's important is that this was a serious, major beginning, consciously and intentionally planned by the Party and Soviet power, and that all these changes in Moscow's urban economy, its scale, its gigantic, rapid growth, and the prospects for even greater growth, formed the real basis for the first General Plan for the Reconstruction of Moscow and the potential for its further development.

The fact that today, 50 years later, it is clear to everyone that without the metro and the Moscow-Volga Canal, the capital of the Soviet Union, Moscow, could not have existed and developed, was a controversial issue for many back then, in 1930-1931.

History tells us that even before the Revolution, progressive engineers had proposed building a metro in Moscow, but they were repeatedly rejected by the authorities and the bourgeois rulers of Moscow's urban development. Remnants of a conservative attitude remained among some of our

Soviet comrades, including those in the Moscow City Council, not to mention some "old-fashioned" residents. Not only among ordinary citizens, but even among some senior officials, there were objections and doubts about the necessity of building a metro and a canal. Of course, "right-wing" opportunists were particularly active in their propaganda against the metro, as well as against industrialization: they argued that such large expenditures were unnecessary, even if they could supposedly be avoided. There were also "leftists" who spouted such nonsense as the metro being an "anti-social" form of transport, supposedly unique to capitalist cities, and that under socialism, people would still travel little, etc. There were also purely practical objections: the metro, they claimed, was too expensive a construction project, requiring a lot of metal, cement, and equipment that would be better spent on industry, tram services, and housing construction. These latter "objectors" wielded particularly significant influence within the state apparatus, including among some Gosplan employees. To ensure the decision was made, it was necessary to defeat the opponents of the construction.

The metro and especially the canal connecting the Moskva River with the Volga. In all these debates, we refuted the arguments of our opponents, proving with facts and figures that Moscow without the metro and the canal is doomed to stagnation.
Comrade Stalin's speech during the Politburo's discussion of the matter in the Central Committee's Politburo proved decisive in the final resolution of these fundamental issues. "Only the hardened," Stalin said, "who cannot see beyond their own noses, can fail to understand that without the metro and canal, Moscow will perish as a major center." During the Politburo's consideration of this issue, even before the Central Committee Plenum, it unanimously decided to build the metro and canal.
The Central Committee Plenum of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), in its resolution on urban development, following Comrade Kaganovich's report, wrote: "The Central Committee Plenum believes it is essential to immediately begin preparatory work for the construction of a metro in Moscow as the primary means of solving the problem of fast and inexpensive passenger transportation, with the goal of beginning construction of the metro in 1932."
On the issue of connecting the Moskva River with the Volga, the Central Committee Plenum wrote: "The current state of the Moskva River, with its extremely limited water resources, poses a threat to both Moscow's water supply and, especially, shipping within the next five years. The Central Committee considers it essential to fundamentally resolve the problem of irrigating the Moskva River by diverting water from the upper reaches of the Volga and instructs Moscow organizations, in conjunction with Gosplan and the People's Commissariat of Water, to immediately begin drafting a plan for this structure, with the goal of beginning construction work on connecting the Moskva River with the Volga as early as 1932." It took only four years to turn the idea of a metro into reality. It took only six years for the Central Committee Plenum's decision to connect the Moskva River with the Volga to be implemented, so that Moscow would receive Volga water via the canal and water pipelines, and a powerful Volga-Moscow shipping route, connected to the ports of five seas.

MOSCOW METRO

Much interesting and instructive can be written about the history of the construction of our Moscow Metro. The main thing is that our heavy industry, which arose on the basis of the country's industrialization, provided the Metro with its own, domestically produced equipment and materials. The main thing is that the rise

At a new cultural and political level, the working class and collective farmers allocated their best people, especially Komsomol members, engineers, and technicians, to the construction of this unique structure. Under the Party's leadership, they mastered this complex undertaking and achieved victory. It can be said without exaggeration or boasting that the first Moscow metro builders laid the foundations for metro construction and mass tunneling in the Union Soviet Republics and even in countries of the global socialist system.
The construction of our Moscow metro went through four stages:
The first stage – the second half of 1931 and 1932 – the preparatory period and the beginning of construction.
The second stage – 1933 – the actual deployment of construction.
The third stage – 1934 – was a period of the most intensive, intense construction and installation work in all areas of underground and above-ground construction.
The fourth and final stage before launch took place at the end of 1934 and the first quarter of 1935.
The first stage primarily focused on geological exploration and design work. While we had experienced specialists in geological exploration, such as Academician Gubkin, for example, we didn't have many in the construction and design of the metro structure itself, although we had plenty of builders, including those who worked on tunnels in general. But a simple tunnel is one thing, and a metro system in the capital, especially under difficult conditions, is quite another. We had very few such specialists. More precisely, we didn't have any; they had to be trained and retrained on the fly, during the design and construction process. We didn't want to bring in large numbers of foreign specialists to Moscow at the time. In any case, very few were brought in. I remember well the American consultant Morgan, who worked conscientiously and creatively.
Even before the Metrostroy project began, various projects were floated, including one that was "tempting" for those who wanted to get rid of the expensive underground metro system—a project to build an elevated metro system, following the example of many projects in foreign cities. We rejected this proposal. Both the Central Committee and Stalin fully supported us on this matter.
But the first project presented by Metrostroy also turned out to be unsuitable, primarily because it was based entirely on

Open-pit or shallow-cut mining. This was one of the first and most important questions in the debate about the project, which we rejected.
The difficulties lay in the fact that the Metrostroy we organized initially took the wrong stance, advocating for the open-pit, so-called "German" method of construction. This was partly due to the fact that the specialists we brought in for the metro construction were all civil and industrial builders, not miners. For example, I knew Comrade Rotert from Dneprostroy and Kharkov as a prominent, conscientious, veteran construction specialist, and we appointed him head of Metrostroy, but he proved, especially in the early days, to be a staunch defender of the open-pit method. Some suggested firing him, but I personally opposed it. We didn't fire him, but we argued with him and, so to speak, convinced him, re-educated him, so to speak, using the tried-and-true method of public and party criticism during the construction process. Unfortunately, during the initial phase, most of the builders, including communists and non-miners, were very slow to convert to the closed, underground, shaft-based method of construction.
In order to make a final decision, despite the objections of the majority of Metrostroy engineers, and reject his project, we needed to engage numerous Soviet specialists and scientists, and even foreign experts, including our miners from Donbas, including Abakumov. We also had to immerse ourselves in these engineering and technical issues, understanding all the intricacies and calculations, so we could assume responsibility for the decision to use a closed method and deep burial, and muster the resolve to overcome and prevent the geological hazards that opponents of the closed, underground method threatened us with. What is now, based on our experience and experience, an easy decision, was very difficult back then.

We assembled a reputable team of Soviet scientists and outstanding engineers, and also organized consultations with foreign specialists we invited to Moscow from America, England, Germany, and France, who had spent considerable time and diligence understanding the specific geologic conditions of Moscow. The Soviet expertise, especially the geologists led by Gubkin, was of significant assistance, while the foreign consultations operated separately from our Soviet expertise.

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We then organized a joint hearing of the reports of the Soviet expert panel and the foreign consultation, which also contained disagreements: the British experts favored a closed method and deep burial, with some exceptions arising from the peculiarities of Moscow's geology; the German experts favored a shallow, open-pit method; and the French favored a closed method, but at a shallow burial. The Soviet expert panel favored a closed method, allowing for open-pit mining in certain areas. We studied the issue not only using drawings and calculations but also established a closed-method pilot site in the Sokolnichesky District, which yielded very valuable data.
As a result of a thorough study of the issue (and we, the members of the Bureau of the Moscow City Council, especially Kaganovich, Khrushchev and Bulganin, actively participated in the work of the expert review and foreign consultation, about which I regularly reported to the Central Committee and personally to Stalin), the Moscow City Council, the Moscow City Council and the Presidium of the Moscow City Council made the final decision: to build the Moscow Metro using the closed method, with deep foundations, allowing, as advised by Soviet experts, for some sections of the first stage to use the open method, primarily in those areas where construction had already actually begun.
This decision was approved by the Central Committee of the Party and the government. From this moment on, a new era in metro construction began. The metro builders themselves, considering that most of the Metrostroy engineering and technical personnel had little or no knowledge of underground mining, turned to our glorious Donbass residents for assistance in their native capital, Moscow. In a short period of time, we, in consultation with Ordzhonikidze, selected a strong group from among the many volunteers from Donbass, especially engineers. The miners took up the task with passion and zeal and played a major role in the construction of the metro.
We refined the entire route of the first stage from Sokolniki to Krymskaya Square and the Arbat radius from Manezhnaya Square to Smolenskaya Square. At the same time, to avoid randomly selecting Metro routes without regard for the overall Moscow plan, which we had already begun developing, and to take into account the ongoing construction of many metro lines, we developed a comprehensive long-term plan for future metro construction. In March 1933, the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars, at the suggestion of Moscow organizations, approved the Moscow Metro line plan for 10 radii, spanning 80 kilometers:

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1) Kirov radius - 10 km.
2) Frunzensky radius - 6 km.
3) Arbat radius - 5 km.
4) Gorky radius - 5 km.
5) Tagansky radius - 10.6 km.
6) Zamoskvoretsky radius - 8 km.
7) Pokrovsky radius - 9.3 km.
8) Rogozhsky radius - 9.6 km.
9) Krasnopresnensky radius - 4.5 km.
10) Dzerzhinsky radius - 7.8 km.
In addition, there were plans to build a metro line on the Timiryazevsko-Kaluzhskoye direction and two ring lines: along Sadovy and Kamer-Kollezhsky Val.

The first phase of construction covered a distance of 11.6 km: 5.8 km from Sokolniki to Sverdlovskaya Square, 3.5 km along the Frunzensky Radius from Sverdlova Square to Krymskaya, and 2.3 km along the Arbatsky Radius from the city center to Smolenskaya Square. The entire construction was divided into sections. The most challenging and complex were: from Kazansky Station to Kalanchevskaya Street, the stretch between Dzerzhinsky and Sverdlova Squares, the Okhotny Ryad sections, and from Manezh to Frunzenskaya Street. These sections received special attention, both in terms of personnel selection and the development of technical methods. It was there that we deployed new equipment—shields, employed a caisson method for working with compressed air, and pioneered ground freezing. Admittedly, all of this was done in the second and third stages, but we had already planned for it in the first stage. By the end of the first stage, construction of the shafts had begun, and personnel were being recruited. So, when we said that the first stage was preparatory, that doesn't mean there was no construction at all. There was, but it wasn't as extensive as what's to come. The first stage prepared the groundwork and made it possible to launch construction on a broad front in the second stage.

During the second stage (1933), 25 shafts were built, and underground work began. The construction of a pilot shaft and surface section under the leadership of the talented young engineer Makovsky was crucial. Progress was accelerated by the inclusion of a significant number of specialists—miners, engineers, technicians, and workers—in the ranks of Metrostroy. The most important factor in accelerating construction was the restructuring of the organizational management system of Metrostroy and its sections. Mobilization, of course, was decisive.

All the forces of the Moscow Party organization, the working class, the assistance of our industry, and especially our Central Committee of the Party and the Soviet government. Everyone considered the metro, the canal, and the reconstruction of Moscow an integral part of the Party's overall policy, the construction of Socialism, for whose victory they fought tirelessly.

With all the energy inherent in Bolsheviks, we Muscovites fought to implement the Central Committee Plenum's resolution on the metro, recruiting miners, especially from the Donets Basin. We reorganized Metrostroy. We drew on the experience of restructuring mine management in the Donbass, which I knew well, having personally traveled to the Donbass on numerous occasions at the behest of the Central Committee's Politburo and carried out this organizational restructuring of the Donbass mines. To accomplish this, we had to harshly criticize the coal industry's leaders who clung to the old ways, including one of the most prominent and capable figures in the Donbass coal industry, Comrade Yegor Trofimovich Abakumov. I had known him for a long time, when he was still a mine manager, then a trust manager, and I managed to convince him of the incorrectness of his position. Because it had been difficult for him to adapt to the new way of life in the Donbass itself, and because I took into account that he was such a man. We really need him at Metrostroy, so I proposed transferring him to us in Moscow, to the metro, and, to avoid traumatizing him, releasing him from his work in Donbass and simultaneously appointing him deputy head of Metrostroy. The Central Committee understood this, and he himself took up his work at Metrostroy with great zeal. What he had failed to accomplish in Donbass in restructuring the administration, he managed to accomplish at Metrostroy under the guidance of the Moscow Committee and not without my influence.

Essentially, this restructuring transformed the mine into the main independent construction unit of Metrostroy, directly subordinated not through sections, but directly to Metrostroy with all the ensuing rights and obligations, including such significant matters as wages, material support, including housing, etc.

The Mining Company and the Moscow City Committee organized independent mine party organizations; at Metrostroy itself, the party organizer was Comrade Starostin, a former leading Komsomol official. These mine party organizations became not only the center of mass party,

cultural, political, and mass production work, alongside the trade unions, but also a crucial lever and assistant.

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MK and MGK on the struggle for the pace and quality of metro construction, on the development of socialist competition and shock work among workers and engineering and technical personnel. During the second stage, and especially during the third, the task of vocational training and political education of workers became especially pressing for party and trade union organizations. The atmosphere of love for the metro, created by the "subbotniks" (workdays) held under the slogan "All of Moscow is building the metro," led to thousands, tens of thousands, of Komsomol members rushing to build the metro in 1933. Among them were often those with little professional training. They needed to be trained and politically organized so that this romanticism would be translated into labor discipline and high productivity.

Many engineers initially didn't believe that these young people would master complex construction techniques so quickly, especially in underground mine conditions. In my speech at the Moscow City Council Plenum, attended by shock workers from Metrostroy and Moscow factories and plants, on July 16, 1934, I said the following about this: "We had to recruit many thousands of workers to work at Metrostroy. Almost all Moscow enterprises allocated their best workers, primarily Komsomol members. These allocated workers are excellent people. The thousands of enthusiastic shock workers who emerged from them are the best proof of this. But enthusiasm alone isn't enough to work on the metro. You need skills and mastery of the techniques of your trade. The overwhelming majority of the recruited workers were completely unfamiliar not only with metro construction (none of us, of course, had any previous experience with such construction), but also with the earthworks, concrete, reinforcement, and other work they were assigned to do. Textile workers, chemists, utility workers, metalworkers, and collective farmers had to quickly retrain as construction workers on the fly. Much work was needed to instill the necessary skills in the metro builders. The Bolshevik Komsomol enthusiasm of the workers helped in this, thanks to which it was possible to unite a militant collective of Metrostroy shock workers in a relatively short period of time. We strove to ensure that the methods and techniques of management were dominated by content, not form, and that the living person was at the forefront. From the worker to the manager. We knew many of them personally, talked with them, and listened to the voices of every worker, technician, engineer, and manager. Members of the MK and MGK bureaus, especially Kaganovich,

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Khrushchev and Bulganin regularly visited the mines and responded, both personally and collectively in the MK and MGK, to every important event in Metrostroy, especially to fundamental issues that ensured the pace and quality of construction.

Of course, alongside all these positive aspects, there were also negative aspects, which we tried to correct based on our findings, suggestions, and criticisms from workers, engineers, communists, and, above all, our Central Party Committee, which closely monitored the progress of the metro and canal construction, providing us Muscovites with necessary and timely instructions. And since I reported most frequently to Comrade Stalin on these issues, I received from him not only advice and instructions, but also occasional reprimands, particularly regarding the quality of metro construction.

The third phase of metro construction was decisive. Despite the acceleration of construction during the second phase, we were significantly behind schedule in excavation, concrete placement, and especially the tunnel overall. The delay was partly due not only to delays in construction but also to disputes over specific construction methods, stemming, on the one hand, from the complexity of the project and, on the other, from the inexperience and overcautiousness of some builders. There was a major debate over the stations—whether to build them with two or three vaults. It was clear to us

that a three-vaulted station with a central hall was not only fuller, more spacious, more beautiful, and more welcoming, but also more comfortable for passengers, especially during rush hour. We, MK-MGK, favored three-vaulted stations. But the designers and some of the builders were concerned about collapses and subsidence and proposed two-vaulted stations. Some builders, for example, Comrade Gotsiridze and others, who stubbornly defended the triple-vaulted station (at Krasnye Vorota). After lengthy debates, and most importantly, after studying the technical calculations, triple-vaulted stations were generally accepted.
There was a delay in tunnel construction on the Arbatskaya Radius. There were proposals to build under Arbatskaya Street using the Parisian method, meaning a closed tunnel, but at a shallow depth, just a few meters below the surface. This project faced serious objections: it posed a risk of building collapse due to the loose soil and narrowness of the street. And all this was happening in the city center, next to the Kremlin. When the metro builders presented this project to us, after discussion, we told them: We are ready to agree to this project if you, the builders, guarantee us: 1. to protect the buildings from collapse and uninterrupted traffic;

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2. Ensure the uninterrupted operation of water, sewer, electricity, gas, and telephone services. Metro builders stated that they cannot provide such a guarantee; rather, they know and declare that interruptions, and serious ones at that, are inevitable. Naturally, the Moscow City Council and the Moscow City Council Presidium rejected this project.
There was a second project: to excavate at great depth using a closed method. This appealed to us, proponents of the closed and deep method. But its opponents demonstrated that the geology was exceptionally difficult: after the upper layer of loose sands, there is a large layer of aquiferous sand, beneath which lie large quicksands, with no Jurassic clays to help. Technically, especially with modern technology, even this geology could have been overcome, but given the state of the art at the time, this project required completely new preparation, incredible effort, and offered no guarantee against surface accidents or building collapses. Furthermore, adopting this option meant abandoning the first phase of the Arbatsky Circle, delaying its construction for several years.
After careful review and discussion, the Moscow City Council, the Moscow City Committee, and the Presidium of the Moscow City Council rejected this project as well. We reported it to the Central Committee, and the Politburo approved our decision and proposed exploring other options, ensuring the construction of the Arbatsky Circle within the established deadline.
In search of a new solution, we invited the metro builders to the Moscow Party Committee and posed the question: why had they completely tied themselves and their design to the surface of Arbatskaya Street, which not only offered no advantages to the builders but, on the contrary, complicated the entire project? After all, we argued, a passenger of the future Metro couldn't care less whether they rode directly under the street or slightly off to the side. Their primary interest was getting from Arbatskaya Station to Smolenskaya Station. Couldn't this be achieved by moving slightly to the right of Arbatskaya Street? After all, that's where the courtyards are, the vast majority of them empty, offering ample opportunity to carry out construction work on a broad front. What is extremely difficult or even impossible in capitalist countries due to the prevalence of private property is completely absent here. The October Revolution carried out fundamental "preparatory work" for the Metro as well: the courtyards are ours, Soviet, and we can make full use of them. Come on, I told them, let's walk through these courtyards. I remember how right there, at dawn, after the night meeting,

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We walked around all these courtyards from Arbatskaya to Smolenskaya Square, which greatly surprised the early risers.

The metro builders asked for a short period of time for a thorough investigation, after which they returned joyful and inspired, declaring that this option was the best, and they would undertake to prepare the working design and begin work as soon as possible. That was the decision. The Central Committee approved our decision, and work on the Arbatsky Circle began at an exceptionally high pace and intensity.

The bulk of the Metrostroy's earthworks and concrete work, especially for the completed tunnel, occurred during the third stage, and the second half of 1934, during the fourth stage, which included installation, electrical installation, and finishing work. People often say of this type of stage: "The end is the crown of the work." This "end and crown" was achieved with exceptional effort, and not only by the metro builders. All of us, the MK-sts and Mossovetians, essentially became members of the metro construction team, with a small addition: as leaders, we were responsible to the Central Committee for everything and everyone, hence our tension and our exacting demands on the metro builders. In our efforts to ensure accelerated construction rates and especially to ensure high construction quality, we weren't limited to slogans and propaganda; we considered, resolved, and ensured the concrete quality of concrete and insulation work, as well as the quality of the granite, marble, and tile finishes. The Central Committee of the Party and the Council of People's Commissars issued a special resolution on the quality of metro construction work, and the Moscow City Committee, Moscow City Committee, and the Moscow City Council did everything possible to ensure its implementation. We inspected the quality of the work on-site and immediately held operational meetings and separate worker rallies in the mines, at which the workers made specific commitments. I remember at one rally in a mine where water had been seen seeping through the concrete casing, I spoke poignantly about the quality of the work and said, "Make sure it doesn't drip anywhere!" These simple words later spread throughout the mines and became a slogan, "Make sure it doesn't drip anywhere." And the workers applied this not only to water seeping through the concrete but to the quality of all types of work. At a meeting with engineers discussing electrical installation work and general preparations for the metro's launch, while addressing specific issues related to this, I said, "Make sure it doesn't jam. When will we start running the trains?"—and these words also became a slogan. Thousands of people repeated to each other: “Make sure it doesn’t jam.”

I'm telling you this because everyone at Metrostroy was driven by a desire to ensure high quality work, which was expressed in the party's slogan: "Build the best metro in the world." The Moscow Committee, Moscow City Committee, and the Moscow City Council had to address contentious and difficult-to-resolve issues related to the construction and preparation of lines for operation. We discussed these issues at meetings at the Moscow Committee; during mine inspections; when reviewing Metrostroy complaints about poor supplies of materials and equipment, by summoning representatives from ministries and factories; when reviewing complaints and criticisms from workers and engineers, especially regarding labor organization, wages, and material support.

The struggle for the production and supply of shields, trolleys, and later metro cars and escalators was the concern of the entire Moscow organization and, I would say, the entire country's party organization. This continued after the completion of the first phase of construction, when the task of operationalizing the Moscow Metro became pressing, even though the new People's Commissar of Railways, the former First Secretary of the Moscow City Council, Comrade Kaganovich, and new people from the People's Commissariat of Railways, to whom the government had transferred the management and operation of the newly constructed Moscow Metro, had already stepped in.

The Central Committee of the Party and the Government highly praised the heroic work of the metro builders. In addition to the individual awards, at the ceremonial meeting on May 14, 1935, dedicated to the launch of the metro, Comrade Stalin spoke and proposed: "For the successful construction of the Moscow Metro, express gratitude on behalf of the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR to the shock workers, male and female, and the entire

team of engineers, technicians, workers, and employees of Metrostroy." Furthermore, Stalin proposed: "For special services in mobilizing glorious Komsomol members and females for the successful construction of the Moscow Metro, award the Order of Lenin to the Moscow Komsomol organization." The Party and Government awarded orders to hundreds of workers, men and women, engineers, party, trade union, and Komsomol officials, Metrostroy managers, and leading officials of the Moscow City Committee, Moscow City Council, Moscow City Council, and district committees.

The completion of the first phase of the metro was an exciting moment in the life of the entire organization and each of us individually - all of us responsible for the quality of the metro were worried about every little problem, telling each other how we couldn't sleep at night, both from joy that we had finished and from anxiety - was everything alright?

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In the tunnel, with the cars, with the ventilation, with the traffic, will there be accidents, etc. Personally, I have another concern—they are talking about the resolution of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR "On naming the Moscow Metro after Comrade L.M. Kaganovich." I was worried because I was against it and resolutely objected to it both in the MK and the Central Committee, but my protests were of no avail, especially after Comrade Stalin wrote a letter to Muscovites stating that Comrade Kaganovich "is directly and immediately conducting successful organizational and mobilization work on the construction of the metro. The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)," Comrade Stalin wrote, "requests the metro staff to disregard Comrade Kaganovich's protests and to make a decision to name the metro after Comrade L.M. Kaganovich."

On May 13, 1935, the Resolution of the Central Executive Committee was issued.

"The Central Executive Committee of the USSR decrees:

In accordance with the wishes of the Metro builders and the Moscow party and Soviet organizations, the Moscow Metro is to be named after Comrade L.M. KAGANOVICH."

In my speech at the ceremonial meeting dedicated to the launch of the first stage of the metro, I said: "We fought in the days of October, then in the civil war. We fought against the interventionists and the kulaks, fought against our economic and cultural backwardness, fought for a new structure for our country, fought against opportunists in our midst. We fought to transform our country from a backward, impoverished, roadless, uncultured one into a cultured, industrial country, a country that can catch up and surpass technologically advanced countries and demonstrate new models of human culture. The Moscow metro is one of the sectors of that great war we have been waging for decades, and especially in recent years. And if you ask us how we built the metro, we could briefly say: we didn't simply build a metro; we fought for the victory of our first Soviet metro." Having successfully completed the metro construction, we won not only as builders but also as Bolshevik organizers. Yes, we had to put in a lot of work on the construction site. We battled nature, we battled the poor soil conditions near Moscow. You're tunneling as if you were in dry rock—and then suddenly there's pressure, flooding, and quicksand.

We had no experience in metro construction. We had to work with engineers and technicians to figure it out in detail at first.

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In all matters. We, the organizers, learned technology, and the engineers learned from us, the Bolsheviks, assertiveness and organizational skills. When, for example, the danger of landslides in Dzerzhinsky Square became apparent, we met at night, asking one specialist after another what to do. There were proposals to abandon the tunneling under Dzerzhinsky Square, or to take a detour, to go deeper, or perhaps to abandon the idea of building a station in the square and go exclusively through a tunnel. One engineer would express one idea, another another, a third a third, and in the

end, we would weed out the wrong ones, find the right path, combine the right ones into a single, strong, steely weld, cement it with Bolshevik experience, and arrive at a solution that the engineers and practitioners would leave confident that the project would be successful.
The Moscow Party Committee, the Moscow City Council, and Metrostroy had to tackle many complex issues. I wouldn't say the construction was without difficulties or hitches. I hope that in the construction of the second phase, as mandated by the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars, we will be able to avoid these delays as well. Construction of the second phase will be carried out using more powerful equipment, but one thing is clear: the team at the construction site, forged in struggle and united through extensive self-criticism, has become such a force—a force, as Comrade Stalin said, of Party and non-Party Bolsheviks—that they will now be able to build an even more advanced Moscow Metro.
Our Moscow Metro is remarkable precisely because it's not just marble—no, it's not just granite—no, it's not just metal—no, it's not just concrete—no! Every piece of marble, every piece of metal and concrete, every step of the escalator, radiates the new human soul, our socialist labor; our blood, our love, our struggle for the new man, for a socialist society. The peasant, the worker, knows how to see in the metro, in these lights, the embodiment of their strength, their power. Previously, only landowners, only the rich used marble, but now the power is ours, this construction project is for us, the workers and peasants, these are our marble columns, our own, Soviet, Socialist. When we recall today the entire path we have traveled, we involuntarily feel a sense of pride that we built such a gigantic structure – the metro – using only our own efforts, the efforts of our industry: our escalators, our relays and automatic blocking, our carriages and rails, our workers,

Our Komsomol members, our Komsomol women, our engineers. We have built a metro where, descending into a station, a person feels, as the Moscow workers put it, "like in a palace." And even the palaces of our metro are not uniform. Every station has its own uniqueness. Where, then, gentlemen bourgeois, are the barracks, the destruction of personality, the destruction of creativity, the destruction of art? On the contrary, in the metro, we see the greatest creative development, the flowering of architectural thought—every station is a palace, every palace, each uniquely designed. But each of these palaces shines with a single light, the light of advancing, triumphant socialism!

MOSCOW-VOLGA CANAL

The Moscow-Volga Canal is the metro's sister canal. The issue of Moscow's water supply was the most pressing issue of all. The Moscow River, which gave its name to the great world city of Moscow, was unable to supply the city's enormous growth; even if the entire Moscow River were drained dry, it still wouldn't satisfy the growing demand. Existing plans to build a series of dams on the Moscow River, the Istra, the Ruza, and other rivers, while good, were patches that didn't fully resolve the water supply problem, let alone transportation. The most serious proposal was to build a dam on the Istra River. We began implementing this even before the Moscow-Volga Canal.
While we were still working on this issue in the June (1931) Central Committee Commission, we learned that there was an idea, and even something like a project, to connect the Moscow River with the Volga. This idea and project were being pursued by engineer Avdeyev, who, despite the ironic attitude towards him on the part of some specialists, was confident in this idea and fought for it. We summoned him to the Politburo commission, and in the presence of Stalin, Molotov, Voroshilov, Ordzhonikidze, and other members of the Politburo, he delivered a report that was subjected to comprehensive discussion. The essence of Avdeyev's project was that, by building a high dam at Staritsa above Tver (Kalinin) and receiving Volga water, we would direct it partly through the canal being dug, and partly along the Sestra and Istra rivers to the Moscow River. This canal, 200

kilometers long, should be primarily gravity-fed, and constructed not only by digging a canal, but by using all natural resources.

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The rivers and streams lying along its route. We had no other options at the time, and the Central Committee commission, without accepting or expressing its final position on Avdeyev's draft, believed that the idea and proposal to connect the Moskva River with the Volga, irrigating the Moskva River with water from the upper Volga, should be adopted. The Central Committee Plenum adopted a resolution on this matter and instructed Moscow organizations, together with Gosplan and the People's Commissariat of Water, to immediately begin drafting a canal construction plan and to begin construction in 1932.

Despite the Central Committee's resolution, there were many opponents of the canal, even more than for the metro, especially in the People's Commissariat of Water Supply and, to some extent, in Gosplan as well. And they opposed not only Avdeev's project, which had major fundamental flaws, but the very idea of building a canal, as it was supposedly unrealistic and unfeasible. We at the Moscow City Committee and the Moscow City Committee, and I personally, after the Plenum, had to study this issue in detail with the participation of leading experts, organize meetings, and analyze Avdeev's project. Avdeev fought fiercely for his project, but, unfortunately, often without engineering or, especially, sufficient scientific evidence.

During the analysis, geologists questioned the soils along the future canal's route, which posed a risk of absorbing large quantities of Volga water. This and other shortcomings of Avdeev's design led to our rejection of it. We gave engineer Avdeev credit for the very idea of connecting to the Volga, which, admittedly, had existed before him. But he defended it boldly, persistently, even obsessively. We personally defended him from the mockery of many of his opponents, especially supporters of "patch" projects, who rejoiced that Avdeev's design was not accepted. We turned to the consideration of another option that had emerged. This, of course, was not yet a design, but a preliminary outline, which, unlike the outlines of the Avdeev gravity canal, envisioned constructing a canal using the floodplains of several rivers, with numerous artificial structures.

As a result of the commission's consideration and development of the design specifications, the Moscow-Volga Canal, as a waterway, was given a direction primarily from north to south: the canal begins in the village of Ivankovo on the Volga, 8 km from the Dubna River, and runs to the city of Dmitrov, cutting through a number of hills; south of Dmitrov, the canal heads to Iksha, adhering to the floodplain of the Yakhroma River.

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and then the Iksha River; after Iksha, the canal heads into the Klyazma River valley, crossing the Ucha River, and follows the Khimki River valley to its junction with the Moskva River, then continues along the Moskva River—Shchukino, Karamyshevo, and ends at Pererva. A separate branch of the canal is the water supply canal, originating from the Uchinskoye Reservoir.

This project received our genuine support—it was scientifically substantiated from an engineering perspective. Unlike a gravity-driven canal, this Moscow-Volga Canal is, so to speak, mechanical—along its 128 kilometers, according to the project approved by the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars, it was to include the following: six dams, five powerful pumping stations, seven locks, two concrete dams, and two locks on the Moscow River near the villages of Karamyshevo and Pererva, a water supply canal—31 kilometers from the reservoir on the Ucha River to the Stalinskaya Water Supply Station, eight hydroelectric power stations, and the Istra Hydrotechnical Complex.

All this colossal work had to be completed by the 1937 navigation season, linking Moscow by large vessels not only with the Volga, but also via the Volga-Don River to the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov; via the Caspian Sea to Central Asia and Transcaucasia; to the Baltic Sea via the Mariinsky

system; and via the White Sea Canal to the northern seas. And most importantly, ensuring the daily supply of two hundred million buckets of water to Moscow, 125 million of which would come from the Volga, instead of the 8.5 million received from the Moskva River before the revolution and the 27 million in 1931.

It's no exaggeration to say that such a radical reconstruction, and in such a short time—five years—is unprecedented in the entire global practice of urban planning and hydraulic engineering. But one can imagine the effort and stress required by the Party, the Government, and the builders to construct such structures in such a short time. Much can and should be written about the construction of the canal and all the other related water supply structures.

During the first period, an independent construction organization, the People's Commissariat of Water, was created, naturally operating under the supervision of the Moscow City Council and the Moscow City Council. Due to project delays, construction progressed slowly, and it must be said frankly that the scope of the work—150 million cubic meters of earthworks and 30 million cubic meters of concrete—was beyond the capabilities of the organization created for this purpose under the People's Commissariat of Water. Moreover, particular difficulties presented themselves.

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The labor force Moscow had already allocated to the metro was already being recruited, and it was still difficult to allocate the necessary numbers to the canal. Meanwhile, by this time, 1933, the White Sea Canal had been completed, and a strong team of construction workers had been formed, including both civilian and camp workers. We were faced with the question of whether the "White Sea Canal" workers would agree to undertake the construction of the Moscow-Volga Canal. I admit that we Muscovites did not immediately agree, but after some thought, based on the interests of actually completing the complex task at hand, and setting aside all other considerations (such as allowing camp workers to work near Moscow, etc.), we accepted the proposal. The "White Sea Canal" workers quickly moved to the Moscow route. Among them were many qualified specialists, and we added qualified hydraulic engineers and provided additional equipment, especially from the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars. (For example, they transferred the Kovrov Excavator Plant to Moscow-Volga Kanalstroy, which equipped the construction site with excavators, which they did not have or had in short supply at Belomorstroy.) A number of major designers and builders emerged during the construction, proving themselves in practice.

In its work, the Moscow Committee did not make a significant distinction between the metro and the canal, but, given that there was a significant difference between the construction projects in terms of management and especially the composition of the construction workers, we believed that it was necessary to realize the difference in working conditions for both civilian and camp workers on the White Sea Canal and the Moscow-Volga Canal, and that Moscow could and should provide these workers with better conditions, particularly through enhanced cultural, educational, and "political" work among the camp inmates, in order to transform them into a cohesive collective of Soviet workers.

The leading figures of the Moscow City Council and the Moscow City Council, including, of course, myself personally, often visited the construction site, delved into specific issues regarding the progress of the canal's construction, gave instructions and, let's be honest, pressed ahead with the schedule.

All the Kanalstroi communists energetically set about implementing these and other directives from the MK; socialist competition was launched, encompassing not only civilian workers but also camp inmates. Of great importance were not only educational work among them, but also the announcement that those who worked well would be released early, as well as the introduction of piecework wages for camp inmates. They had the money they earned.

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The right to send to their families. With progressive bonuses, workers received a second salary for exceeding their plan by 25%. All this created a favorable environment for increasing productivity, not only for civilian workers but also for camp workers. It is significant that prisoners submitted over four thousand rationalization proposals per year, 1,200 of which were accepted and implemented. Over the course of two years, more than 20,000 skilled workers were trained from among camp inmates in courses, and about 30,000 through team apprenticeships. This opened up good prospects for prisoners to return home as specialists: mechanics, excavator operators, drivers, etc. During one of my trips along the canal, speaking to an assembly of construction workers, I specifically focused on the issue of organizing prisoner labor.

Every time we visit your construction site, I said, we see new developments in a number of areas. The scope of work is expanding. I also emphasized the particular difficulty of organizing the work of involuntary hired labor. Of course, I said, if an engineer, young or old, is afraid to approach these workers, doesn't know which way to approach them, if he's afraid to talk to them, if he feels awkward, "shy," then no good labor organization will be possible. We need to tell people frankly: in our country, there are courts, there is a prosecutor, and supervisory agencies; if a person commits a crime, they are convicted. But we are creating and must create the best possible environment so that even convicted people feel they can be rehabilitated. We must instill in the prisoner the idea that through their labor, they are educating themselves as citizens of the Soviet state, working for society, for the state, for their country. He benefits both himself and society with good work, through hard work he will achieve a reduction in his prison term, acquire a specialty and return home as an honorary builder of the Great Historical Construction of the Moscow-Volga Canal.

I was later told that the extensive work in this direction had yielded positive results—this had an impact on both the workers and especially the engineers and technicians. I was told that the convicted engineers and technicians were greatly impressed by our discussions with them on engineering and technical matters and, as they said, by our respectful attitude toward them and the objectivity with which we assessed their judgments at meetings, sometimes even to the detriment of the communists, who incorrectly challenged them.

It's no exaggeration to say that in successfully overcoming the significant difficulties of canal construction, the enthusiasm generated among the workers, including prisoners, was no less significant than the economic and technical measures, including mechanization.

The decrees of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Council of People's Commissars, signed by I.V. Stalin and V.M. Molotov, "On the Construction of the Moscow-Volga Canal" and "On Measures to Prepare for the Operation of the Moscow-Volga Canal," provided enormous assistance to the canal's construction and increased enthusiasm among the canal's builders. The Moscow City Committee and the Moscow City Committee discussed measures to implement the decrees of the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars at their plenary session and adopted a specific resolution to ensure its implementation. Through the combined efforts of the Party, the Government, and the builders, the Moscow-Volga Canal was completed on schedule, to a high standard of quality, and with excellent technical design. The architectural design of the structures was a matter of particular concern for the Moscow City Council, the Moscow City Council, and the Moscow City Council. These structures, beginning with the Khimki River Terminal, continue to delight Muscovites today.

Chapter 13

AT THE PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE OF COMMUNICATIONS

PROBLEMS OF THE 1920S AND THE FIRST FIVE-YEAR PLAN

The Soviet government received a difficult legacy in the economy as a whole, and especially in railway transport.

The dire situation in railway transport during the Civil War and the decisiveness with which the Soviet government and Lenin personally fought to overcome these difficulties in order to save people from famine and transport grain from the hinterland are demonstrated by the adoption of such an extraordinary, drastic decision as the cessation of passenger traffic for a short period. Lenin delved into this issue in detail and explained it thoroughly not only to the masses but also to the communists, among whom there were doubts about the implementation of this measure. It was an exciting moment, and to grasp the full urgency of the situation and such an extraordinary measure, I will cite fairly lengthy excerpts from Lenin's speech. I am convinced that no writer, however capable, could recount or reflect everything that we have gathered from Lenin's own words. "In Ufa province, grain reserves reach 60 million poods, and grain procurement is proceeding rapidly," Lenin said in March 1919. "But here we are faced with colossal difficulties in transportation. On the Kazan-Sarapul and Volga-Bugulma railway lines, there are up to 10 million poods of grain already procured. But we cannot transport it, because there is a clear shortage of locomotives, railcars, and fuel, and the locomotive service is insufficiently exhausted." In order to increase the freight carrying capacity of our railways, we had to resort to a very drastic measure: from March 18 to April 10, passenger train traffic will be suspended throughout Russia.

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Trains. Before deciding on this measure, we discussed it three times with fellow railroad workers and eminent railway experts. Only after thoroughly discussing this measure and calculating the possible results in advance did we take this step. The calculations showed that stopping passenger traffic would free up 220 locomotives, albeit weak, but still capable of transporting 3.5 million poods of grain. If we examine the data on grain transported by bagmen—there were weeks when free transport had to be permitted—it turns out that over the same three weeks, bagmen could transport no more than 200,000 poods. This calculation settled the issue. Naturally, there will be kulaks, speculators, and even individual workers who will raise an outcry and say that their last chance to transport even a pood of grain is being taken away; we know that Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks will appear, who will exploit the famine and stir up the population against Soviet power. But here, as in all difficult situations, we rely solely on the consciousness of the advanced working masses. It's better to accept deprivations, better to face the hostile agitation of the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, but we must face the danger squarely and openly declare: "We will not escape our food shortages unless we take the most decisive measures, unless we exert every effort to transport the grain." In many places, grain destined for export is piled up at stations, right on the ground, and will be washed away during the spring floods. We must expedite its loading and removal. In taking such decisive action, we have taken into account all the relevant circumstances. We know that worker traffic on the railways increases before Easter, and therefore service will be restored by Easter. We know that commuter rail service is absolutely essential for workers, and therefore it will continue now. We have sent our most energetic and experienced comrades to the local areas <...> They have been given the task of mobilizing the local peasantry and making every effort to transport grain, at least to Kazan, which will save the grain and ensure its delivery to the capitals and non-agricultural areas."

And in 1920, Lenin continued to attack and fight for the viability of rail transport with the same force and intensity. Lenin demanded not only improved train service, but also the restoration of rail transport. The incredible heroic efforts of Lenin, the entire Party, the Government, and all railway organizations prevented this.

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Catastrophe, paralysis of transport. In dire straits, the railway workers, with the help of all workers and peasants, all communists, and, in particular, communists specially assigned to the railways, ensured troop transport for the front, for the victory over Kolchak, Yudenich, Denikin, Wrangel, and the White Poles.

At the end of 1921, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and local party organizations once again recruited and dispatched party workers to the railways who could assist railway activists in restoring transportation, order, and discipline. Not content with this, the Central Committee decided to appoint Comrade Felix Edmundovich Dzerzhinsky as People's Commissar of Railways. Comrade Dzerzhinsky focused his efforts on restoring the railways' material resources, establishing order in road maintenance, and establishing discipline on the roads. As a result of these measures, by 1924, railway transport began to function better. By 1926, it had been largely restored. In 1925-26, the pre-war level of freight turnover in ton-kilometers was already reached and even surpassed, although the 1913 level in freight shipments was not reached until 1926-27. The material and technical infrastructure was not only restored, but also significantly improved. After Dzerzhinsky's death, Rudzutak was appointed People's Commissar of Railways, and transport continued to recover.

The new period—1929–1934—was marked, after the adoption of the First Five-Year Plan, by rapid, quantitative and qualitative growth across the entire national socialist economy, particularly in industry, which placed increased demands on transportation. Collectivized agriculture also necessitated increased transportation to and from the countryside, particularly of agricultural machinery, fertilizers, and consumer goods. Transportation output—shipping—also increased, but this growth in transportation did not meet the growing demand. Therefore, at the 15th Party Congress in June 1930, the issue of transportation was seriously addressed in the Central Committee's report and in the congress's resolutions.

After the 16th Congress of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), its Politburo, and the Council of People's Commissars addressed transportation issues, particularly rail transport, closely, concretely, and on a daily basis. Then, as the Central Committee's leadership in transportation expanded, a special standing commission was created, comprising a majority of

Politburo members: Stalin, Molotov, Kaganovich, Ordzhonikidze, Voroshilov, and Andreyev. The chairman of this Central Committee transportation commission was initially Comrade Molotov, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, and later, Secretary of the Central Committee Kaganovich. The Transportation Commission met regularly, reviewing the most important transportation issues and preparing draft resolutions for the Central Committee and Council of People's Commissars. To monitor the implementation of these decisions, develop initial drafts of Central Committee and Council of People's Commissars resolutions, raise individual important issues and proposals, and oversee personnel selection, the Transportation Department of the Central Committee was established. Central Committee Secretary L.M. Kaganovich was also appointed head of this department. While not interfering with the operational work of the People's Commissariat of Railways, the department assisted it, particularly in the organization and operation of political departments on the railways.

The Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars also issued specific assignments on the reconstruction and material supply of transport, the improvement of the locomotive fleet and operating conditions, the wages of locomotive crews and workers, the planning and regulation of transportation, the organization of railway transport management, personnel, labor discipline, and trade union work, and the reorientation of party and economic organizations toward railway transport. The extent to which the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), its Politburo, the Transport Commission, and Stalin personally took up the issue of railway transport with utmost determination is demonstrated by the fact that in June 1931, the

Central Committee heard a report by People's Commissar of Railways Rukhimovich and a speech by Andreyev, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Railway Workers' Trade Union, and in October, a report by People's Commissar Andreyev, who had replaced Rukhimovich.
During 1933-1934, the Central Committee and Council of People's Commissars adopted a number of significant resolutions on rail transport, prepared primarily by the Transport Commission of the Central Committee and Council of People's Commissars and the Transport Department of the Central Committee, naturally with the participation of the NKPS leadership and People's Commissar Andreyev himself. For example, the resolution "On Transportation Planning and Improving the Work of Local NKPS Bodies" was extremely important. Previously, transportation plans had been drawn up locally by so-called interdepartmental bodies, disconnected from the operation of the railways, and the railways often transported non-essential cargo at the expense of essential ones. After this decision, the preparation of transportation plans was entrusted to the NKPS. A first-category cargo category was established—coal, metal, oil, grain, consumer goods, etc.—which were to be provided with priority, while second-category cargo was planned by the railway director. The transportation plan became national.

This was a significant blow to the bearers of the “ultimate”, essentially bourgeois theory and practice of the spontaneity of the transportation process according to the prevailing situation.
The Standing Transportation Commission of the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars, relying on the Transportation Department of the Central Committee, took all measures to implement the adopted decisions. The Central Committee convened a meeting of operating personnel, attended by many employees of stations and operating districts. Stalin, Molotov, Voroshilov, Ordzhonikidze, Andreyev, and others actively participated in this meeting, which Comrade Kaganovich was tasked with opening. Of great interest are the numerous questions and comments posed by Comrade Stalin and other Politburo members regarding the organization of stations and operating districts, revealing weaknesses and encouraging stations and districts to improve their work and overcome bureaucratic management methods. These comments and remarks demonstrate the extent to which the Central Committee, the government, and Comrade Stalin delved into the specifics of railway transport operations, going beyond "general" management.
Through the Political Directorate of the People's Commissariat of Railways, the Central Committee and Council of People's Commissars carried out extensive work on the technical reconstruction of transport. One such major and important issue, for example, was the introduction of the new, powerful FD (Felix Dzerzhinsky) steam locomotive, vitally needed to intensify the transportation of heavy industrial freight. This issue was fiercely opposed by the "limit-seeking" elements of the People's Commissariat of Railways' Research Institute and the NKPS apparatus itself. The Transport Commission of the Central Committee and Council of People's Commissars instructed a committee consisting of Kaganovich, Voroshilov, Ordzhonikidze, and People's Commissar of Railways Andreyev to study the issue and prepare a decision. It was necessary to call upon the professors, locomotive builders, advanced engineers and practitioners - locomotive engineers, trackmen, bridge builders, with the help of whom the arguments of the "limit" supporters who spoke out against the FD locomotive were defeated, and the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars firmly decided to adopt the new powerful FD locomotive for use in railway transport, which our industry began to produce and which played a major role in the rise of transport.
Thus, the struggle against the "limit" workers essentially began in the Central Committee commission, but, unfortunately, within the People's Commissariat of Railways itself, the "limit" workers still set the tone. That's why the issue of transportation was raised more acutely at the 17th Party Congress in 1934 than at the 16th.

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In the Central Committee's report, Comrade Stalin said: "Transportation is the bottleneck on which our entire economy, and above all our trade turnover, could stumble, and perhaps is already beginning to stumble."
Comrade Voroshilov devoted an entire section of his speech to transportation. He himself explained why he spoke of transportation in such detail, poignantly, and "with pain": "Transport is the Red Army's brother. The difference between them is that our army is still only preparing to act; when the time comes to defend the borders—how it will act, we will see—while transportation is already in combat positions, it is already operating, and it operates continuously, every day, every hour, every minute. Transportation must prepare for war just as the army itself does. In the future war, transportation, and not only rail, but all types, will play a huge role."
Comrade Voroshilov harshly criticized the work of railway transport, as well as the speech at the Congress of People's Commissar of Railways Comrade Andreyev. "On me," said Voroshilov, "Comrade Andreyev's speech made a impression like a professor's lecture from the pulpit. An excellent lecture... But, in my opinion, railway transport should have been discussed somewhat differently. In addition to what Comrade Andreyev said about laxity and disorganization, it was also necessary to say where they stem from and when they will finally be eliminated. The Central Committee has always devoted great attention to transport and is currently dealing with it, perhaps, more than any other issue. Comrade Kaganovich, on instructions from the Central Committee, at one time devoted almost 50% of his time to transport. Which difficulties are more—objective or subjective? Certainly, more subjective. What are they? Disorganization and the lack of basic discipline. For example, we, members of the Politburo, know that even the highest-ranking transport officials don't completely obey their People's Commissar... It would be wrong to conclude from what has been said that there aren't excellent, well-disciplined people in railway transport who are excellent at their job and selflessly devoted to the Party. No, they exist, and not in small numbers. We know these true shock workers well, all those who shed tears of blood when they see what's happening in transport. But given the current chaos in railway transport, they are largely powerless."

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APPOINTMENT AS PEOPLE'S COMMISSARY. FIGHTING CRASHES

After the 17th Congress, no radical turnaround in rail transport occurred. Criticism at the Party Congress failed to stir the ranks of either the People's Commissariat of Railways or the railways. Although Andreyev himself, of course, tried to implement the decisions of the 17th Congress, certain elements, and most importantly, the "limit" gentlemen who set the tone, were unwilling to change. After discussing the situation, the Politburo of the Central Committee concluded that a radical turnaround required a change in leadership within the People's Commissariat of Railways. On February 8, 1935, a decision was made to appoint L.M. Kaganovich as People's Commissar of Railways, retaining him as Secretary of the Central Committee.
In proposing that I remain Secretary of the Central Committee, Comrade Stalin said that "this is essential for the interests of the Central Committee's work, and Comrade Kaganovich will be able to combine these two jobs at the Central Committee and the People's Commissariat of Railways. This will also be useful for his work at the People's Commissariat of Railways, where his authority is especially needed now. At the same time, Comrade Kaganovich will have to be relieved of other major tasks he was carrying out concurrently." Stalin proposed relieving me of my duties: Chairman of the Party Control Commission of the Central Committee (Yezhov was elected in my place), First Secretary of the Moscow Party Committee (Khrushchev became this), Head of the Agricultural Department of the Central Committee (Zhdanov was confirmed in my place), Head of the

Transportation Department of the Central Committee, and Chairman of the Transportation Commission of the Central Committee, which Stalin proposed abolishing: "Comrade Kaganovich must act independently as People's Commissar, reporting to us on his projects and activities, and we will assist him." All these proposals were accepted.

I'll be honest, it wasn't easy for me to adjust to this new job, as I'd spent over 20 years working in general Party and public affairs, and for some time in general Soviet work. I won't pretend I was being humble. Of course, I had a certain knowledge and understanding of the economic affairs of industry and railway transport, having handled them as a Party leader, but general Party leadership is one thing, and direct management is quite another.
When the Politburo raised the question of appointing me People's Commissar of Railways, I deviated somewhat from my party rule—never to refuse a job offered to me by the Central Committee. This time, I tried to seriously object,

citing the exceptional specificity of this industry, the difficulty of mastering it, etc. All members of the Politburo, first and foremost Comrade Stalin, spoke in favor of my appointment, justifying this primarily by the fact that, having worked for several years on the Politburo Commission on Transport and as head of the Central Committee's Transport Department, I had studied rail transport and, in addition, as Comrade Stalin said, had proven myself to be understanding of the matter and capable of organizing people, especially in the development of socialist competition, strengthening conscious labor discipline, etc. "We are confident," Stalin concluded, "that he will master this matter, and if it is difficult, we will help."
So, by the will of the Party, I became a railroad worker, truly loving this new job and devoting more than twenty years of my life to it. And, most importantly, with the whole soul of a Bolshevik worker, I fell in love with the glorious railroad workers, with whom I became close in the difficult struggle to overcome difficulties, to revive rail transport, and to fulfill the historic goals set by the Party and the Government, both during the construction of socialism and during the difficult period of the Great Patriotic War.
Naturally, as an active member of the Leninist Party, I had connections with railway workers even before the October Revolution, and I knew their lives and, to a certain extent, the specific aspects of their work. However, when, as Secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), and later as People's Commissar of Railways, I was entrusted with the direct management of railway transport, I naturally had to study it more deeply and specifically.
The first and foremost source of my knowledge was practical experience. I traveled to depots, stations, track sections, construction sites, and so on, and there, with workers and engineers, I completed my first course, studying locomotives, cars, and tracks during their repair and operation. This, however, was not enough. General knowledge was required, and I gained this not only from reading books and the best textbooks, but also from conversations with the best engineers and staff of the NKPS apparatus itself and, especially, from scientific and educational institutes. I usually arrived at the institutes (MIIT, MEMI, and others) late in the evening or early evening, so that curious onlookers would not disturb my studies in the laboratories with the professors and instructors, primarily Comrades Obraztsov, Syromyatnikov, Nikolaev, Durnovo, and others, who eagerly, kindly, and diligently imbued me with knowledge of railway matters.

Following the Marxist-Leninist method and my love of history, which is the foundation of all knowledge, I also devoted myself to studying the history of railway transport, its technology, economics, labor organization, and construction. This, combined with the Marxist-Leninist science I had previously mastered, which was mandatory for every Bolshevik, decisively helped me acquire

the minimum knowledge necessary for working and fighting for the implementation of Party decisions in transport.
The period 1935–1941 was decisive in the implementation of the Second Five-Year Plan and the broad-based struggle to successfully fulfill the Third Five-Year Plan adopted by the 18th Party Congress. At the same time, it was a period of preparation for the defense of the Soviet Union in the event of an attack by external enemies of our homeland.
After the 17th Party Congress, the best people in railway transport itself did much to improve railway operations. However, it must be said frankly that, despite the existence of good resolutions and directives from the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars, and their genuine assistance to transport within the transport organization itself, beginning with the NKPS, their implementation was poorly organized. Moreover, not only bureaucratic clerks but also saboteurs, wreckers, and right-wing Trotskyist groups opposed the decisions of the Central Committee and the NKPS leadership itself. The NKPS lacked a sufficiently strong Bolshevik leadership to resist them.
It can be said without exaggeration that, although in other People's Commissariats, as I highlighted in my report at the 17th Party Congress, there were many bureaucratic methods and bureaucratic rats, nowhere was there such an influence of old officials on the affairs of the People's Commissariat as in the People's Commissariat of Railways, in which many influential figures from the old pre-October Ministry of Railways and road administrations remained.
But the main problem wasn't so much this as the transmission belts they carried, among whom were even communists, who infected a significant portion of party and non-party activists with a lack of faith in the strength and logistical, organizational capabilities of transport. This lack of faith, even the "conviction" that rail transport had reached its "limit"—that it could no longer load or transport any more—was the main stumbling block to improving operations and moving forward. This block had to be removed, overturned.

This is where I, as the newly appointed People's Commissar of Railways, had to begin. This was a heavy stone. To move and topple it, it was necessary to overcome the resistance of those stubbornly clinging to it. And most importantly, to attract new, progressive people who were already working on the railways.
The environment I encountered at the People's Commissariat of Railways (NKPS) was contradictory. I wasn't a complete stranger to the railroad workers, including those at the NKPS. They knew me as a Central Committee secretary who had been involved in rail transport for several years—this somewhat eased my work from the very beginning, especially among the railroad workers and in the lower and middle ranks of the NKPS itself. But this also alerted those opposed to the party line and prepared them for battle and resistance. As for the leadership, alongside those loyal to the party, a certain section held extreme positions, trying in every way to prove to me through "deeds" that they were fundamentally right. That is, they continued to fight against the line and the Central Committee's assignments, which I had been tasked with implementing on the railroads.
To make things clearer, I'll recount here an important fact from my first days on the job. Before I knew it, my deputies and their subordinates from the departments (I didn't start with dismissals and kept them in place) presented me, in the very first days of my tenure, with a proposal to declare a "convention" on the Moscow-Donbass and Moscow-Kursk roads—that is, precisely on the roads transporting coal, metal, oil, and the like. They knew well that, while working in the Central Committee, I had consistently opposed the system of "conventions" on Soviet roads. I had repeatedly pointed out that the "convention"—the cessation of loading when certain routes encountered difficulties—had been adopted from the practice of private capitalist roads. And even there, it was used less frequently than by our overzealous, poorly performing operational workers, who, at the slightest provocation, resort to "conventions": "We're more at peace, and the fact that the

factories are shutting down is none of our business." Essentially, this is the same as Trotsky once proposed—closing unprofitable, loss-making enterprises, ignoring the fundamental difference between a socialist economy and a capitalist one, which disregards the interests of the working class and the entire state. Our Party Central Committee and the government disapproved of the practice of "conventions," and the railroad workers knew this, but—"Vaska listens and eats"—they often practiced it.

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And so, in the very first hours of my tenure as People's Commissar, in response to reports of heavy snowdrifts on the aforementioned roads, they came to me and, with a hidden, sly smile, reported: the roads are snow-covered, there's no way out—it's not up to us—we need to declare a "convention" (though these were the last snowdrifts of February and March). Some, perhaps, were convinced in their own way that there was no other way out, but the "byproduct" of their extreme thinking was the desire to prove that the new People's Commissar, who had spoken out against "conventions" in the Central Committee, was now, faced with reality, forced to do what we had done—declare a "convention," and on the main thoroughfares, too—Moscow, Donbass, and Baku. Needless to say, I resolutely rejected their offer. These would-be communists (Postnikov, Arnoldov, and others), known as the ultimate arbiters of the fate of the network traffic, told me, "Then we can't be responsible for the network traffic." It was an ultimatum of sorts, to which I replied, "You can submit your resignation," adding half-jokingly the words from a popular revolutionary song: "The Bolsheviks can do without you." They didn't submit their resignation, we didn't announce any "convention," and we gave the NKPS and road workers their first lesson in Bolshevik action.
Instead of declaring a "convention," we dispatched NKPS department heads, road managers, and others to the snow-covered areas that very night. Along with them, we sent additional snow-clearing equipment from nearby roads, materials, and qualified track workers. But since many of the snow-clearing equipment were out of order, we had to rely on mobilizing manpower with shovels.
That same night, as Secretary of the Central Committee, I personally spoke by telephone with the secretaries of the regional and district party committees, and with the chairmen of the regional executive committees. I asked them to help clear the tracks—to provide men, provisions, shovels, to send party organizers, and to take the junctions where large numbers of train cars had accumulated under party surveillance.
This first battle (it can rightfully be called that!) was victorious not only on this particular section of the railway network, but also had a remarkable impact on many railway workers, including those in the NKPS apparatus. People saw that it was not retreating in the face of difficulties, not using the notorious "convention" to cover up one's helplessness, incompetence, or deliberate abuse, but organized

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The Bolshevik offensive against difficulties and their overcoming is our way of ensuring victory in railway transport.
I reported this to Stalin at a meeting of the Politburo of the Central Committee, which approved my actions, and Stalin added, "Develop the offensive!" I immediately asked for permission to waive the usual rule when changing People's Commissars—drawing up a report on the acceptance and transfer of affairs—as it would take a long time and would tear both me and the apparatus away from urgent matters. Comrade Stalin, half-jokingly, half-seriously, asked, "Perhaps, Comrade Kaganovich, you simply don't want to spoil your relationship with your friend Andreyev?" I replied, "That's not the point. It's that it would tear both me and the apparatus away from work for almost a month, and that's impossible in the current state of affairs." "Well, then, we'll agree to it, but we mustn't let it lead to glossing over the shortcomings." The Politburo members agreed. So, we

dispensed with the report, but we didn't gloss over the criticism of the shortcomings; we developed it in the Bolshevik manner.
We were faced with a central task: fulfilling the state plan for loading and transportation, primarily ensuring the transportation of first-class freight; laying the foundations for Soviet rail transport so that it would ensure the forward movement of the socialist economy. To achieve this, we had to grasp the key link and pull the entire chain together. At that time, this first link was labor discipline, technological discipline, the discipline that ensured the smooth operation of the entire complex railway conveyor system. It was essential to develop an offensive based not on general discussions of discipline, but on those very pressing issues that, as if in focus, reflected all the ailing processes within rail transport. These key issues primarily included: combating derailments and accidents; the anti-state policy and practices of the NKPS Research Institute for Operations; and accelerating railcar turnover.
We began working on developing solutions to these issues from the very first days of March. We convened business meetings, held discussions with many organizations and individual employees, with professors and researchers. The decision to abandon the drafting of an acceptance report was beneficial, because there were employees who really wanted the new People's Commissar to get bogged down in paperwork and figures, while they managed the network as before.

spirit. They even showed hypocritical concern for the "interests of the new People's Commissar," so that everything bad I witnessed would be documented, but I rejected their false concern.
Many railway workers were involved in the work on derailment and accident prevention measures, from engineers, conductors, carriage foremen, and switchmen to depot, station, and line managers. The goal wasn't so much to issue another order, but to understand the issue at its core and identify the key levers of influence. Therefore, after the derailment prevention order was issued, engineers, carriage foremen, and station managers said, "This order was written by our own hands, with our own hearts' blood, and we will fight for its implementation."
At first, we drafted a resolution for the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars. The Politburo of the Central Committee approved everything contained in it, but Comrade Stalin, who was against formulaic work, made the following proposal: “We,” he said, “have been issuing many Central Committee and Council of People's Commissars resolutions on rail transport over the past few years, more than on any other sector. Apparently, this was necessary, but now the situation has changed. Now we must stop or curb this inertia. It is necessary that Comrade Kaganovich, as the new People's Commissar of Railways, develop and adopt all measures, and there will be many of them now, boldly, without constantly looking back at us. In our already adopted resolutions, there is a large reserve of unfulfilled directives by which Comrade Kaganovich will be guided. He must now study life and affairs even more deeply and issue the necessary measures by orders of the People's Commissar of Railways. He will report the most important of them to us; After our approval, “in principle,” he will publish them, or, if we find them unsuitable, he will take our comments into account, revise them, and publish them.” The members of the Politburo accepted Stalin’s proposal with great approval.
This, of course, meant that I was given more rights, but I also perceived it as placing more responsibility on me.
So, the order of the People's Commissar of Railways "On the fight against derailments and accidents" No. 83/Ts (Ts meant People's Commissar) was approved by the Central Committee and issued on March 19, 1935. We were not afraid to publish in it figures that had not been published before, but this had to be done so that all railway workers would feel the severity, shame, and gravity of the situation,

So that this would reach the minds and hearts of every railroad worker. The order began bluntly with the words: "The number of derailments and accidents on the railways is still high and has continued to grow recently. In 1934 alone, there were 62,000 derailments and accidents. The increase in derailments and accidents continued in 1935: in January, there were 7,000, and in February, over 5,000 derailments and accidents." It went on to cite figures for damaged freight trains, losses, instances of orders not being carried out, and so on. The fire of criticism was directed at the command staff, lest they repeat the cliché: the switchman is to blame. "Responsibility," the order stated, "for such disgraceful work falls primarily on the immediate transport commanders—road managers, political department heads, heads of operational departments, depot managers, track section managers, and communications managers."

The unsound practice of railway managers and the People's Commissariat of Railways (NKPS) reviewing reports of derailments and accidents and taking them "under advisement" was condemned. As a result, derailments became habitual, considered routine, and combating them was viewed as a secondary concern, ignoring the Bolshevik concern for the disgraceful operation of the railways. Even the NKPS didn't always report derailments. At the same time, the order condemned the practice of considering referral to court as the most effective measure: "Prosecutors accuse, courts judge, and yet the number of derailments grows." This bureaucratic, callous, and bureaucratic approach to derailment prevention led to a situation where, at some depots, nearly half of the drivers had disciplinary actions or criminal records. "The commanders don't understand," the order emphasized, "that a derailment or accident is akin to the defeat of an individual military unit in battle and, like that, must be personally studied in detail by the transport commander so that the lessons of this defeat are fully absorbed to correct deficiencies and improve overall operations." Combating derailments was to become the primary and central responsibility of railway commanders and the entire command staff, because derailments are a reflection of all the shortcomings in railway operations. Derailments, like a mirror, reflect the state of discipline and the organizational and technical management of the railways.

Based on a thorough study of the facts, it was established that over a third of the most significant derailments were due to train ruptures, the total number of which for 1934 and two months of 1935 amounted to over 26,000 incidents. A thorough analysis of the causes of the ruptures was given, including such things as improper

Train formation, careless inspection of harnesses and poor train assembly, conductor crews' inattention to engine drivers' braking and releasing signals, improper train control on the line and when starting, engine drivers' ignorance of track profiles, and discrepancies between existing track profiles and design specifications. Of course, if road and service managers had addressed poor performance—that is, improved employee discipline—these causes could have been largely eliminated or significantly reduced, if not completely.

Road managers were instructed to "personally take charge of combating accidents and wrecks and, not limiting themselves to investigating the causes of accidents and wrecks, to take all necessary operational measures of an economic, organizational, and technical nature both to promptly eliminate accidents and wrecks and to prevent them." They were instructed to personally investigate every major wreck and personally travel to the scene to investigate significant wrecks.

The road managers and their "patrons" in the People's Commissariat of Railways (NKPS) apparatus "rebelled" against this, arguing in every way that it was impossible. A heated debate erupted around this point with the road managers. I understood perfectly well that with such a high number of derailments, a road manager wouldn't be able to keep up with even the most important ones, but I replied: "First, try to keep the proportion of major derailments as low as possible, and second, you can send your deputy sometimes. Finally, third, the most important thing is for you to understand that going out to the line, being among the "troops" during battle, is your most important duty." "Not limiting yourself to just signing papers, having visited the crash site, you will be able to gain a

deeper understanding of the unenviable, ugly situation on your road in all your services and, with all the Bolshevik sharpness and anger, you will attack the outrages and outrageous people who lead to the death of innocent people and state property in crashes."
The intensity with which the railway managers protested the clause requiring them to personally attend major derailments demonstrated that it was spot on. It forced them to restructure their work methods—a powerful blow to the bureaucratic, red-tape-based management approach. Plunged into a pit where all the deficiencies of poor performance accumulated, the railway manager would be forced to abandon his office-based approach and focus on rooting out all the ugliness that had plagued the railway.

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That's why, the more sharply they objected, the more persistently I defended this point, and, of course, I succeeded. When I reported this to Stalin and the other members of the Politburo, they fully endorsed my position.
Many operational and technical measures to prevent derailments were developed and adopted by the People's Commissariat of Railways and the railways based on the advice and criticism of line employees, including our railway managers, as well as engineers, track workers, wagon operators, maintenance workers, and others. For example, regarding track management, it was proposed to conduct a comprehensive inspection of rails lying along the track and replace any rails hazardous to train traffic at least twice a year within a month; establish schedules for systematic track inspections using measuring instruments; provide engineers with verified longitudinal track profiles, restore all track signs, and install additional signs at damaged points.
A major issue related to the derailments was the issue of post-derailment cleanup. "The sluggishness with which derailment cleanup is carried out is the height of helplessness and irresponsibility on the part of road commanders," the order stated. "Traffic is suspended for hours simply because the technical means for post-derailment cleanup are not prepared. On most sections, relief trains are manned by hastily assembled personnel without qualified leadership and without even the most basic equipment." Economic, technical, and organizational measures were taken to strengthen relief trains, equipping them with permanent qualified personnel, equipment, and cranes so they could quickly clear the tracks. But the existing and newly acquired cranes were unable to lift a steam locomotive or even a heavily loaded wagon, and industry did not yet produce powerful 130-150-ton cranes. I then raised the issue with the Politburo of equipping the People's Commissariat of Railways with powerful cranes. The Politburo deemed it necessary to supply the People's Commissariat of Railways with cranes. Stalin then asked Ordzhonikidze: "Why can't our industry produce powerful cranes? Why do we have to import them from abroad, spending hard currency?" Ordzhonikidze reported that factories hadn't yet mastered this production. Stalin, hearing this, made another proposal: "Refuse the import, and oblige the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry to immediately summon the directors of the relevant factories and organize the production of powerful cranes."
The next day, when I was with Comrade Stalin on other

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In my presence, he called Kirov on the phone and said to him, "They say the Putilov factory is refusing to produce powerful cranes. Take charge of this and organize production. Kaganovich really needs cranes." After finishing the conversation with Kirov, Stalin advised me to go to Leningrad myself and, together with Kirov, expedite the matter. The next day, I was already in Leningrad. Kirov was both pleased and surprised by my hasty arrival, but we immediately went to Putilov together—and the deal was done. The factory director, Comrade Ots, whom I had known from Pskov, where I had gone to attend the Congress of Soviets, convened a technical meeting in our presence, at which the Putilov workers decided to provide the railway transport with powerful

cranes, which was quickly implemented. Thus, we equipped the repair trains with powerful, modern equipment.
The main result of the execution of the order was the selfless activity and energy demonstrated by the railway workers in the fight against derailments, especially by the new fresh workers who rose and grew in this fight against derailments, which turned out to be, as we expected, a powerful impetus, a means of raising general discipline, improving management and changing the clerical-bureaucratic style of work.
The saboteurs not only delayed the execution of orders but also deliberately staged sabotage. Therefore, the fight against them was not relaxed, but intensified. Unfortunately, even innocent people suffered in this struggle. The People's Commissariat of Railways, together with the prosecutor's office, convened a meeting of judicial and prosecutorial officials regarding this matter. In my speech at this meeting, I requested and demanded that, along with punishing the truly guilty, the utmost caution be exercised and that the conviction of the innocent be avoided.
After reporting on the progress of the fight against derailments, I informed the Politburo about preparations for measures to turn around wagons and overcome conservatism and "extremism" in transport. I proposed that the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars convene, as in previous years, a meeting of railway workers. The Politburo approved this idea and recognized the need to convene such a meeting, but Comrade Stalin made an amendment: unlike the previous meeting, to instruct the People's Commissariat of Railways to convene such a meeting on the instructions of the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars. "At the present time," he said, "this would be better in the interests of strengthening discipline within the People's Commissariat of Railways itself and the authority of its leadership." This was accepted. I asked permission to convene the meeting in the hall of the Central

The Party Committee, which was of great importance, gave its consent.
On April 1, 1935, I opened this meeting. Politburo members and Comrade Stalin participated. The meeting addressed not the operation of rail transport in general, but three key issues: combating derailments, accelerating car turnover, and capital construction. These issues, being crucial, allowed us to link the current struggle with the prospects for further reconstruction of rail transport.
On the issue of derailments, both the comrades who spoke and I focused primarily on how to practically implement the order to combat derailments. In my speech, I emphasized that a genuine "turning point in the fight against derailments and accidents" has not yet been achieved. They believed that combating derailments and accidents was one-hundredth of the overall work and measures being carried out by the railways. They completely failed to understand that derailments and accidents are the primary indicator of the quality of railway operations, and combating them is the most important lever for restructuring rail transport. True restructuring is taking place in the struggle against resistance to this restructuring. Elements of such resistance, let's be honest, exist even among people like you yourself—transport leaders.
Having dwelt in detail on specific measures, especially organizational ones, I particularly emphasized the importance of discipline in combating derailments. “Discipline for oneself, for the socialist Fatherland, for the millions of workers in transportation,” I said, “is not yet understood everywhere. That is why this discipline is trampled on from top to bottom. They still do not know how to organize engineers, switchmen, dispatchers, conductors, and other workers so that they work with genuine competition. Some managers compensate for this incompetence by punishing left and right. Of course, there are class enemies who deliberately cause harm; if a person is truly incorrigible, an outsider, then he must be removed and punished. But this is not the way to treat a worker who accidentally errs. “It is impossible,” I said, “to turn court and disciplinary sanctions into a mass event applied in individual depots or sections to almost the majority of personnel. Then these measures lose their meaning.” Disciplinary action should motivate the rest of the workforce to

perform better. But to achieve this, it must be applied to the incorrigible. For everyone else, technical and political training must be applied."

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AGAINST TRANSPORT "LIMIT-BREAKERS"

The issue of combating derailments was inextricably linked to the theoretical and practical struggle against "limitism," since the "limitists" not only failed to combat derailments but also justified them, falsely arguing that derailments were the result of railways operating at their limits. Therefore, we simultaneously addressed this issue, since no measure to improve transport could be implemented without overcoming this, so to speak, ideologically harmful or destructive barrier.
Until 1935, the "limit" theory was propagated by a significant group of individuals calling themselves scientists and working in the People's Commissariat of Railways (NKPS) research centers, technical colleges, journals, and elsewhere. They provided artificially low technical calculations and measurements that allowed them to "substantiate" views that ran counter to the interests of the state and socialism. They claimed that the technical and operational capabilities of the railways had been exhausted, that transportation was operating "at its limit," and that the USSR's railways could not handle more than 53,000-56,000 cars per day, despite the fact that much had already been done to strengthen the railways economically and technically.
Therefore, in railway transport, and at its very center—the People's Commissariat of Railways—it was necessary to wage a struggle for the very line of the Party and the Central Committee, which not even all communists followed. Rather, it could be said that the so-called learned doctrines of "limitationism" remained the "rulers of thought" in the People's Commissariat of Railways and on the railways, using quasi-scientific formulas to conveniently cover up the poor practices and poor performance of all the failing workers.
This convenient disguise for incompetent workers was also used by sabotage gangs operating secretly in transportation, Vikzhel members, and right-wing Trotskyist groups. As a result, the "limit" members gained considerable power and opposed their supposed "technical doctrines" to the Leninist Party line. That's why the NKPS had to begin by fighting for the party line itself, defeating its opponents and strengthening it as an unshakable foundation and guide to action—to rapidly advance in step with all the builders of socialism in our country.
The "limit-setters" created an atmosphere of complete irresponsibility for the disruption of the state transportation plan, giving a quasi-scientific

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Justifying the poor performance of backward railway workers, undermining discipline on the railways. Therefore, there was a close ideological and practical connection between the "limited workers" from scientific institutes and their like-minded colleagues in the People's Commissariat of Railways and the railways—and therein lay their strength.
To defeat these "thought leaders," it was necessary to refute them on their merits, especially since there were honest, misguided "limit-minded" scientists among them. Therefore, we had to not only issue an order, but also put in serious work beforehand: hold a series of scientific meetings and personal conversations between the People's Commissar and the "limit-minded" themselves, especially with those who were not their supporters, and listen to both. These meetings revealed that a significant portion of the corps of veteran railway engineers, and even a certain number of young, newly minted scientists, were susceptible to this disease. The most prominent exponents of this were Professors Vasiliev, Kudrevatov, and Neishtadt, who worked at the Institute of Operations, and Bratin, head of the Eastern Department of the People's Commissariat of Railways. If Professor Vasiliev was, so to speak, a party-theoretical representative of conservatives who failed to embrace

the revolutionary understanding of the socialist nature of our Soviet transport and ignored the advantages of a socialist economy, then Professor Kudrevatov, Denikin's former director of the Southern and Caucasian railways, who had worked well for the Whites (not as well as for us), was a staunch opponent of the revitalization of Soviet transport. Meanwhile, this Denikin "professor" was held in high esteem within the NKPS apparatus, and Bratin, head of the most important department of the NKPS Operations Directorate, set the tone for the entire Directorate. Deputy People's Commissar Postnikov—a towering "Goliath"—paired with the hunchbacked little Bratin—they looked like Pati Patachon. Postnikov imagined he was in charge of operations, but in reality, Bratin was in charge, and he was operating at the "limits," disrupting loading and shipping plans. We were helped to understand their incorrect, distorted calculations and measurement systems by those scientists—both old and young—who were summoned to meetings with the People's Commissar. They spoke out against the "limit-makers," presenting their own calculations that refuted theirs. And, of course, we were decisively assisted by the leading machinists, compilers, and dispatchers, to whom we turned for help and who, in real life, in practice, overturned all the pseudoscientific technical measurements of the "limit-makers." About these leading workers, especially the Krivonosov machinists,

I'll say more later, but for now I'd like to name those leading scientists who provided transport, and me personally as the new People's Commissar, with great, invaluable assistance, because without them it would have been more difficult to scientifically refute the "limit" theory. These include, first and foremost, professors like Obraztsov, a Soviet scientist and revolutionary patriot; Syromyatnikov and Nikolaev, both locomotive engineers; Zemblinov, an operator; Professor Perederiy, a builder; Professor Sokovich, a movement specialist who initially hesitated but later, during the debate, came out against the "limit" advocates; and, in addition, Khachaturov, a talented young economist whom we nominated for Corresponding Member of the Academy; Mochilin, and others. Many fresh young engineers, recently graduated from technical colleges, emerged on the line and joined the fight for the new measuring instruments. These included people like Platonov, Beshchev (the future minister), and others. And in the NKPS itself, Vishnevetsky, Baev, Podshivalov, Dubrovin and others distinguished themselves as advanced engineers.

As a result of a serious scientific and technical exposé, we established that these "gentlemen who push the limits," while crying out for science, in fact, as I reported at the Plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), were, in fact, violating science and technical calculations, resorting to demagogic justifications for the most backward elements and backward working methods, all in an attempt to thwart the nascent rise of rail transport. But their dominance had come to an end. The order of the People's Commissar of Railways we had drafted was reviewed by the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and approved with the appropriate amendments. It was lengthy, with a detailed exposition of the content of the "limitationism," so Comrade Stalin proposed abbreviating it in order to familiarize it with as many practitioners as possible. As a result, Order No. 99/C, "On the Anti-State Line and Practice in the Work of the Scientific Research Institute for Operations and the Eastern Railways Department of the Operations Directorate of the People's Commissariat of Railways," was issued on April 14, 1935.

I attach such great importance to this order that I will allow myself to quote its contents here, which briefly but expressively conveys the essence of the "limitation." "The conducted investigation of the work of the Scientific Research Institute of Exploitation," the order states, "has shown that the entire line and practical activities of the Institute and the Department run counter to the decisions of the Party, the government, and the People's Commissariat of Railways regarding the fulfillment of the state loading plan, especially regarding the acceleration of wagon turnover. Instead of genuine active assistance to practitioners

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To support the railway workers in implementing the decisions of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR on the state transportation plan and improving the operation of railways, the leading employees of the Institute and the Department of Eastern Railways - S.I. Neishtadt, S.K. Kudrevatov, N.A. Morshchikhin, S.V. Guryev, I.S. Berishvili, the head of the Department of Eastern Railways V.S. Bratin, together with Professor M.I. Vasiliev, working as a consultant at the People's Commissariat of Railways, formed a group whose goal was to substantiate the impossibility of accelerating the turnover of wagons and thereby fulfilling the state transportation plan.
Despite spending several million rubles, the Institute of Operations conducted no serious scientific research in its practical work. Railroad workers in their difficult work received neither scientific nor technical assistance from the Institute nor even a decent book that would have helped station managers and other operational personnel understand the latest technical advances in operation. Instead, pseudoscientists, with false and flattering arguments about how our transport supposedly performed better than American ones, demobilized and misled even some NKPS management.
In its practical work on organizing traffic on the eastern roads, the Eastern Roads Department followed not the NKPS's line, but the line of the aforementioned group of slackers from the Institute of Operations. As a result, the Eastern Roads Department performed worse than the other departments.
In view of all the above, I order:
1. Suspend from work at the Institute of Exploitation the acting head of the Institute, S.I. Neishtadt, employees of the Institute - N.A. Morshchikhin, S.V. Guryev, S.K. Kudrevaty, I.S. Berishvili and from work of the consultant - M.I. Vasiliev.
2. Dismiss the head of the Eastern Roads Department of the Operations Department, V.S. Bratin.
3. Appoint with demotion:
Bratina V.S. - assistant to the head of the Grozny department of the North Caucasus Railway.
Neishtadt S.I. - engineer for technical training at the Batraki station of the Samara-Zlatoust railway.
Morshchikhina N.A. - engineer for technical training at the Yudino station of the Moscow-Kazan railway.
Guryeva S.V. - engineer for technical training at the Topki station of the Tomsk railway.

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Berishvili I.S. - engineer for technical training at the Rtishchevo station of the Ryazan-Ural Railway.
4. Appoint Comrade A.S. Mochilin as the head of the Research Institute for Exploitation.
People's Commissar of Railways L. Kaganovich."

Subsequently, instructions were given regarding the research work on the subject.
In his speech at the First All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites, Comrade Stalin spoke of the adopted measures: "Take, for example, the People's Commissariat of Railways. In the central office of this People's Commissariat, there recently existed a group of professors, engineers, and other 'experts'—including communists—who assured everyone that 13-14 kilometers per hour, the commercial speed, was the limit beyond which it was impossible, impossible, to go unless one wished to contradict the 'science of operation.' This was a fairly authoritative group, which preached its views orally and in print, issued instructions to the relevant organs of the People's Commissariat of Railways, and generally acted as 'rulers of thought' among operators. We, not experts in the field, based on the proposals of a number of railway practitioners, in turn assured these authoritative professors that 13-14 kilometers could not be the limit, and that with a certain amount of organization, this limit could be expanded. In response, instead of listening to the voice of experience and practice and reconsidering their approach, this group launched into a battle against

progressive elements in the railway industry and further intensified the propaganda of their conservative views. Naturally, we had to give these respected people a slap in the face and politely escort them out of the central office of the People's Commissariat of Railways. And what happened? We now have a commercial speed of 18-19 kilometers per hour. It seems to me, comrades, that, as a last resort, we will have to resort to this method in other areas of our national economy, unless, of course, the stubborn conservatives stop interfering and throwing spokes in the wheels of the Stakhanovite movement."

Thus, the fight against "limitism" in transport was a prerequisite for the development of the Stakhanovite-Krivonosov movement in railway transport and the adoption of new, high-level performance standards. This struggle and victory over the "limitists" was not easy, because their false theory was fueled by backward sentiments.

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and the poor performance of many. It's no coincidence that the order regarding the "limit workers" was issued on April 14, and on the 15th, the order "On Accelerating Wagon Turnaround" was issued. While work was underway on measures to accelerate wagon turnover, the "limit workers" unleashed a frenzy of activity, opposing the development of this issue in every possible way. They worked both underground and legally, publishing articles demonstrating the impossibility of accelerating wagon turnover. This hastened their defeat. As soon as it became clear that the "limit workers" had been defeated, the NKPS apparatus took a different approach to accelerating wagon turnover. And this wasn't simply because they were afraid, but because a firmly established political line determines practice.

We have made accelerating railcar turnover a top priority, critical to the fulfillment of the state loading and transportation plan. Railcar turnover is the amount of time—in railcar days—it takes to load, transport, unload, and reload railcars.

You can have a large fleet of cars and still have no empty cars to load, even if turnover is poor. You can also have a minimal fleet of cars but still have cars to load, even if turnover is accelerated. The fewer physical cars you have, the more pressing the need to speed up car turnover and improve the performance of all services to ensure the target turnover.

But this was precisely what the "limit-setters" opposed, transforming the science of train movement into a "science of train downtime," of cars en route and at stations. They understated technical and commercial speed standards and overstated downtime standards at stations, while practitioners, working under these understated standards, transformed stations from productive units for the formation and passage of trains into holding areas and graveyards for unrepaired locomotives and cars. Thus, the struggle was not over abstract scientific and technical formulas, but for the improvement of overall operations and the strengthening of discipline in traffic management. This struggle was intense and difficult.

Among railway workers, especially at the lower levels, a determination has matured to combat the backlog and the bureaucratic rot that is hindering transport's progress. The fact that we, in a Party and Leninist manner, involved drivers, conductors, young engineers, compilers, dispatchers, depot, station, and track workers in developing the issue and in the fight to speed up car turnover ensured the success of the entire subsequent struggle for acceleration.

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Wagon turnover. Personally, I was helped to gain a deeper and more concrete understanding of this issue by choosing two locations for practical study in the very first days of my arrival at the NKPS: the Moscow-Sortirovochnaya depot and the Lyublino station. I was familiar with them from my work at the Moscow Party Committee, and this helped me create a relaxed, favorable atmosphere when I arrived there as People's Commissar of Railways. My conversations and business meetings with depot and station employees, especially with engineers, conductors, train conductors, and

others, including depot and station management, discussions and debates among depot and station employees themselves in my presence, and my direct observation of technical operations provided invaluable assistance in my first steps as a railway manager. Only thanks to the progressive people of transport—the workers, service employees, engineers, and scientific and technical figures I have already mentioned—we overcame the resistance of the conservative "limit" members and were able to develop, in a short period of time, an important, historic document for the railways: on April 15, 1935, the People's Commissar of Railways issued Order No. 100/Ts "On Accelerating the Turnaround of Wagons."

The order and additional measures took into account all the business proposals of the participants in the meeting of railway workers from April 1 to 4, 1935. At the meetings, he cited figures on the inflated turnover of cars by elements, and these figures were recorded in the order: “The average turnover of a car on the network as a whole in 1934 was 211 hours, i.e. 8.78 days. Of these 211 hours, a car was idle for loading and unloading for 47 hours - 22%, at marshalling and section stations - 91.5 hours - 43%, at intermediate stations - 27 hours - 13% and only 45 hours - 21.6% were actually in motion. At the same time, the technical and commercial speed of trains remained extremely low. The average car mileage was 117 km per day. Many operating workers still consider this outrage to be a normal phenomenon and think that freight trains are like turtles that, by nature, cannot and should not move faster.”

I think our philosophers will forgive us for this comparison with a biological organism—a turtle—but we couldn't even foresee the profound real moral impact this would have on the souls of the railroad workers. Some of them even asked

to delete the words about the "turtle" from the order, but we did not agree, and it must be said that this "turtle" gained great popularity on the line - in disputes with conservatives, progressive people constantly reproached them: "You are turtles, but we do not want to be turtles and we will not."

A number of railway, department, and station managers, despite having enormous reserves to speed up car turnover, wasted their energy on anti-government arguments against the impossibility of a decisive recovery. Train schedules were not followed, there was a lack of routing, leading to frequent train overruns, and car repairs were inadequate. Instead of properly repairing cars, the railways tried to push "sick" cars onto other lines, thereby creating traffic jams at interchange stations.

A comprehensive program of measures was developed, including the upkeep and material strengthening of key marshalling yards (76 such important junctions were specifically named), the creation of freight train schedules, and the revision of previously inaccurate schedules, eliminating unnecessary stops, increasing operating speeds on sections, reducing waiting times for oncoming trains, and effectively combating schedule violations. Railway managers were obligated, in conjunction with customers, to eliminate intolerable delays in loading and unloading, with a specific objective set to reduce downtime for loading and unloading on customer tracks by 15% and for NKPS's own commercial freight by 25%. Specific tasks were given to form shipping routes for bulk cargo (coal, ore, metal, oil, timber, salt, building materials and grain), without allowing the reorganization of shipping and technical routes at the accompanying dispatch and marshalling stations.

The heads of the roads and operational departments and the heads of political departments, station masters and party organizers have been given the following tasks: to streamline the work of the stations, eliminate the chaos in work, organize and conduct systematic instruction and testing of the knowledge of each railway worker of his official duties, put in order the rest rooms of the locomotive and conductor crews, ensuring uninterrupted economic and political services for them (food, boiling water, bedding, newspapers, etc.).

At the same time, the heads of political departments were given instructions

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Stop the practice of overloading railway workers with hours-long meetings, when engineers, conductors, switchmen, couplers and others come to work, including night shifts, tired after dozens of hours of meetings and gatherings in various public organizations.

Bonuses were provided for station workers and conductor teams for exceeding the plan for wagon turnover and reducing wagon downtime standards, as well as a number of measures to enhance the role of chief conductors.

Of particular importance was the introduction of permanent NKPS inspector-dispatchers on the railways, working according to Kutafin's method (traveling directly with freight trains). They were assigned to the NKPS staff and subordinated to the railway chief during their duties. The inspector-dispatchers were empowered to report any serious irregularities in train movement directly to the People's Commissar of Railways, who organized a prompt review and response to each report. As the People's Commissar's on-line controllers of freight train movements, the inspector-dispatchers played a significant role; the mere knowledge that the inspector-dispatcher would report any irregularities to the People's Commissar in itself strengthened their discipline. The inspector-dispatcher acted as a kind of state controller or receiver in railway production, monitoring the quality of the product—transportation.

The heads of railways and political departments were warned about the strict and unwavering monitoring of compliance with NKPS orders. Furthermore, the Central Party Committee authorized me, as Secretary of the Central Committee and People's Commissar of Railways, to directly appeal to the regional and territorial committees, and the Central Committees of the national communist parties for assistance, including monitoring compliance with decisions of the Central Committee, the Government, and the key NKPS orders approved by the Central Committee. This, of course, made the desired impression on them.

During these months of struggle and upheaval, we gathered the Moscow railway workers' activist group, where I had the opportunity to speak about the decisions and orders adopted, as well as the railway workers' Komsomol activist group and the party meeting of the NKPS communists. At the very beginning of my speech at the NKPS party meeting, I said: "Please don't be offended, but I'll tell you frankly—you're greeting me now, but I can't greet you now, although I'm sure that such a moment will come. I'm far from thinking that one general meeting, or even the desire of all communists, is enough."

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"In order to correct this major and serious matter. I, on the contrary, think that we will have to work hard and not just to achieve significant results, but to fight. But I am confident that the existing core of communists in the People's Commissariat of Railways and on the roads can quickly accomplish the complex and difficult task set by the Party and its Central Committee."

Having outlined the practical program of work, I said: "Some people talk a lot about the People's Commissar. Much depends on the leadership, of course, but if the Communists don't surround him with a tight fighting ring and fight alongside him, then the People's Commissar, to use the terminology you're familiar with, will suffer a defeat."

At a general meeting of all NKPS employees held two days later, I stated that we weren't going to "shake up" people, but would rework and re-educate them—and only those unwilling to improve their work, and especially those who resisted in their "limitedness," would we transfer to other positions. In conclusion, I said: "Comrade workers of the NKPS, we can't delay; every day is precious. Starting tomorrow, you must begin working in a new way, without waiting for new orders. When you arrive at the office, first of all, clear out your desk drawers; you have quite a bit of junk there. Clear out this junk. Begin a new life—a life of struggle, a life of efficiency, a life of knowledge, a life of revolutionaries upon whom the entire country looks up, upon whom the Party and the Soviet government place their hopes, upon whose work not only the economy but also the

defense of our great, beloved, Soviet, Socialist Motherland depends in large part." We will value every employee individually. We won't have an impersonal, multi-headed apparatus behind which the real people are invisible. We won't have paper obscuring the real person. I will demand that every department, division, and sector manager know every employee, work with every person, and value people—both morally and materially—for their work, their experience, and their knowledge." Attaching great importance to such a combative and important weapon as the press, we convened a meeting of the political press. This was likely a discussion in which the issue of skillful and insightful criticism and self-criticism figured prominently. Our railway press, led by the central newspaper "Gudok," played a major role in the revitalization of rail transport.

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At the same time, measures were developed to improve the scientific and technical work of the People's Commissariat of Railways and reorganize the Technical Conference into a Scientific and Technical Council under the People's Commissariat of Railways, to improve scientific research work in transport, and to unite scientific research institutes. The Council was entrusted with the following tasks: developing, both at the direction of the People's Commissar and on its own initiative, technical issues related to the reconstruction of railway transport (the introduction of new types of machines, mechanisms, and transport equipment of all types, the introduction of modern and advanced methods of track work and the construction of railway tracks and their mechanization); developing technical issues related to the improvement of the current operation of railway transport (improving the use of rolling stock, developing junctions, etc.); reviewing and evaluating projects for new major railway construction and complex railway equipment and machines.

The Council included: Yu. V. Rudy (Chairman), A. V. Sevryugin (Deputy Chairman), Academician I. G. Aleksandrov, Professors Ya. M. Gekkel, S. V. Zemblinov, V. N. Obraztsov, V. L. Nikolai, P. V. Maishev, K. A. Oppenheim, P. K. Khudyakov, M. A. Shatelen, D. A. Shtange, and a number of leading engineers. The Council was instructed to attract the best technical and practical resources as experts.

Freight transportation planning was improved, and changes were made to the nature and content of NKPS orders regarding the implementation of monthly state loading and transportation plans. In the area of construction, fundamental measures were developed to streamline the NKPS's design and survey work. A special meeting was convened to outline ways to significantly improve passenger service, including eliminating passenger train delays. At a special industry meeting, measures were developed to improve the condition of railway tracks and bridges, particularly for the urgent upkeep of track infrastructure.

The largest logistical measure to fundamentally strengthen the production and technical base for railcar repair was the decision to build 200 railcar repair centers, essentially factories, during the second half of 1935 alone. This was a practical, economic, technical, and Bolshevik-inspired response to the "limit-makers" who feared the destruction of the railcar fleet as car turnover accelerated and travel speeds increased. I remember when this proposal was put forward.

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Under the new leadership of the People's Commissariat of Railways and approved by the Central Committee and Council of People's Commissars, most of the NKPS and railway management didn't immediately believe in the feasibility of this plan. It was later dubbed the Metrostroyevsky Plan—due to its deadlines and pace. Some called it a railway Magnitogorsk. This difficult task of building essentially 200 factories in a single six-month period was accomplished; the metro construction experience was truly transferred here. The Central Committee, Council of People's Commissars, and the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry assisted us with supplies, even importing machine tools; schedules for their implementation were established, and so on and so forth. By autumn, these

two hundred car repair centers were ready—cars were no longer being repaired in the open air or driven hundreds of kilometers to factories. The "predeltsy" were humbled and defeated by the Bolshevik force of all the railway workers who had supported this, I would say, great undertaking for our economy.
A major technical reconstruction project was completed in a short period of time: the transition of all freight trains to fully automatic braking, which had been underway for years, was completed. By the end of 1935, this task was completed. Measures were taken to improve the quality of metal products supplied to railway transport and to strengthen the responsibility of the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry plants for quality. On July 3, 1935, an order on this matter was issued, signed by People's Commissar of Heavy Industry Ordzhonikidze and People's Commissar of Railways Kaganovich.

FIRST SUCCESSES

It can be said without exaggeration that the four months of March, April, May, and June 1935 were months of vigorous boiling of the railway boiler; the entire organism, from top to bottom, worked with tension, creatively, militantly, intelligently, and a turning point—the first serious successes—was achieved.
Now we could say without boasting that we had completed the first stage of work well and were emerging from it with a "satisfactory" grade, or, as students say, a "satisfactory" grade, and even a "good" (editor's note) in some areas. But we must remember that a "good" grade in the first grade is not satisfactory in the second grade. If you get stuck in one place, a "good" grade in the first grade may turn into a "fail" grade in the second grade. Now we must rise to a new, higher level. In the first stage, we focused primarily on organizational measures, on eliminating egregious

and obvious shortcomings, on uniting the railroad workers, primarily the command and political staff, on fostering competition and shock work, and on exposing the inertia, anti-state practices, and false theoretical fabrications of the "limit-minded." Now we had to move into the second class, where greater demands would be placed on us and tasks would be more complex and challenging. Therefore, while continuing the same work outlined above, we had to place special emphasis on implementing a number of economic, production, and technical measures across all sectors of the railroad industry, focusing first and foremost on locomotive operations as a crucial link in improving train service, which would consolidate and further advance the rise of our rail transport.
We were still extremely unsatisfactory in utilizing the locomotive fleet, replenished with new "E" and "FD" locomotives. In particular, there was an extremely low technical speed, which remained almost at the same level: 23 km per hour in 1932, 22.7 km per hour in the first half of 1935 and only 23.7 km in June of that year; intolerable downtime of steam locomotives, which during the day (excluding washing days) are in motion for only 7.9 hours - 33.1%, and the remaining 16.1 hours are idle either at intermediate stations (3.7 hours), or in the main (6.1 hours) and turnaround (6.3 hours) depots (6.3 hours); unsatisfactory maintenance of steam locomotives, poor quality repair of steam locomotives due to lack of personal responsibility in repairs, poor organization of work and wages, which does not stimulate the acceleration of locomotive turnover and their better use.
Over the course of a month and a half, we at the People's Commissariat of Railways, after consulting with individual leading steam locomotive engineers, prepared a draft order "On Improving the Use of Steam Locomotives and the Organization of Train Traffic." When we reported this draft to the Central Committee, Comrade Stalin proposed, given the importance of the issues raised, convening a second railway workers' meeting, similar to the one held in April, and discussing this draft at that meeting. The meeting took place in July 1935.

As a result, the draft order of the People's Commissar of Railways dated August 7, No. 183/Ts, was finally developed, edited, reported and approved by the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars. In addition to the introductory general assessment of the actual situation, the order addressed the following issues: improving the operation of steam locomotives; reducing downtime for specific tasks, for example, at intermediate stations by 30%, etc.; increasing technical

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speed by 15%; on work on short hauls so that on hauls 60-70 km long, crews could make three full trips per day; on the introduction of triple driving while maintaining paired driving on individual traction hauls; on the installation of new, more advanced meters for measuring the performance of steam locomotives; on new schedules and timetables for freight trains with an increase in the technical and commercial speeds based on an increase in the technical speed of steam locomotives, a reduction in the number of train stops, the combination of wagon inspection operations, cleaning the firebox and filling with water, etc.

The issue of eliminating the lack of personal control in routine locomotive repairs was a key focus. Functional teams were replaced by integrated repair teams (excluding boilermakers), headed by a relieved senior foreman. Decisions were also made to create a minimum stock of the most commonly used locomotive parts at the depot; to replace hot and cold boiler cleaning with a technical innovation—warm boiler cleaning with artificial circular cooling; to create locomotive departments to manage all locomotive operations within the entire traction section, relieving depot managers of this work and focusing their efforts on repairs, organizing the work of locomotive crews, and training them; and to define the tasks and work of road managers, locomotive services, and the NKPS locomotive department to improve locomotive operations and train personnel.

At the July 1935 meeting, the issue of organizing train traffic, train schedules, and timetables was specifically addressed. We instilled in railway workers the idea that strictly scheduled train operation should be the ironclad law of all transportation operations.

The difficulty of working in transportation lies in the fact that our subjective shortcomings—lack of cohesion, the lack of discipline among lower and middle-level command staff—are compounded by objective difficulties—the sprawl and dispersal of our production. Yes, rail transport is a kind of front, and anyone who decides to take on this work should know that it is more hectic and difficult than any other. What helps overcome these difficulties? These include the locomotive, the track, the carriages (keeping them in good repair, maintaining equipment), organizing the best people, uniting all railroad workers, establishing a proper wage system, incentivizing good work, and, of course, political organization.

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However, in addition to all this, an organizational lever for the entire movement over tens, even thousands, of kilometers is necessary. After all, a transportation network isn't a rural road or even a modern highway. It's the delicate system of nerves and blood circulation of a country. One stubbed toe can send the entire system into a tailspin, one station malfunctioning, a wreck on one stretch can disrupt the schedule and travel time, throwing the entire road, and sometimes the entire network, into a tailspin.

Therefore, the disciplinary lever, the organizing and guiding principle on the railway network, is a unified train schedule—a schedule whose implementation reflects, like a mirror, both the coherence and the disruption of traffic. It is the schedule and the timetable that must weld hundreds of thousands of people scattered over tens of thousands of kilometers into a single, harmonious team. The schedule must compel the crossing guard to wake up promptly, get out, and let the train pass, the switchman to prepare the switch promptly, and every agent to work efficiently, accurately, and in an organized manner. "We must," I said, "love and respect the schedule as a banner, as the fundamental condition for the organic, healthy growth of transport."

I'd like to cite one more passage from the July meeting: "The selection and training of personnel is the primary responsibility of transport commanders, political departments, and trade unions. Training personnel doesn't mean uniting them through personal, petty, tearful relationships, covering up shortcomings out of false kindness, failing to point them out in time, and then driving them to a breakdown and to court. Such sentimental 'kindness' backfires. No, work on the person, help them, expose their shortcomings and weaknesses through Bolshevik self-criticism, so as to raise them to the level of great tasks, thereby raising transport to the level of the tasks set by the entire socialist economy of our country."
Following the meeting, an event of great historical significance took place: a reception in the Kremlin for all the participants of the meeting, with other leading railway workers also invited, by the leaders of the party and government. General Secretary of the Party Central Committee Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin spoke at this reception. His speech was of great theoretical, practical, and inspiring significance—it elevated the role and importance of railway transport to a great, national level. Stalin said: "The existence and development of our state, which surpasses in size any state in the world, including

"England and its colonies (not counting the dominions) are unthinkable without well-established rail transport, linking the vast regions of our country into a single state... England as a state was unthinkable without first-class maritime transport, linking its numerous territories into a single whole. Similarly, the USSR as a state would be unthinkable without first-class rail transport, linking its numerous regions and districts into a single whole. This is the great national significance of rail transport in the USSR."
Comrade Stalin's statement was of great importance in fostering a sense of responsibility in all railway workers and raising their self-esteem: "Railway workers have workers in high positions and workers in low positions, but there are no unnecessary or insignificant people in transport. From the highest-ranking executives to the 'minor' workers, down to the switchman, down to the oiler, down to the cleaner—all are important, all are significant, for transport is a conveyor belt where the work of every worker, every cog, is important. When you understand this, comrade railway workers, when you establish coordination among all parts, among all workers in the transport mechanism—that will be true, Bolshevik discipline."
Comrade Stalin praised the successes of transport: "Transport's successes are undeniable, and we have no intention of hiding them. We have no need for false modesty. Your achievements are considerable. Average daily loading has risen from 56,000 wagons to 73,000. This is significant in terms of advancing transport. But, comrades, this is still insufficient in terms of the country's needs. We must achieve an average daily loading of 75,000-80,000 wagons per day. Allow me to propose a toast to your successes, which are undeniable and for which you have earned true Bolshevik comradely praise." "Allow me to propose a toast to the achievements you haven't yet achieved, but which absolutely must be achieved. To all of you—from the switchman to the People's Commissar—doing everything necessary to raise the level of transportation, which is already moving uphill but still swaying, to a smoothly functioning, precise conveyor belt, like a fine clockwork mechanism! To all of you and to your People's Commissar, comrades!"
This reception is the first in the history of railway transport, all the speeches at this reception, including my speech, speeches

The speeches of railroad workers expressed the feelings of all railroad workers in the country and their readiness for selfless labor to restore transportation. This reception in the Kremlin, and especially Comrade Stalin's speech, which praised the railroad workers' work in 1935, had a profound influence on the emerging movement of shock labor and socialist emulation.

The Central Committee and the Government decided to grant the railway workers' request to establish an annual holiday—Railway Worker's Day—to commemorate the railway workers' reception in the Kremlin, celebrated on July 30. This was confirmed by a resolution of the USSR Central Executive Committee signed by Kalinin. Thus, an annual All-Union Day of Railway Transport of the Soviet Union was established. Subsequently, following the example of railway transport, similar All-Union Days were gradually established in other sectors of the socialist economy, and then not only in the economy but also in various areas of government activity.
This was the end of the first stage of the struggle for the rise of railway transport in 1935 and the beginning of a new, second stage of a more sustainable and profound rise of railway transport of the Great Railway Power – the Soviet Union.
In all sectors of the national economy—in industry, transport, collective and state farm agriculture—a powerful stream of Stakhanovite production innovators unfolded, moving our Soviet Motherland to new socialist frontiers and strengthening its defense capability.
I personally knew many of the most progressive people well: Stakhanov, Krivonos, Dyukanov, Busygin, Smetanin, Evdokia and Maria Vinogradov, Nikita Izotov, Angelina Pisarenko, Maria Demchenko and others. Of course, I knew especially well the pioneers of railway transport, who became my closest, dearest and most intimate friends, comrades in the rise of railway transport, and above all those like Krivonos Petr and his entire family, whom I met in Slavyansk, having visited them in their house and having talked with Petr’s father, Fyodor Krivonos, Ognev A.S., Zakorko N.T., Yablonsky F.F., Omelyanov A.Ya., Zaitsev V.G., Neudakhina A.S., Babaitsev (he was one of those drivers with whom I had a conversation at the Sorting depot), Satbaev, Timerbek, Borodulin K.A., Kozhukhar M.M., Krasnov, Shakursky, Kirzhenko, Makarov, Mezhetsky, Bogdanov, Blinov, Troitskaya and many others.

The growth of the socialist economy, based on the Stakhanovite, innovative movement, which also embraced the majority of engineers, technicians, and our intelligentsia, ensured the growth of the people's material well-being, as well as the advancement of education and culture in the country. This is clearly demonstrated by the example of railway transport, where at that time, the People's Commissariat of Railways and the railways controlled all primary and secondary schools where the children of railway workers were educated, as well as higher railway educational institutions, the construction and operation of clubs and cultural centers, and healthcare—hospitals, clinics, sanatoriums, etc.
An important task was to organize the training of practitioners in a minimum of technical knowledge without interrupting their work and to organize mass training in the technical minimum for workers and employees of all railway transport, primarily Stakhanovites-Krivonosovites, in order to facilitate the promotion of the best of them to command positions.
Particular attention was paid to utilizing existing engineers and technicians, especially young ones, a significant number of whom were transferred from the chanceries where they worked to the lines. Graduates of technical colleges received personal assignments directly from the People's Commissar. In particular, I personally received a large number of graduates—in groups and individually. Furthermore, we held meetings at which I spoke, giving them instructions on how to work, asking them to consider themselves young representatives of the People's Commissariat and the People's Commissar personally, and urging them to fight conservatism. This inspired them and mobilized them for struggle and creativity. Many of these young engineers later became serious leaders. As examples, I could name the Minister of Railways Beshchev, a senior official in the Council of Ministers, Comrade Platonov, the head of the railway department, Gavrilov, and others.
When I reported to the Central Committee about my practice of personally assigning and accepting young engineers graduating from NKPS technical colleges, Comrade Stalin proposed, and the Central Committee adopted a resolution requiring all People's Commissars to personally assign and

accept young engineers graduating from technical colleges, and this, of course, yielded positive results.
After the development of major measures to improve the use of steam locomotives and the organization of train traffic, measures were developed to restructure the wage system and increase wages in railway transport.
In addition to the direct increase in monthly settlement rates, there was

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Progressive piecework pay per kilometer driven was increased by 20%, and bonuses were established for exceeding technical standards; command staff of the operations services, locomotive and wagon facilities, track and structures, signaling and communications were granted progressive bonuses for exceeding monthly targets.
As a result of these decisions, as well as improved labor organization and the development of the Krivonosov movement, real wages increased significantly. Suffice it to say, for example, that the average monthly salary of freight train drivers increased from 362 rubles in 1934 to 519 rubles in 1935 and to 600 rubles in April 1936.
Our subsequent work consisted of resolving a number of economic, organizational, and technical issues. In the locomotive sector, we were busy introducing a new type of condenser-equipped locomotive (the People's Commissariat of Railways had been holding back this locomotive, which had produced remarkable results, for several years). It certainly didn't replace a diesel locomotive, but it was close to them; most importantly, it ran on coal and provided a range of up to 400-500 km without taking on water. When I reported this locomotive to the Central Committee, Comrade Stalin expressed particular interest, and Comrade Ordzhonikidze took effective measures to introduce it into production. By 1936, we had already received approximately 400 of these locomotives, deploying them on lines with poor water supplies, and our leading Far Eastern engineer, Makarov, and his partner, Mezhetsky, completed the route from Khabarovsk to Moscow on this single locomotive, without replacing it en route. This locomotive was named after Ordzhonikidze. Then we introduced a powerful passenger steam locomotive, named after Stalin—the IS. We received very few electric locomotives; their production plan was not met, and this primarily delayed the electrification of key sections. Of crucial importance was the introduction of electric lighting on steam locomotives and electric lighting at 1,000 intermediate stations, which had previously relied on kerosene lighting.
In October 1935, we convened a meeting of road finance workers and the People's Commissariat of Railways (NKPS), where we discussed the fight against losses, accumulation, more accurate income accounting, and, most importantly, business accounting, a new system of settlements between roads, and the business accounting system we introduced in 1936 despite serious resistance from many road workers. Implementation of all these measures required improvements in logistics at the NKPS and on the roads. This was especially true.

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This was important in connection with the development of the economic and construction activities of the People's Commissariat of Railways and roads, the introduction of business accounting, and the significant increase in the resources at the disposal of the People's Commissariat of Railways and roads. Improved accounting of material assets was combined with the fight against abuse, arbitrary spending, and outright theft and misappropriation of state resources. A crucial measure was the selection of personnel for the material and technical supply agencies who were honest and loyal to the Party and the workers' state.
Just listing the problems and activities the NKPS had to address and implement demonstrates that it was not only engaged in general management and organizational and political mobilization of the masses to boost transportation, but also transformed into a production and technical headquarters.

To achieve this, the NKPS had to restructure its operations and structure. Guided by the instructions of the Central Committee and the Government, the NKPS restructured its management of the railway network, overcoming bureaucratic management methods and isolation from real life and from the leading figures in transportation. Suffice it to say, for example, that the NKPS central office was reduced by 1,000 people, which made it possible to increase employee salaries. To implement differentiated management of the roads, territorial departments were created within the central administrations, and simultaneously, technical departments were established within the central administrations to better develop and implement technical issues and gain knowledge of the technical situation in the regions. This rectified the intolerable situation, for example, where the People's Commissariat of Railways (NKPS) in 1935 lacked basic data on, for example, how many stations were lit by kerosene and how many by electricity. There wasn't even any systematized data on traction routes and their technical speeds, or on throughput capacities (but there was a map compiled by the "limit workers" in 1934, a biased effort demonstrating that throughput capacity was insufficient). The NKPS didn't even have freight train schedules for individual sections.
The restructuring of the apparatus, the reduction of paperwork, and the strengthening of live communications with the local authorities improved the apparatus's work and eliminated the aforementioned shortcomings. Many remained, some of which recurred, but the fight against them continued systematically.
The meeting of railway workers was of great all-Union significance

The Moscow Junction, to which leading workers from other junctions were summoned, took place in the Green Theater of Gorky Park and was broadcast by radio to similar meetings at numerous junctions, stations, and depots across the Soviet Union. In my speech at this mass meeting, I emphasized the struggle—for 80,000 railcars loaded per day and Bolshevik preparations for winter transportation. Subsequently, I would often speak at such mass meetings at the Green Theater, especially on Railway Workers' Day, July 30, but this was my first address to all railway workers in Moscow and the Union.
The winter of 1935-1936 overturned not only the "limit" rule but also the long-held belief among railroad workers that winter inevitably brought a decline in loading and freight volumes. In reality, however, more freight was loaded in the winter months than in the summer.
But there was a grave risk of disruption to the entire network due to the impending paralysis of traffic on the Siberian and Far Eastern railways, particularly on the Tomsk Railway, which would split the unified Soviet railway network in two. The suspension of trains on the Tomsk Railway had already begun to clog the Ural railways and even the Samara-Zlatoust Railway, and from there this wave could easily reach the central and southern railways, which would mean the complete collapse of the entire winter quarter.
I reported the current situation to the Politburo of the Central Committee and raised the question of my transfer to the Siberian railways. The Politburo paid close attention to this, and although some comrades expressed doubts about my leaving the central apparatus in January, after Comrade Stalin's observation that the main threat to the entire network was currently coming from the eastern railways ("If we fix things there, everything will go more smoothly"), the Politburo approved my departure. Comrade Stalin also offered the following suggestion or advice: if Comrade Kaganovich succeeds in achieving a significant turnaround on the Tomsk railway, it would be a good idea for him to travel further, to Vladivostok—this is important from both a transportation and economic standpoint and a defense one—while also specifically inspecting the progress of the construction of the second Karymskaya-Khabarovsk railway, which is of particular importance. "We must," said Stalin, "give Comrade Kaganovich the right to take all necessary measures on the spot to speed up the construction of the second tracks, obliging the builders of other organizations to carry out all his instructions." Politburo

This proposal was accepted, and in January 1936, with a small group of workers, I went to the site. I will not recount here the entire course of my trip and all the measures taken on the Tomsk and other Siberian railways during my stay there; that would require an entire volume. I will cite an excerpt from my report, given more than 50 years ago, in April 1936, at a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars of Railways: "The introduction of the new schedule from October 1, 1935, was a major operational undertaking, but to achieve its success, it was necessary to promptly manage its implementation, combating schematism and formalism in this matter. Allow me to use as an example the measures taken by the NKPS in the winter on the eastern roads. The eastern roads lagged in implementing all the measures planned by the NKPS. And, it must be admitted, the NKPS apparatus lagged in servicing the eastern roads. What did we encounter on the eastern roads, primarily on the Tomsk? The workers on the eastern railways performed poorly, failed to adapt, and failed to implement the People's Commissariat of Railways' orders, including those regarding locomotive operations. The Stakhanovites were not supported, and their work was wasted by the poor performance of others; trains were not moving, were stuck at stations, and were held for hours on stretches; trains from neighboring lines were rejected by orders of the railway management and at the discretion and outright caprice of dispatchers, station attendants, and the like.
The first step was to break the anti-state practice of refusing to accept trains and force the people to mobilize their efforts to improve operations. Many operators, based on schematic calculations, especially those with a "limit" mindset, reasoned as follows: the line is "protected"; it can't be demanded to handle increased loads; more cars can't be sent there. The line has a large surplus of locomotives, based on established turnover rates; it can't be given more locomotives. It needs to be gradually "unwound," deciding in advance that the load must be halved. We took a different approach. And the experience now being conducted on the Tomsk line is extremely interesting for other lines. The Tomsk line's workers had to be forced to handle a large number of trains, so they would understand there was no other way out.
The first political blow we dealt to the demagnetized personnel on the Tomsk railway was that we said: you are acting like state criminals; you are tearing the unified railway network of the USSR into pieces; you are not transporting

You're deliberately violating the schedule and arbitrarily refusing to accept trains. "Open the gates," please. We knew that trains wouldn't run on orders alone. If we'd simply "opened the gates," allowing more trains to pass without taking any other measures, the Tomsk Railway could have truly reached a deadlock. But we took other measures. First, we provided more locomotives and cars. The veteran operators (I was referring here to the NKPS officers, including Postnikov) couldn't understand or agree with this: the Tomsk Railway has so many extra locomotives and cars, and you're demanding more. We responded: you can't reason schematically; at the front, there are situations in which, by all the command's calculations, one division is enough to defeat the enemy, but the quality of a division varies, and sometimes inferior quality must be compensated for by quantity, and improved quality at that. First and foremost, we needed to convince the honest workers of the Tomsk Railway that they could load and transport significantly more. We gave them locomotives and cars, even though we had a surplus fleet.
We supported the eastern railways with a better supply of spare parts and materials, sent repair trains from the central railways and skilled workers from other railways to lagging depots, and supplied key personnel with warm work clothes.
The second measure we carried out was to rally the best people. If we had taken only economic and technical measures without mobilizing people organizationally and politically, everything would have failed. The weakness of the old operational calculations lies in their failure to take into account the ability of people to overcome difficulties if they are given the right direction and organized.

And, most importantly, we replaced a number of failing employees, starting with the railway's management (we removed the railway's director, Mironov, a conceited nobleman), and assigned a number of new workers. The workers of the Tomsk and other eastern railways, supported by all our specific measures, supported by the logic of necessity, were forced to step up their game.
The third measure is the exposure of scoundrels, the use of the instrument of the proletarian dictatorship to punish those who interfered with proper work.
The fourth measure is operational maneuvering on the eastern roads, that is, such regulation of freight flows that trains the roads to work intensively, with full use

This ensures throughput capacity, but at the same time prevents the railway from being clogged with excess train stock on certain sections. In this regard, streamlining the daily compilation of "train regulations" is of paramount importance. This provides a complete picture of the railway on each section and allows for appropriate maneuvers—moving trains from one section to another. We later implemented this experience of compiling daily "train regulations" on all railways and at the NKPS network-wide, which proved extremely helpful in our work, especially during the Great Patriotic War.
The fifth measure was restructuring the NKPS apparatus's relationship with the eastern railways. We forced the central administrations to turn their attention to the eastern railways and strengthen their service to their needs. (If my orders issued from the Siberian and Far Eastern Railways, and my conversations over the direct line with the NKPS, had survived, they would have been very interesting and instructive documents about how we restructured the NKPS apparatus "from the front lines" during the battle.) Upon our arrival in Moscow, we increased capital investments for 1936 in the eastern railways and improved their supply of spare parts and materials.
It's no exaggeration to say that my trip through Siberia and the Far East enriched me. I completed a comprehensive course in railway affairs, studying not only the industry but, most importantly, the people—railway workers and non-railway workers alike. I spoke with many of them not only at work but also at home, in their families, where I discovered many everyday needs that we helped to partially address.
The conclusions were of great importance not only for the eastern roads, but also for the further development of all railway transport in the USSR.
I reported to the Central Committee on my visit to the eastern railways and the measures taken and being taken, which approved all the measures taken and being taken. The Central Committee provided significant assistance to the workers of the Siberian and Far Eastern railways, going so far as, for example, to meet the requests of Far Eastern railway workers for hunting rifles and supplies to promote hunting and thereby improve their meat supply (the Central Committee ordered the allocation of no less than 25,000 hunting rifles).
Based on the results of 1935 and the first quarter of 1936, the Central Committee, in my opinion,

In his report, he approved the work of the People's Commissariat of Railways and all railway transport, and for the results achieved, he issued a resolution awarding orders and medals to railway workers. After Kalinin presented the orders, I expressed the railway workers' gratitude in my speech at the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee: "For each of us, this year has been a year of the greatest exertion of all our spiritual and physical strength. It was truly a year when railway workers went to bed and woke up with one thought: how not to slip up, how not to trip again and end up in the same puddle in which they had been sitting for too long. Our achievements and victories are significant, but we still have many shortcomings in our work, and many difficulties remain on our path. We must create a transport system that embodies in its work, as the Metro already does, love, attention, and concern for the workers—the builders of socialism. I think I have

the right to say here not only on behalf of you, the recipients of the award, but also on behalf of the entire multi-million army of railway workers, that we will do everything to ensure that our transport becomes, in the full sense of the word, cultural, socialist transport."
Here, perhaps, it would be appropriate to cite a letter I received during that period from the great proletarian writer Maxim Gorky, who wrote to me: "I take this opportunity to express my sincere admiration for your Herculean work in cleaning out the Augean stables of transport. Your energy has amazed me more than once, but your work in transport is almost fantastic!"
I congratulate you with all my heart, dear comrade.
M. Gorky.
29/X 35. Tesseli."
It is no exaggeration to say that 1935-1936 were the years when a solid foundation was laid for the restructuring of Soviet railway transport.
Of course, all these meetings did not reduce or weaken our daily operational business work and the fight against the emerging disruptions in loading of types of cargo and transportation, but we usually managed this issue daily, hourly, via direct telephone lines, private orders, and the convening of operational meetings via a selector.
In October, we summoned the heads of roads and the heads of road transport to Moscow to hear them specifically about the fulfillment of the loading plan in connection with its underfulfillment on some roads,

To verify compliance with the order regarding crashes and preparations for winter. We paid particular attention to winter preparations.
After this, some of the NKPS's senior staff were dispatched to the roads to provide operational assistance to the road managers. I personally deployed to the Donetsk and Stalinskaya (Ekaterinoslavskaya) roads.
The fact is that these two major railways, which had been functioning well in 1935 and the first and second quarters of 1936, began to falter in the third quarter of 1936. This worried us, and I traveled there and, together with local party leaders, took prompt measures to improve their performance. In my speeches at the activist meetings, I thoroughly analyzed their work and, of course, subjected it to harsh criticism. At the end of my speech on the Stalin Railway, I said: “They said here that I was supposed to come to you to celebrate the renaming of the railway (the former Yekaterinoslavskaya was renamed the Stalinskaya). I didn’t come then because I didn’t have the opportunity. But I can tell you that by my character, by my experience, by my skill over many years of struggle, I am better suited to organizing a business-like upsurge, to the work of criticism, to the work of positively correcting mistakes, than to celebrations. But I am confident that the Stalin Railway, and I, together with it, will yet celebrate.”
In early January 1937, we held an All-Union teleconference with all road managers, department heads, and major hubs. This meeting was crucial for improving overall performance during the first quarter. We never dropped below 80,000 railcars per day in loading.
The conference call wasn't just a call for action and promises. It was a serious, in-depth, and technically businesslike dispatching review of the situation on each road and section, both in terms of loading and traffic. Some roads had to be criticized "in full view of the entire network," while others were praised. While we generally offered sparing praise, in this case we commended and rewarded the best. In particular, I announced that the reprimands issued to certain road managers had been lifted due to their improvements and were now operating satisfactorily.
During these years, for example, interesting, important and extensive work was carried out by political departments in connection with the movement among the wives of commanders and leading transport workers regarding their participation in improving the cultural and living conditions of life and work of railway workers, which was vividly described by the participants of the meetings convened at the People's Commissariat of Railways.

Leading Women of Transport (there were two such meetings in 1936—one in June and one in December). In my speeches, I sincerely thanked these leading women for their invaluable assistance not only in establishing a cultured and clean environment in dormitories, schools, hospitals, kindergartens and crèches, and at the enterprises themselves, but also in helping their husbands be pioneering innovators in rail transport.

1937: LESSONS OF SABOTAGE

The Plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), held in February-March 1937, heard and discussed reports on “The Lessons of Wrecking, Subversion, and Espionage by Japanese-German-Trotskyist Agents in Industry and Transport.”
The Central Committee Plenum also discussed other very important issues: preparations for the election campaign (reported by Comrade Zhdanov), shortcomings in party work and measures to eliminate Trotskyist and other double-dealers (report by Comrade Stalin), and lessons from sabotage in industry, transport, and other sectors of the economy (report by Comrade Molotov).
I will focus mainly on my report: “Lessons of sabotage, subversion and espionage of Japanese-German-Trotskyist agents in railway transport.”
I began my report with the following general remark:
"We are discussing here the lessons of sabotage, subversion, and espionage by Japanese-German-Trotskyist agents. This means we must uncover the specifics of this sabotage, its methods of combating it, and, most importantly, expose our own mistakes, the mistakes of economic leaders, both party and non-party, from the lowest economic worker to the people's commissar, who failed to promptly expose the enemy's sabotage. The roots and nature of Japanese-German-Trotskyist sabotage in railway transport are the same as in heavy industry, as Comrade Molotov reported here. We are dealing with a gang of rabid intelligence agents and spies, embittered by the growing power of socialism in our country and therefore using all the means of a barbaric struggle against Soviet power, against the Soviet Union, that are in the arsenal of spies, saboteurs and intelligence agents. What is stated in the first paragraph of the draft resolution of the Plenum of the Central Committee applies to rail transport to a particular extent.

"The Trotskyists, who became hired tools of fascism, adopted the sabotage techniques of all previously exposed sabotage and espionage organizations in industry and transport. In relation to rail transport, it can be said that they adopted not only sabotage techniques, but also a significant number of unexposed individuals and even organized sabotage groups that had remained undetected for a number of years."
Just as Molotov did with the national economy, I presented the Central Committee Plenum with facts from the history of sabotage in railway transport, beginning with von Meck's organization during the Industrial Party period and ending with Trotskyist groups that in 1930 entered into an alliance, an agreement with the saboteurs and spies among the bourgeois specialists who occupied official positions in the People's Commissariat of Railways and on the railways, enabling them, under the guise of theoretical formulas and calculations, to confuse technical plans, disrupt transportation plans, and the development and reconstruction of railway transport. This chain, which linked Trotskyists with seasoned supporters of the old bourgeois system, extended further, linking them to people with party cards but with Trotskyist pasts or sympathizers. I illustrated this at the Plenum with facts, in particular the testimony of one of the Trotskyist leaders, the former chief deputy of Trotsky when he was People's Commissar of Railways, Serebryakov.

They used "limitism" as a legal cover for the subversive work of bourgeois wreckers and Trotskyists. They transformed the "limit" theory into a legal Trotskyist platform aimed at disrupting all state plans for rail transport, using journals, departments, and even various meetings and conferences for this purpose for several years, up until 1935. The "limitists" and bourgeois-Trotskyist wreckers used the All-Union Dispatcher Conference convened in December 1934 to promote, develop, and adopt decisions that facilitated their sabotage, particularly disrupting train schedules. These projects were, unfortunately, hastily approved by the NKPS leadership.
It has been established that orders and instructions were mostly developed and edited by the "limit" saboteurs, while communists - big and small - did not notice the open, legal, brazen work of the enemy.

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In 1935, under the Central Committee's leadership, we succeeded in eliminating the rule of the "limited" elements—their legal, overt sabotage activities were eliminated, but they switched to underground sabotage. Here's what the same leader of the Trotskyist underground sabotage headquarters, Serebryakov, testified:
"In early 1935," Serebryakov testifies, "after L.M. Kaganovich was appointed People's Commissar of Railways, I summoned Arnoldov (he was then head of the Directorate of Operations and Traffic). Arnoldov, upon coming to me, first of all stated the following: 'If at the beginning of 1934 it was said that transport was the bottleneck facing our economy, then the same can be said now—a year later... Suffice it to say that by the beginning of 1935, the average daily loading amounted to just over 50,000 cars. All standards were set to the extreme. We and our specialists have 'substantiated' all of this so thoroughly that it is unlikely that Kaganovich will be able to move transport forward anytime soon.' In addition, 1) the fleet of "sick" cars and locomotives has increased, as their repairs are being carried out substandardly as a result of the established system of impersonal repairs; 2) the transition to solid axleboxes, automatic braking, and automatic coupling has been delayed; 3) the track infrastructure is in very poor condition, as funds for routine repairs were misdirected; 4) the roads were supplied with incomplete and substandard spare parts and materials; 5) traffic jams were created. All this, Arnoldov said, has led to an increase in the number of derailments and accidents on the roads, and to disruptions to train schedules.
"If," Serebryakov continued, "by 1935, transport was suffocating within the narrow confines of reduced standards, it was because Arnoldov, together with a group of specialists, had succeeded in making these reduced standards the law of railway operation. All of this was what Kaganovich soon exposed as the 'limit' theory, which our organization used to cover up its sabotage."
Of course, it wasn't Kaganovich's fault. That was the work of the Party, its Central Committee, and myself included. But the real issue was that the legal cover for sabotage had been eliminated. The saboteurs were effectively neutralized, and progressive individuals were given the opportunity to flourish, break old norms, and, through their creative revolutionary work, create new standards and metrics that ensured a resurgence in transportation.

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Yes, indeed, by clinging to "limitism," we captured the core of Trotskyist open, legal activity in railway transport. In 1935, they were seriously damaged, driven underground, and, of course, couldn't operate as they had before. But in 1936, they revived their activities.
The railroad workers, carried away by their success, failed to exercise due vigilance. I spoke about this at the Central Committee Plenum, and I spoke not in the abstract, but illustrated it with concrete facts and people. I also spoke about what the Party Central Committee, Stalin, and I, of course, had repeatedly emphasized to the railroad workers: vigilance not only in 1935 but also in 1936. In the order regarding the derailments, I wrote that "one of the most important reasons for the ongoing derailments is the subversive and sabotage work of class enemies—former kulaks, White Guards,

Mensheviks, Trotskyists—and the dulling of the Bolshevik vigilance of commanders and political workers." Despite this, even as People's Commissar, I showed trust and leniency toward the disguised people who had deceived me.
While we removed Arnoldov from his post as head of the Operations Directorate, Livshits, a former Trotskyist, was Deputy People's Commissar. He spoke out so vehemently against the "limit-minded" and displayed such energy in his work that we believed in his honesty. The same could be said of Tomlenov, whom I myself nominated as head of the Locomotive Directorate. He was a highly qualified engineer and a communist. The son of an engineer, an engineer himself, he had studied under Soviet rule and had previously served as secretary of the district party committee. I had a good opinion of him and even hoped to develop him into a major leader, but it turned out that, while posted to Japan in 1929, he gave in to his "youthful temperament" and became infatuated with a Japanese woman. Then, supposedly her husband, in reality a spy, appeared. He threatened Tomlenov with arrest and scandal, and when a second intelligence officer showed up, offering to settle the matter if Tomlenov would sign a document informing Japanese intelligence, he "suffered," as he later admitted, and agreed. Thus he became a Japanese intelligence officer, and the Trotskyists "ennobled" him with their "ideology." He no longer confined himself to information; he was wreaking havoc. And as head of the Locomotive Directorate, he not only wreaked havoc himself but also recruited many assistants.
According to the data of investigative and judicial bodies, I highlighted in the report at the Plenum of the Central Committee about sabotage in locomotive and wagon, track facilities, about sabotage in construction and reconstruction

Rail transport, on the necessary measures to eradicate sabotage and eliminate its consequences, especially ensuring traffic safety. I reported to the Central Committee Plenum on the facts of saboteurs, spies, and Trotskyists organizing derailments, especially of passenger trains, with heavy casualties; on improving the selection and training of personnel, especially those involved in train operations; on the work of political departments; and on increasing the vigilance of communists, especially senior officials.
Along with the fight against actual saboteurs, investigative and judicial errors were committed when judicial authorities perceived the deliberate slander of honest people by spies, lumping them into their own gang. In a number of cases, we objected to and saved from conviction a considerable number of such honest workers, who later occupied leadership positions. In others, however, despite having their own testimony, we were unable to defend them, and they were wrongfully convicted.
After the Plenum of the Central Committee, we held a broad meeting of railway transport workers in March.
In my report to the activists, I reported on all the issues discussed at the Plenum of the Central Committee, and most of all, of course, on the lessons of sabotage, subversion and espionage by Japanese-German-Trotskyist agents on railway transport.
At the same time, I warned against making frivolous accusations and over-cautiousness. "Exercising political vigilance," I said, "doesn't mean 'catch everyone.' Someone doesn't like someone's nose, so they consider it a saboteur. Someone says something wrong, and they're labeled a saboteur. Someone knew a Trotskyist, and they're labeled a Trotskyist, even though there's no basis for it."
It must be said, however, that these and many other similar warnings did not prevent the mistakes, excesses, and subsequent gross distortions that, unfortunately, did occur. This is the fault not only of the NKVD and the judicial and investigative bodies, but also of us—the leaders. While we insisted on vigilance, we failed to take the necessary measures in time to prevent excesses, abuses of power, and misuse of that power.
However, a grave mistake is made by those who, on the basis of the fact that some innocent people suffered, conclude that the entire fight against saboteurs and spies, including those from the Trotskyist camp, was allegedly wrong. This is an attempt

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Discrediting the entire revolutionary, class-based Leninist party line for preserving Soviet power and the course toward building and winning socialism in the struggle against its enemies. It is no easy task to overcome sabotage, subversion, and espionage in transportation, just as in other sectors of economic and state activity. As early as 1927, during a discussion of the lessons of the Shakhty sabotage at the Central Committee Plenum, General Secretary of the Central Committee I.V. Stalin warned that sabotage would continue as long as capitalist encirclement existed.

What's new about today's sabotage is that, due to the changing circumstances, the people behind it are also changing. Currently, the main cadres and "active" elements of sabotage are Trotskyists and "rightists." But that doesn't change the situation. "Lenin and Stalin," I said, "have repeatedly warned us that those who embarked on the path of struggle against the Party—Trotskyists, "rightists," "right-leftists," and all the other opportunist elements who joined them—would inevitably, in their development, slide, for the most part, into the camp of imperialism. We now see that they have slid into the camp of rabid fascism, becoming hired agents of fascist counterintelligence. That's why the most important thing now is not so much to acknowledge this, but to prevent such sabotage in the future, to counter it with our Bolshevik vigilance and determination in the fight against our enemies. We must eliminate the excesses and mistakes that have been committed; we must eliminate all the shortcomings that have allowed the enemy to operate here, especially in railway transport. "The enemy knew," I said, "what railway transport meant for war. That's why railway workers bear a special responsibility to the Motherland, to the country. We must not allow any delay in eliminating the consequences of sabotage."

After the Plenum of the Central Committee, we convened a meeting of locomotive workers, separately also locomotive repair inspectors and driver-instructors, an assembly of wagon workers, inspectors-dispatchers, traffic safety inspectors, an assembly of track workers, freight service workers, builders and others.

These were purely business meetings, held on a political basis and playing a major role in the immediate elimination of the consequences of sabotage and in the implementation of the Second and Third Five-Year Plans, which was especially important in preparing for the defense of our homeland.

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RAILWAY TRANSPORT IN THE SECOND AND THIRD FIVE-YEAR PLANS

During the Second Five-Year Plan, railway transport ceased to be a “bottleneck” in the national economy and firmly entered the ranks of the most advanced sectors of the socialist economy.

It's no exaggeration to say that without the rise of rail transport, the Second Five-Year Plan for industry and the national economy as a whole would not have been achieved. The objective of providing special advantages for heavy industry freight by rail, increasing the share of coal, metal, oil, timber, building materials, and, of course, grain in the loading and transportation of goods, was fulfilled. This was achieved despite, and partly because of, significant changes in the geography of freight flows: while overall freight traffic increased by 75% during the Second Five-Year Plan, traffic on railways in the Far East, Central Asia, Siberia, and the Urals increased by 2.5 times. Significant changes also occurred in the European part of the country—coal and metal from the Donbass now flowed directly to the center in a powerful stream along the newly constructed Moscow-Donbass highway. Similarly, thanks to the construction of a bridge across the Volga River near Gorky, timber from the Urals and the Kirov region was sent via a shorter route to the central regions of the country, and so on. New flows of oil and petroleum products emerged due to the discovery of new oil fields and the construction of new refineries. The same applies to metals.

Wasteful shipments decreased as the distribution of productive forces within the country improved. However, due to the growing needs of the USSR's outlying regions, long-distance shipments increased. Many wasteful and counter-transportations remained. Measures taken to reduce them did not eliminate them.
The industry mastered and delivered powerful, modern FD steam locomotives—the very type of locomotive that the "limit-saboteurs" and saboteurs fought against. A total of 1,928 FD steam locomotives were produced during the Second Five-Year Plan.
Of particular importance was the development, production, and delivery of an entirely new type of steam locomotive with a tender-condenser, which could travel 500-700, and even 900 kilometers without taking on water while running on coal. Previously, saboteurs had disrupted its implementation. A total of 730 steam locomotives with tender-condensers (SO) were produced during the Second Five-Year Plan.

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The development of a new, powerful passenger locomotive—the IS—was crucial. This steam locomotive hauled passenger trains at 130 kilometers per hour. We received 113 such steam locomotives during the Second Five-Year Plan. Of course, one could, as they say, "be wise in hindsight" and criticize why we then relied on the new type of steam locomotives rather than electric locomotives. But, firstly, we had to consider the power shortage—power plants were built and expanded, but they couldn't meet the significant increase in electricity demand, including on the railways; secondly, the production of electric locomotives and other equipment lagged even the modest demands of the People's Commissariat of Railways.
Electric and diesel locomotive production was poor. According to the Second Five-Year Plan, 350 electric locomotives were to be delivered; in fact, 145 were delivered, i.e., 41.5%; of the diesel locomotives, 30 were delivered, i.e., 12%, against a planned 248. The lack of electric locomotives and, most importantly, the crisis with electricity and electrical materials not only prevented us from expanding electrification but also disrupted the commissioning of prepared lines. The Second Five-Year Plan, admittedly understated compared to the NKPS requirements, planned to electrify 5,050 km. In fact, 28.9 km were electrified in 1934, 197 km in 1935, 562 km in 1936, and 114.8 km in 1937. A total of 979 km were electrified during the Second Five-Year Plan. Despite the enormous difficulties of electrification, by 1937 the railway network already had 1,690 km of electrified track—these were our first steps, the seeds of the future vast and powerful electrified railway network of the Soviet Union.
The People's Commissariat of Railways developed a plan for the extensive electrification of railways, a special department for electrification was organized, and new designs of electric locomotives were developed, including the PB (Politburo) electric locomotive.
When a major shift in the country's electricity balance and electric locomotive production began to emerge in the early 1950s, the Central Committee and the Council of Ministers, at the suggestion of Comrade Stalin, developed and adopted a major plan to electrify over 50,000 kilometers of main railway lines, including the Siberian and Far Eastern mainlines. (Thus, the "America" of electrification was discovered long before 1956, as the "Stalinists" boasted.)
The replacement of light rails with heavy ones has been carried out on a broad front,

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The replacement of sand ballast with crushed stone. Of particular importance was the introduction of new large track equipment, which facilitated and accelerated the entire process of track repair and reconstruction. This extremely complex work could now be performed without lengthy interruptions to traffic—that is, as railroad workers put it, both "under the wheels" and through "windows" for 2-4 hours, provided by the track workers. These included machines such as track plows, machine-track stations, and especially the Platov tracklayer, which was intended for both

construction workers and track workers. This remarkable, powerful machine won widespread recognition and continued use for many years, naturally undergoing further improvements. The tracklayer, supported by the organization of depots preparing sections for track laying, still plays a prominent role today in the construction of new lines and second tracks.
Although new railway construction was improved during the second five-year plan, the construction plan was not met, particularly for new lines. Of the 9,500 km planned, only about 4,000 km were actually commissioned.
It so happened that during the first year of the Third Five-Year Plan, I had the opportunity to work not only in railway transport but also in heavy industry. After the death of the unforgettable Sergo Ordzhonikidze in 1937, by decision of the Central Committee and the Government, I was appointed People's Commissar of Heavy Industry.
I objected to the combination of these two positions—the People's Commissariat of Railways and the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry, as was initially proposed, and the decision was made—no combination of positions, with my dismissal from the People's Commissariat of Railways. But things didn't work out that way. Bakulin, who proved inadequate to lead a People's Commissariat like the People's Commissariat of Railways, was appointed People's Commissar of Railways.
Preparations for the autumn-winter transportation were poor. It so happened that, due to the abrupt disruption of autumn-winter transportation on rail transport, in December 1937, the Central Committee and Council of People's Commissars appointed me authorized by the Central Committee and Council of People's Commissars to the People's Commissariat of Railways, then again as People's Commissar of Railways, concurrently with my duties as People's Commissar of Heavy Industry. It was a difficult combination.
At the conference calls convened in January 1938 at the People's Commissariat of Railways, first a narrower circle of active railway and People's Commissariat of Railways members, and then a broader meeting, attended by more than 40 thousand railway activists from all the railways and the People's Commissariat of Railways, I spoke as an authorized representative of the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars. "The Central Committee of the Party

"And the Council of People's Commissars," I said, "there is great concern about the state of rail transport." I analyzed the causes and the planned measures, which primarily focused on car turnover. At the Central Committee Plenum, I also presented data on losses in car turnover, particularly due to the poor performance of technical stations.
In April, a large meeting of the People's Commissariat of Railways and Railways was convened in Moscow. At the meeting, a report was heard from Comrade Zemlyachka, Chairman of the Government Commission for the Acceptance and Transfer of Affairs, and speeches were made on this report, including my own as the newly appointed People's Commissar of Railways. As a longtime activist in the railway army, I naturally touched on many pressing issues that went beyond the acceptance and transfer of affairs and had a significant impact on the entire work of 1938.
In the second quarter of 1938, the road situation improved. In my speech at the third Railway Worker's Day celebration in the Park of Culture and Recreation, I discussed the achievements and shortcomings of the winter of 1937-1938 and the mobilization of forces to prevent even the slightest delays during the winter of 1938-1939.
In some ways, 1939 and 1940 were special years—we carried out significant military transports. We transported a considerable number of troops to the West when some of our Ukrainian brothers were still under the rule of the Polish lords. Likewise, we helped liberate the glorious peoples of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia from bourgeois rule. True, the military forces we transported didn't have to be used, because the peoples themselves ousted their rulers, but we carried out the transports "for real."
Particularly significant and, I would say, difficult, especially given the distance involved, were the transports to the East to repel the presumptuous Japanese imperialists at Khalkin Gol and Khasan.

As is well known, the glorious forces of our army we brought there taught the imperialists a serious lesson. Transports to the Finnish Front were particularly challenging, where we encountered difficulties on the Kirov Railway and at the Leningrad Junction. On instructions from the Central Committee, I had to travel to Leningrad, Petrozavodsk, and to the front-line junctions and stations. On the Kirov and Oktyabrskaya Railways, we learned important lessons and conclusions that would have significant instructive value for future large-scale troop transports.
Of course, the organization of new roads in 1939 was of military significance: Belostok, Brest-Litovsk, Kovel and Lvov, and in 1940 - Chisinau, Latvian and Lithuanian.

Accordingly, changes were made to the structure of the People's Commissariat of Railways. For the successful fulfillment of government assignments and their work under the auspices of Stakhanovite and Krivonos, the government awarded over three thousand railway workers with orders and medals that year. Later, for the successful completion of the government's assignment for special military transport, orders and medals were awarded to 540 of the best railway workers of the October and Kirov Railways. The People's Commissariat of Railways, in turn, awarded 15,000 Stakhanovite and Krivonosite workers with the "Honorary Railway Worker" and "Shock Worker of the Stalinist Call" badges.

Chapter 14

PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE FOR HEAVY INDUSTRY

In 1937, after the death of our unforgettable Comrade Sergo Ordzhonikidze, I was confirmed as People's Commissar of Heavy Industry, relieved of my duties as People's Commissar of Railways in the first months. But in early 1938, due to newly emerging difficulties on the railways, I was reappointed People's Commissar of Railways, retaining my position as People's Commissar of Heavy Industry. It was a difficult juggling act!
During the First and Second Five-Year Plans, our industry grew enormously, exceeding the Second Five-Year Plan. Heavy industry, which the Party and government ensured had priority for development, delivered the greatest growth. However, while the overall plan for heavy industry was fulfilled by 122%, the plan for pig iron, coal, and oil production was not met. Despite enormous successes and growth rates surpassing those of other countries, including in pig iron, coal, and oil, we still lagged economically and suffered serious shortcomings in the utilization of capacity and the development of newly built enterprises.
Accordingly, the Central Committee resolved organizational issues. For example, in 1937, two new People's Commissariats were separated from the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry: the People's Commissariat of Mechanical Engineering and the People's Commissariat of Defense Industry, which strengthened our position in both the economic and defense capabilities of our country. In 1939, a number of other People's Commissariats were separated from these People's Commissariats of Heavy Industry—one can imagine what a truly "heavy" People's Commissariat this was, led by such outstanding figures.

figures of our party, such as Dzerzhinsky, Kuibyshev and Ordzhonikidze.
In the second half of 1937, I was appointed People's Commissar of Heavy Industry of the Soviet Union. Heavy industry continued to grow rapidly, but at the same time, some sectors lagged, particularly in the development of new capacities and new technology. Even here, in industry,

sabotage had its impact, and the struggle to eliminate the consequences of this sabotage was still ongoing.
Along with improving and accelerating the pace of new construction and the commissioning of new iron, steel, and rolled metal production facilities, the Board of the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry undertook extensive work on developing and implementing technical innovations and scientifically prepared and developed rationalization proposals that would intensify production and expand capacity at existing enterprises. For example, in 1938, construction of a blast furnace and an oxygen plant began, at which time it had already been calculated that blast furnace productivity could be doubled when operating with oxygen blast. Surface hardening of metal was also developed at that time (Professors Vologdin and Geveling), which particularly interested me because the use of such hardening, for example, on rail joints, would dramatically reduce rail wear along the track. Vologdin was a frequent guest in my office on this topic. The use of direct rolling was being explored, which should increase the productivity of rolling mills, and so on.
A key progressive issue was the revision of the existing mill specialization to ensure the national economy was supplied with high-quality rolled metal products, both profile and commercial grades. This project continued to attract the attention of metallurgists, and even now it remains unfinished and contains significant shortcomings. Mill specialization was essential to prevent this from leading to increased back-and-forth and long-distance metal transportation. All these and other measures were closely linked to the Third Five-Year Plan for the ferrous metallurgy sector.
A special focus was on developing the non-ferrous metallurgy industry (copper, lead, tin, aluminum, gold, rare metals, etc.), which was not only of economic but also crucial defense importance. With the Central Committee's permission, I traveled to the Urals, familiarized myself with the state of heavy industry, and particularly diligently studied the copper and gold industries.

which I knew little, and in conclusion participated and spoke at the said meeting.
I must say that while I was better prepared for the metallurgical and coal industries thanks to my previous work in Ukraine, Yekaterinoslav, the Donets Basin, and subsequently, with the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), I had to work more extensively on them. However, in chemistry, geology, power plants, non-ferrous metals, and oil, I had to "gnaw at the granite of this science" with particular intensity. But, as always, a party worker is helped by studying the matter directly on the spot, at enterprises, in conversations and meetings with workers, engineers, managers, and communists. Although this wasn't enough, I had to learn from leading specialists and from textbooks. Particularly helpful was the meticulous analysis of issues at meetings, activist groups, and gatherings of communists and workers, when it was possible to stir up criticism and self-criticism, revealing the essence of the issue.
Particular attention was paid to geology, and a broad meeting of geologists was convened. At the head of the geologists was such a remarkable scientist and a deeply committed Party member as Ivan Mikhailovich Gubkin. Personally, frequent interactions with Comrade Gubkin and visits to his office particularly helped me understand and appreciate the importance of geology, which I always tried to support in every way, while maintaining my deep respect for geologists.
The fuel industry held a prominent and honorable place within the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry: coal, oil, and peat—these were the most challenging sectors of heavy industry. They played a particularly prominent role in my work when I was appointed People's Commissar of the Fuel Industry (again, concurrently with my duties as People's Commissar of Railways).
I must emphasize that I was closely involved with the hard labor of miners even before the Revolution and was imbued with a deep respect and love for miners and an understanding of the specifics of the coal industry. Furthermore, while working in Ukraine as General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, then Secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), I was directly involved in the coal industry on behalf of the Central Committee, frequently traveling to the Donbass, Kuzbass, and

other basins, and especially to the Moscow Basin, which I oversaw as Secretary of the Central Committee. Beginning in 1930, the Central Committee and, on its instructions, the Moscow Committee, became particularly involved in the development of the Moscow Basin. Although its coal is of inferior quality to that of the Donetsk region, it is, however, closer to the point of consumption and, with the correct thermal engineering,

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In this mode, as subsequent practice has shown, they produce a good effect. It was necessary to overcome the conservatism and resistance of Moscow consumers and, most importantly, to radically reconstruct the outdated, semi-artisanal Moscow Region basin.
In 1937, the coal industry failed to meet production targets in the Donbass region, and immediately after my appointment as People's Commissar for Heavy Industry, I left for the Donbass. Together with the regional party committee and its secretary, Shcherbakov, we adopted organizational and economic measures to improve the performance of mines and mine administrations. Party, trade union, and economic organizations convened gatherings of leading miners, which attracted approximately fifteen thousand people throughout the Donbass.
Through the efforts of miners and party organizations, we subsequently achieved increased coal production in the Donbas and other basins. Cyclical production was improved. We studied the situation at each Donbassugol trust and took specific measures tailored to their specific needs. As a result, we ensured that most trusts met and even exceeded their production targets.
In June 1938, a meeting of coal industry workers was convened in the Donbass. As a result of this meeting and the review of the situation at each trust individually, and within the trust, at the major mines, specific measures were developed, which were reviewed and adopted by the Board of the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry. To ensure the stability of the mine management staff and to strengthen their confidence, after the meeting, over the course of several days, I received all the mine managers of the Donets Basin and issued each a document, signed by the People's Commissar, confirming their appointment as mine managers, who could only be dismissed by the People's Commissar. We extended this practice of meetings and reviews for each trust to all other basins, summoning the heads of the coal trusts to the Board of the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry, and then the People's Commissariat of Trade, sometimes with the participation of some mine managers and Stakhanovites. We listened to their reports and developed specific measures for each of them.
At the request of the Central Committee, a commission chaired by L.M. Kaganovich was appointed, which reviewed and finalized the projects for other basins to the Politburo. In October 1938, the Central Committee and Council of People's Commissars adopted resolutions on the work of the Kuzbassugol, Moskvaugol, Uralugol, Karagandaugol, Vostsibugol, and Sredazugol plants and trusts.

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"Tkvibulugol" and "Tkvarchelugol." These resolutions were of great importance for the subsequent development of the coal basins. In May 1939, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Council of People's Commissars adopted a resolution that improved the coal industry's logistical support. People's Commissariats were instructed to fulfill coal industry orders on par with military orders. A resolution adopted by the Central Committee's Organizational Bureau increased the attention and assistance of regional committees, the Central Committees of national communist parties, and all local coal industry organizations. In November 1939, the Central Committee, in its resolution on improving party and political work among the masses in the Donbas mines, established the institution of Central Committee party organizers at large mines (approximately 100 mines). The Third Five-Year Plan for the Coal Industry envisioned a gradual shift in the geography of coal production and the elimination of its unevenness. The Donbass, which

held 5.4% of the USSR's coal reserves, produced 58.9% of the entire Union's coal output in 1938. The planned increase in coal production in new regions, both central and remote, including open-pit mines and brown coal, began to be implemented in 1938 and 1939. This was reflected in specific numerical targets for each basin and their implementation. Accordingly, the construction of 573 mines with a capacity of 166 million tons was planned—twice as many as in the Second Five-Year Plan. Mine construction was also planned in previously unknown areas, such as the Chkalov region (10 mines), Mangyshlak, and others. Mine construction accelerated—the goal was to build a mine in 10 months, not 5-6 years. By 1939, several mines had already been built in the Donbass within 10 months. Accelerating shaft sinking and introducing new, already designed machinery were crucial in this regard. Work was underway to eliminate the one-sided nature of coal mining mechanization, promoting comprehensive mechanization and the introduction of new, modern machines, especially combines capable of both cutting and felling coal.
During the Third Five-Year Plan (1939), work to disseminate the cyclical method of work, the most advanced collective Stakhanovite method, was expanded. The struggle for cyclical work was difficult, but with improved organization and comprehensive mechanization, it gained ground ever more broadly and deeply. Of crucial importance were the cadres of workers, their stability, and their qualifications, as well as the engineering, technical, and management personnel, their training, proper selection, and utilization.

and creating the necessary conditions for them. In 1939, by decision of the Central Committee, the Government awarded a large group of miners and coal industry workers.
Following the Bolshevik principle of supporting everything new and positive, the People's Commissariat of Trade and Commerce was pursuing a new endeavor: underground coal gasification, which, in Lenin's words, meant "an industrial revolution." The gas industry was only just beginning to emerge, based on the development of the first natural gas fields. We were unable to develop it on a large scale at that time due to the lack of large-diameter pipes and a general shortage of pipes, even for the oil industry.
I'll also mention another type of fuel that may not sound so "honorable," but which still holds significant significance in the life of the country today—the peat industry. The People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry worked diligently on it, supporting it both materially and morally, particularly in its mechanization and the elimination of seasonality, the introduction of artificial peat dehydration, and the easing of the labor of the humble, dedicated peat bogs. The exceptional importance of the oil industry is well known—I particularly felt the urgency of this matter while working on agricultural issues in the Central Committee. I was convinced every day that mechanized agriculture, tractors, combines, and automobiles—as indeed is the case with all modern industry—cannot exist without petroleum products. But I was little acquainted with oil production and extraction, so, upon joining the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry after a trip to the Donbass, I, on the advice of Comrade Stalin went to Baku to take the first course of training on the spot for workers, engineers and senior Baku oil workers.
Baku is the largest and main center of the oil industry, rich in glorious revolutionary traditions. I studied the oil industry, visiting all of Baku's fields and refineries, interviewing workers and engineers, and holding field and plant meetings where critical shortcomings in operations and drilling were self-critically uncovered. Jointly with the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan, business meetings were held at Azneft, where the results of the audit and complaints to the People's Commissariat were reviewed. The conclusions and measures developed jointly with party bodies to improve Azneft's operations and the oil industry's fulfillment of oil production and refining plans were very valuable.
I met the staff, among whom were many talented young engineers who later advanced to major positions.

Kalamkarov, Baibakov, Yevseenko, Popovin, Belenky, and others were assigned to the newly created People's Commissariat of the Oil Industry, where I was appointed People's Commissar. Measures were developed on the spot to improve living conditions and increase wages for oil workers. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan and the Transcaucasian Regional Party Committee decided to improve and strengthen party-political and trade union work in accordance with the instructions of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks).

I must especially emphasize the great assistance provided by the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist Party and the Transcaucasian Regional Party Committee (in particular, Bagirov and Beria), who were then actively involved in the development of the Baku oil industry. My concrete study of the reality in Baku was of great help to me in conducting the All-Union Conference of Oil Workers convened by the People's Commissariat in Baku, which was of great importance for the further work and development of the oil industry. Opening the conference, I explained why we had convened the All-Union Conference not in Moscow, but in Baku. "First of all," I said, "I personally wanted to be on site, in Baku, so as to, as they say, touch and see the living people working in the oil industry, as well as the equipment, fields, and factories. To lead, I must study, and I learn from everyone, from the greatest to the least. I study, of course, not to remain a student all the time; I study so that I can combine what I have learned about the oil industry (as well as about metals, coal, copper, gold, and so on) with my knowledge in other fields and teach my teachers a thing or two. I hope that the workers from all the country's oil regions gathered here will be able to honestly expose shortcomings, without self-flagellation, in a businesslike manner; they will confidently, profoundly, and thoughtfully help us all understand our weaknesses and shortcomings, the consequences of sabotage, and outline practical measures for the complete recovery of the oil industry." I must say that Comrade Stalin, as a man with a long-standing knowledge of the oil industry and its main center, Baku, provided me with considerable practical assistance. When I left for Baku for the All-Union Conference, he gave me a number of pieces of advice not only on general but also on technical and economic issues. At this All-Union Conference, which brought together the cream of the oil industry, important and major issues and measures were developed to improve the operation of oil wells and implement a strict technological regime for them.

The development of the issue of introducing the method was of great importance

The secondary exploitation of oil wells, rather than abandoning them and writing them off as having supposedly exhausted their oil potential, was crucial. Also important was the rapid introduction of a major invention in drilling at that time, and even today, that had a significant impact—the turbodrill. For oil refineries, the pressing task was to increase the yield of gasoline and other light petroleum products, improve the quality of petroleum products, especially high-quality gasoline, introduce new types of cracking, and expedite the completion of refineries currently under construction in Orsk, Ufa, Moscow, and Saratov. Equally important was improving geological work in the oil industry, which was the subject of much debate at the meeting, as some geologists, in railway parlance, were "overzealous" in their arguments and calculations of well capacity and oil pumping capabilities.

During the two weeks I spent in Baku, I learned a lot; I didn’t just absorb it, but, so to speak, I processed it in my brain and soul.

Having examined the general state of affairs, we established that the oil industry over the 10 years from 1928 to 1937 provided an average annual growth of 15% per year, which ensured mechanization in the national economy, and especially in collectivized agriculture.

But at the same time, there was a disproportion, expressed in the fact that the oil industry lagged behind the development of mechanization in the country, especially in agriculture, which seriously affected the sowing and harvesting campaigns.
The development of the country's new oil regions in the East, particularly promising ones like Bashneft and others, necessitated their comprehensive development and maximum expansion. At the same time, it was essential to continually support Baku, which remained the country's primary oil product supply center in 1938. Baku held 29% of the country's oil reserves but accounted for 75% of the Union's oil production and refining. Specific objectives and measures for increasing and expanding production and refining were developed for each oil region: Grozny, Maikop, Embaneft, Dagneft, Bashneft, Prikamneft, Vostokneft, Turkmenneft, Uzbekneft, and Gruzneft. Furthermore, it was necessary to accelerate geological exploration work on the Volga, where geologists believed there was significant oil, in Siberia, Ukhta, and elsewhere.
But while we were creating a “second Baku” in the East, the main ones remained

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Measures to increase oil production and refining in our wonderful breadwinner—glorious revolutionary Baku, from which the Central Committee and the Government demanded, above all, the fulfillment of the 1938 plan. Measures were developed to fulfill the 1938 plan, which at the same time also served to ensure the fulfillment of the Third Five-Year Plan and a new powerful upsurge in the oil industry. In my speech at the meeting in Baku, I said: “We must clearly establish what, in fact, lies at the root of the instability of production and what foundation, what bricks we must lay so that we not only break away (after all, it is possible to break away for a month and then fall behind again)—we don’t need that, we need stable fulfillment of the plan. I must tell you that I always approach the development of measures with great tension. Some people think that here is the People’s Commissar, he has been given power, and what’s more, he is the Secretary of the Central Committee, and in general, in a word, he is not a timid person, so he will, therefore, begin to put pressure. This is a misconception, comrades. Oil is a very serious, profound matter. In fact, any matter, if you approach it conscientiously, not with a piece of paper, not with bureaucratic formality, is a complex labyrinth that must first be navigated. I have tried to understand it to the best of my ability. I am posing before you the questions I am confident I have understood. I will not pose before you now the questions I have not. I am not speaking as a propagandist or a debater. I am speaking before you as the People's Commissar, whose directives will later, after discussion, become binding on you, and therefore I am speaking only of what I am convinced is possible and necessary to raise at this meeting and resolve. The first and decisive condition that creates stability or instability in production is the balance between natural and mechanized production. Either we'll work like money-grubbers—grabbing it today, and then the grass won't grow, as many do—or we'll work like serious statesmen who understand where things are headed—how we should organize production so that it doesn't depend solely on a "God-sent" fountain of oil gushing forth, without any mechanical assistance. Gushing production is unstable: today it's gushing, and tomorrow it might stop, while meanwhile gushing production is growing, and the share of mechanized production is declining. This doesn't mean that gushing should be artificially restrained, but it does mean we shouldn't allow a frivolous attitude toward mechanized, sustainable production. We shouldn't take the low road.

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Resistance, when people are looking for easy money, a fountain of oil has appeared. Why should I bother, they say, maintaining the operation of an old well, especially one that only produces two or three tons? Wouldn't it be better to "write it off" altogether—and off my back? But the fact is that it often produces only two or three tons because the "owner" doesn't flush it, doesn't raise it, doesn't repair it—there it is, a "ladybug," and it doesn't produce milk—oil. Hence the criminally frivolous

practice of mass "write-off" and liquidation of many existing wells. Therefore, the first thing we demand is to actually, and not just rhetorically, put 2,300 wells into operation, draw up a commissioning schedule, provide equipment, primarily by repairing the old ones, provide people, and get them going. I understand that this is a complex matter; it involves construction work and new labor calculations, but it is all doable. And you are obligated to act, not just "welcome." There's no sign yet of any determination, willpower, or organization, but keep in mind that we will strictly monitor your implementation.

I know many of you listening to me are thinking, "You sing well, Comrade People's Commissar, but you're not providing any equipment." I won't avoid this issue; I'll tell you: what you can't repair, we'll give you. But for now, I know: because of your equipment, only 642 wells are idle, while 1,100 are awaiting repairs, 164 are awaiting power, and 584 wells are awaiting "inspection"—a nickname for "death sentence." As you can see, the main issue here isn't the equipment, but the mismanagement. Eliminate this, and you'll revive many wells, create greater stability in production, and change the balance between natural and mechanized production.

But this is where the main work of operation begins."

The issue of increasing oil production from wells was urgently raised. When geologists and engineers in Grozny told me that this was the technological regime, I replied that yours was poor. If we had destroyed the tsarist regime, then we could improve your outdated technological regime, too. At the meeting, measures were developed to improve this technological regime. Although the oil industry differs from the coal industry, the meeting also focused on introducing cyclicality into the oil industry. Significant attention was given to the work of geologists both in the production line, and especially in drilling. Drilling emerged as the most important issue, solving the expanded reproduction of oil production.

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The drillers were remarkable examples of Stakhanovite work. The most important task was the wider implementation of Stakhanovite methods, and especially the reduction of accidents, of which there were many. Accidents often occurred when, after drilling 1,500 meters deep, 50 or even 10 meters remained, and suddenly an accident occurred—and not only the work but also the pipes were lost. In 1937, 65,000 meters of pipe were lost in boreholes in this way. And here, as in rail transport, I encountered the "ultimate" contrast between drilling quality and speed, whereas the Stakhanovite drillers demonstrated in practice the complete combination of quality and accident-free operation with the new Stakhanovite speed. Naturally, all these and other issues, including the cyclical nature of drilling, were raised at the meeting, including in my speech, particularly regarding the introduction of new drilling technology and the remarkable invention of the turbodrill. The issue of offshore production and well deepening was also discussed and raised. I reported on all the events and the meeting to the Politburo of the Party Central Committee, which approved them.

Subsequently, the People's Commissariat was divided into the coal and oil industries, and an independent People's Commissariat of the Oil Industry was created, and I was appointed People's Commissar of the Oil Industry, again serving concurrently with the People's Commissariat of Railways.

Chapter 15

Patriotic War

RAILWAY TRANSPORT DURING THE WAR YEARS

The period 1941–1945 in the history of our Party and our Motherland was a heroic period of life-and-death struggle against the most vicious enemy of all humanity and our Motherland, for its very existence, for the very life of all the peoples of the Soviet Union, for their gains in the Great October Socialist Revolution, for their freedom and national independence against enslavement and destruction by German fascism. It was a period of severe trials and battles, a period of extreme physical and moral strain on the part of the working class, the collective farm peasantry, the Soviet intelligentsia, and workers of all nationalities, and their displays of self-sacrifice, bravery, and heroism at the front and in the rear.
Having overcome the difficult trials and retreats of the first stage of the war, the Soviet people, led by the Great Russian people, gained strength and emerged victorious!

Many remarkable pages have been written about the Great Patriotic War by historians, memoirists, and writers. Regardless of any inaccuracies or even misrepresentations in their coverage of certain aspects, including Stalin's great role as the organizer of Victory, they fundamentally illuminate the facts of the Great Patriotic War and reflect the heroism of millions of soldiers from all nations of the Soviet Union at the front and in the rear.
We must give credit to a significant portion of our military comrades who, to their credit and diligence, illuminated the heroism of our glorious, native Soviet Army more fully than civilian workers and fighters did in the matter of highlighting heroism.

Workers and workers in industry, transportation, collective farmers in agriculture, and all other fields of labor, who selflessly and heroically ensured our army and victory. That is why each of us, to the best of our ability, memory, and available resources, must shed light on the experience of the struggle for Victory.
We fight for peace between nations, but we must always remember that history does not exclude the possibility that this experience may still be needed.
As a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee and a member of the State Defense Committee, who participated in the development and resolution of the fundamental issues of organizing military resistance and defeating the fascist invaders, I witnessed how all the forces of the Party, led by its Leninist Central Committee and Politburo, were concentrated into a single powerful fist. The forces of the Soviets—from rural and urban to the Supreme Soviet, the Soviet Government, ministries and their bodies, trade unions—the broadest mass organization of the working class, collective farm boards, the Communist Youth League, and all revolutionary public organizations of workers of all nationalities, men and women of the Soviet Union—were concentrated. No other country had ever seen such a unification, concentration of effort, energy, will, and patriotic heroism.
The first months of the war, when for obvious reasons, primarily the treacherous surprise of the enemy's attack, our troops were forced to retreat, have generated particularly much debate and discussion. I in no way agree with those who portray matters as if the Party and Government leadership, and Stalin personally, did not foresee the war and allegedly did not prepare the country for it.
Even if we admit that caution was overdone to avoid provocation, this only confirms the fact that our socialist country and its leadership pursued an honest policy of peace and adhered to international treaties. This does not rule out the possibility that there may have been errors in the disposition of our troops and their readiness for active resistance, or shortcomings in purely military measures, which naturally worried Stalin, especially in the early days of the war.
I reject with even greater determination the slanderous, libelous fabrications that in the first days of the war the leadership—Stalin—was at a loss. Of course, none of us, including Stalin, were in a bravura mood. We were, of course, alarmed by this turn of events—a war that would bring many

hardships and sacrifices to the people. We—all members of the Politburo of the Central Committee, first and foremost Stalin—were preoccupied with the difficult times ahead.

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tasks. We all mobilized instantly to fulfill our patriotic duty to our beloved Motherland with all the strength and energy inherent in Leninists.

This was reflected at the very first Politburo meeting in Stalin's office at dawn on June 22, 1941, attended by the leadership of the People's Commissariat of Defense and the General Staff. After hearing reports from his military comrades about the outbreak of hostilities and the Nazis' treacherous attack on our homeland, Stalin proposed making a radio statement on behalf of the Soviet government, entrusting this task to the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs and Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, V.M. Molotov. Stalin gave instructions on the content of this statement. Stalin also stated that he himself would speak on the radio a little later. Looking ahead, I will say that Stalin also familiarized us with the text of his speech before his speech.

Stalin, like all of us, his comrades, was firmly convinced that, despite the difficulties and hardships of retreating before a surprise enemy attack, this retreat would be temporary—and Victory would be ours, our Great Soviet State, led by our Leninist Party. At this first meeting, instructions were given to military comrades on how to repel the enemy, and Stalin said to the other comrades: "We will not develop any measures at this time. Each of you is responsible for specific areas of activity, and each of you, without waiting for decisions, will undertake, in a military manner, the immediate transfer of all Party and state activities to a war footing." Turning to me, Stalin emphasized: "You, Comrade Kaganovich, especially need to contact the General Staff and, without waiting for any directives, ensure troop transport." After that, we all, without delay, went to our control panel. I immediately called the NKPS from the Kremlin and ordered that the members of the board be summoned and that at the same time all heads of departments, divisions, members of the party committee, the trade union committee, the chairman of the Central Committee of the trade union and other leading activists be summoned to the NKPS.

I reported to the board members and the leading officials of the People's Commissariat of Railways about the Politburo meeting with Comrade Stalin, the attack of German fascism, and our tasks. The meeting was brief, tense, and businesslike.

First of all, a decision was made to implement the Military Schedule for train traffic on the network. This schedule was updated in early 1941 by the People's Commissariat of Railways jointly

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With the General Staff of the People's Commissariat of Defense. It took into account and reflected all changes that had occurred in increasing the capacity of the entire road network, particularly border roads, since the schedule was developed in 1938. During this time, work had been carried out to increase capacity. Although not everything planned had been achieved, previously begun construction work on both technical equipment and railway reconstruction had been completed. At the meeting, the Operational and Maintenance Directorate and its territorial road directorates were instructed to immediately contact road managers, notify them of the introduction of the Military Schedule and their adoption of all necessary measures envisaged by the Military Mobilization Plan. The military schedule differed from the peacetime schedule in that it was parallel—all trains, including passenger trains, which had been reduced, traveled at the same speed and had the same technical stops. However, priority was given to especially important military trains, for which designated reserves were used. On June 23, after a re-examination, an order was signed by the People's Commissar of Railways introducing the military schedule across all 44 lines of the Soviet Union's railway network.

In accordance with the planned schedule and the Military Mobilization Plan, mothballed sidings, water supply stations, equipment storage, traction, and other equipment were put into operation. The new Military Schedule established a standardized weight for military trains: 900 tons.
Road commanders were ordered to put into operation all measures and facilities for servicing military echelons stipulated by the Military Mobilization Plan: boilers, water pumps, military food points, kiosks, isolation checkpoints, propaganda points, permanent and collapsible military platforms for loading and unloading troops and military equipment, etc.
Comrade Kucherenko, Head of the Track Administration, was instructed to report his proposals specifically on measures to ensure uninterrupted train service, especially in connection with the extensive track repairs. All Deputy People's Commissars, members of the Board, and heads of departments were to immediately resume their work on a military basis, mobilizing all forces to successfully fulfill their duty to the Motherland. All track administrators were instructed to immediately contact and distribute the tasks.

This assignment was discussed between the deputy people's commissars. The people's commissar himself took on the task of liaising with the heads of front-line roads.
The entire leadership of the People's Commissariat, together with the heads of departments and divisions, and representatives of the Party Committee and Trade Union Committee, was instructed to convene meetings of communists and staff members, report on the outbreak of the Patriotic War against the fascist attack, and call on everyone to fight to the death for victory over the enemy, ensuring a transition to military methods of operation. They were also instructed to provide the Central Committee of the trade unions with telephone and telegraph communications for negotiations with railway trade unions and to launch mass political work to mobilize the development of selfless labor and the fulfillment of their revolutionary patriotic duty by all railway workers, especially the Stakhanovites and Krivonosovites. The editorial board of Gudok was instructed to launch corresponding work in the newspaper. This concluded the meeting of the People's Commissariat Board. The struggle and work had begun in a military manner, as called for by the Central Committee of our Party and its leader, Comrade Stalin.
The first issue we addressed after the June 22 meeting was refining the troop loading and transportation plan so that the amendments could be urgently transmitted to the railways. I contacted Zhukov, Chief of the General Staff of the People's Commissariat of Defense, and asked him to submit his amendments to the previously established plan, if any. Comrade Zhukov replied that amendments would undoubtedly be made and would be submitted to the People's Commissar of Railways that very day. He immediately said, "I ask you in advance, Lazar Moiseevich, to accept our amendments." I replied that I also promised in advance to accept without delay any amendments to the plan submitted by the General Staff. "I have instructions from Comrade Stalin on this matter," I said.
The General Staff's amendments were reviewed and accepted. Combat implementation of the plan began. Railroad workers did everything necessary and possible to ensure loading and transportation for the mobilization and strategic deployment of the Red Army's main forces. This was particularly evident during the first week of the war—from June 24 to 30. On average, 31,629 railcars were loaded per day, including 19,794 operational railcars and 11,835 supply railcars. That is, over just seven days, more than 220,000 railcars were loaded, including more than 138,000 operational railcars. To appreciate and understand the significance and weight of these loading and transportation figures for the first week of the war alone, it must be said that such a volume

Loading and transport in Tsarist Russia at the beginning of World War I took more than two months.

To carry out such loading, it was first necessary to provide it with empty cars. This required changing the road's scheduling plan for empty railcars, speeding up unloading, reducing the loading plan for other cargo, and, most importantly, cleaning, disinfecting, and equipping the cars with the necessary equipment—making them suitable for transporting people, and the open cars for transporting military equipment and weapons. The previously accumulated reserve of cars, of course, helped. The heads of the roads and car services immediately coveted them, appealing to the People's Commissar for their use. But, I confess, the People's Commissar was stingy in granting permission, requiring them to first and foremost ensure that the existing fleet of cars was in good order and fit for military transport. We provided them with more generous assistance, using boards and other materials from the reserve. A great deal of cleaning and washing of the cars was necessary —we appealed to the masses, and it must be said that a colossal, selfless effort unfolded from the very first days of the war. Not only carriage operators but also other railway workers and their families cleaned and washed carriages. The strength of the 200 carriage repair stations built before the war, which successfully handled this work, was evident in this work of equipping carriages and their subsequent repairs during the war.

As echelons approached the front lines from the deep rear areas, there were delays, primarily due to the enemy's brutal and frequent bombing of junctions and crossings not only on the front lines but also on adjacent roads with impunity. In July and August, troop loading decreased compared to the first week of the war: in July, 15,573 railcars were loaded per day on average, including 7,978 operational railcars and 7,595 supply railcars. In August, the average daily loading was 12,145 railcars, including 5,634 operational railcars and 6,511 supply railcars.

The generally difficult situation at the front played a role here. This is well known from the history of the war, and I won't describe the military situation here. However, I will emphasize that the difficult retreat of our troops, accompanied by defensive battles, including at stations and railway junctions, had a profound impact on the state of rail transport and its operations.

Suffice it to say that by June 28, the enemy had occupied Minsk and the Belarusian Railway, and by June 30, Lvov and the Lvov Railway, while the border stations on these and other frontline railways were destroyed and captured by the enemy in the very first days of the war. In the very first days of the war, such railways as the Belostok, Brest, Kovel, and others ceased to function almost entirely. One can imagine what became of the unloading plans on prepared platforms, both permanent and mobile, what happened to the unloading addresses due to "loss of address," that is, due to their capture by the enemy. And since this address changed so frequently, the situation the railways found themselves in was constantly being rerouted by troop trains and supply transports, which, moreover, were often unloaded and then immediately reloaded! These were forced "maneuvers" on wheels, causing more difficulties than the deliberate maneuvers within the front. All these difficult military circumstances placed a heavy burden on the shoulders of the railway, which did not stand still with its cargo, but was obliged to move, lifting the cargo and delivering it to its new destination.

All this led to the delay of wagons before unloading, to the loss of the location of the cargo in these wagons, to the loss of the speed of movement of trains not only on the front lines, but also on the rear roads.

These important circumstances and reasons were joined by confusion, the inability to quickly navigate the war conditions at the station, on the road and around it, plus the usual shortcomings in work that occurred among some railway workers - all of this negatively affected the turnover of wagons and the work of the roads.

The halting of our Soviet troops' retreat and their launching of a counteroffensive also had a beneficial effect on the railways' operations in loading, transporting, and unloading troop trains and transports, focusing their efforts on supporting general strategic operations alongside the execution of current missions. The success of this enormous undertaking was ensured primarily by the main productive force of transport—the workers, engineers, and employees working in railway transport.

A major role was also played by military communications agencies (VOSO) and their employees, who were not limited to the usual role of client - sender and recipient, but participated in the production process of the transport industry itself, enriching the railway workers

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knowledge of military affairs and the military situation - in a word, they worked as heroically as their fellow railway workers.
Our weakest point was the roads and road junctions of Western Ukraine, Belarus, and the Baltic states, which had recently been taken over by us and had not yet completed the reconstruction they had begun. We hadn't managed to complete the work we had begun to reconstruct tracks, junctions, and construct purely military facilities, even though the course of the war had changed their role. But before the war, we had transferred our glorious railway corps, led by General Prosvirov, from the Far East to the Lviv sector. This corps became the core of the glorious and heroic railway troops, who, together with the general railway formation, played a major role in restoring the railways both during and after the war.
For a proper understanding and evaluation of the work of the USSR railways during the Great Patriotic War, especially in terms of such a performance metric as wagon turnover, it is important to note that during the Great Patriotic War the operating conditions of railway transport changed. The railway network was reduced due to the forced temporary withdrawal of our troops and the occupation of part of our country by the German invaders. The length and density of the railway network were reduced by more than 40%. The reduced lines in the south, west, and parts of the central regions were the most powerful, reconstructed, with mechanized marshalling yards, depots, etc.
If at the beginning of the war there were 14 lines leading from Moscow to the west to the front, then by the end of 1941 this number had sharply decreased, and the Moscow junction was a cluster of seven short railway lines fanning out to the front - to the west, south and northwest, and four lines leading to the east.
The war brought colossal changes to the country's economy, the distribution of productive forces, and, consequently, freight flows. The evacuation of industry from the South, West, and parts of the Central regions to Siberia, the Urals, and Central Asia, along with the construction of new military-industrial complexes there, dramatically increased the industrial might of the country's East. Following the evacuation operations, which I will discuss later, rail transport, along with the large influx of troop trains, was forced to dramatically increase exports from the Urals, Siberia, and Central Asia throughout the war.

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Asia's supply of weapons, ammunition, tanks, aircraft, food, and national economic products—Kuznetsk coal, metal—as well as domestic transport in the Urals, Siberia, and Central Asia increased dramatically. The flow of imported cargo from the port of Vladivostok increased especially—this was a revolution in freight traffic and transportation. While in peacetime we imported cargo to the Far East and received empty trains from there, in wartime we had to ship empty cars to Vladivostok, especially tank cars from the West, a distance of 10,000 kilometers across the extremely congested roads of the Urals and Siberia.
Freight flows of coal, ore, oil and petroleum products, metal, and all other cargoes changed radically, becoming less stable than before the war. This had to be taken into account with particular care when adjusting the rolling stock, overcoming difficulties in its movement and unloading. This was especially true for tank cars, which had to be driven to and from the front over long distances, all the way to Vladivostok. The center of gravity of all freight operations shifted to the Ural-Siberian railways, which carried almost three times more cargo than before the war. The volume of traffic on Central Asian railways also increased. Although before the war, we had doubled the

railway network in the East compared to 1913, it took a great deal of effort to master this increased loading and transportation capacity and overcome the difficulties that arose.
We, the railway workers, carried out the order of the Party and the Government and removed a large number of locomotives and carriages from the fire and danger of capture by the enemy.
Military transport naturally took a leading place in the work of the entire network, especially in the delivery of empty formed trains to loading and unloading points at the front, which was extremely complicated due to the exceptional mobility and instability of the front line, especially in the first period of the war.
Work on the central front-line railways, including Gorkovskaya and Yaroslavskaya, became extremely difficult due to the strictly enforced blackout and the incessant enemy air raids on railway facilities. According to incomplete estimates, there were over 20,000 air raids during the war, most of which disrupted train service and formation. On average, 16 air raids and bombings were carried out on railway facilities per day, and 33 on front-line roads.

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According to an incomplete estimate, 27,000 railway workers were killed and about 40,000 were wounded.
An even more serious challenge was the destruction of tracks, bridges, and railway structures, which required incredible efforts from the railway troops and workers to restore them. Each operator simultaneously became the restorer of their own stations, traction structures, track sections, and signaling systems.
By launching such massive air raids on railway facilities and the barbaric destruction of tracks and structures, the enemy sought to reinforce the General Staff's calculations that the Soviet Union's rail transport would be unable to withstand the onslaught and would disrupt military shipments. It must be said that the "allies" also entertained similar assumptions and predictions. But neither the enemy nor other foreign observers understood the nature and capabilities of Socialist transport, much less the nature of the new Soviet railwayman.
The railway workers demonstrated heroism in their work, but even during the battle, we uncovered shortcomings and errors at NKPS board meetings, at asset meetings, at the State Defense Committee, and in everyday operational work. There were numerous shortcomings and errors in the management of military fleet and traffic, for which the railways, the NKPS, and their client companies, including military "clients" who delayed railcars during loading and unloading, were to blame. This was especially true for evacuated cargo.
The shortcomings of the railways themselves played a significant role, but the People's Commissariat of Railways, taking the difficulties of localities and fronts to heart, did not sufficiently address the carelessness and sometimes even rudeness with which shippers and consignees cleared railway cars and tracks. In my more extensive memoirs, I will explore these complex issues in greater depth.
We need to study and analyze the objective difficulties and subjective shortcomings that have occurred, not for self-flagellation or overcaution, and certainly not to make petty, intriguing attacks on anyone and tout ourselves as a "savior," as some opportunists and careerists do, who yesterday were "intoxicated" but today fawn over and savor only the shortcomings and mistakes, exaggerating them and glossing over all the great, positive things that have been accomplished. We are studying and will continue to highlight the shortcomings and errors of the work.

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in order to prevent them from happening again and to not repeat them, so that, if necessary, we can work even better for the good of the Motherland.
It must be said frankly that without the relocation of enterprises and people from the southern, western, and many central regions to the east, we would not have been able to provide our army

with everything it needed. The evacuation that took place represents the victory of a major battle for the organized socialist economy and the organizational skills of our party and the Soviet system of power—the dictatorship of the proletariat.
The brunt of the evacuation itself—that is, as the dictionary explains, the removal of population and property from an area threatened with enemy capture—fell on transport, primarily rail. Therefore, in assessing the roles, it's impossible to shift the focus from the transport itself, as some "historians" do, to the preparation for the evacuation. No Mobilization Plan or Military Schedule envisaged such transports on such an incredibly large scale or with such urgency as this evacuation was carried out. Already in July, more than 300 thousand railcars were occupied by evacuation cargo.
In total, by the most conservative estimates, more than one and a half to two million train cars were transported, including over a million train cars of evacuated cargo and people by November. The vast majority of them were heading east—to the Urals, Siberia, and Central Asia. And all this alongside the main, predominantly counter-current flow of troop trains, carrying the wounded, and locomotive platoons. Fulfilling the Party's call—Stalin's call—we evacuated more than 6,000 locomotives from front-line roads to the rear, not to mention other railway assets that, according to the Mobilization Plan, were located on roads close to the front.
Our unforgettable Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin deeply, accurately, and with warmth appreciated this work of the railway workers. "Our railway workers," he said, "did a gigantic job. They transported mountains of equipment, materials, grain, and millions of people fleeing the fascist barbarians across thousands of kilometers from west to east. The country will not forget this." I recall this not only to appreciate the Great Feat of the railway workers, although this is important and necessary, but also to understand the enormous work of evacuation.

To deeply analyze and consider its positive and negative aspects. This evacuation, which can be called the "migration of peoples," and the displacement of productive forces from a significant part of the country affected the state of rail transport in the late second half of 1941 and early 1942.
It was difficult for managers and local organizations to immediately master and fully prepare the reception and, consequently, unloading sites for such a huge, unexpected influx of evacuated cargo and people. Consequently, loaded railcars filled the eastern tracks and stations. The evacuation and unloading measures taken by local Party and Soviet organizations failed to save the stations and tracks from the colossal accumulation of loaded railcars. Along with the weaknesses of industrial managers, the weaknesses of railway workers, their insufficient demands, were revealed, including those of the People's Commissariat of Railways, which failed to complain to the State Defense Committee.
Only in the summer of 1942 did the unloading of evacuation cargo, and thus the unloading of railway stations, begin to ease. Despite these difficulties and delays, this evacuation epic demonstrates that railway workers, industrial managers, and local organizations, under the leadership of the Party, the Central Committee, and the State Defense Committee, succeeded. A great national achievement had been accomplished. The collection "USSR in Reconstruction," published in the United States in 1944, wrote: "The feats accomplished in the transfer of industry to the East border on the incredible." But what seems impossible to a foreign observer became surmountable and doable for the Soviet people.
The development, processing, and advancement of three colossal flows: 1) evacuation, 2) military, and 3) national economic, and, moreover, mostly counter-current—was undoubtedly a heroic feat of the railway workers, who, knowing neither day nor night, selflessly, under enemy bombardment, carried out their heroic work. It is difficult today, especially for those who did not work on the railway at that time, to imagine the tension and dedication with which the railway workers worked, from the switchman, the engineer, and ending with the people's commissar. The main thing was to ensure the implementation of evacuation shipments on such a grandiose scale and with such haste

as not to disrupt the main transport—military—to the front and within the fronts. I remember how the People's Commissar had to

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Along with his comrades—deputies, department heads, dispatchers—he monitored the extraordinary speed of troop trains, moving at 800-1000 km per day, for example, from the Far East and Siberia, heading toward our native Moscow to defend it from the enemy rushing toward it. The difficulty was that this flow was being met by a stream of factories evacuated to the Urals and Siberia. But the troops were delivered on time, and they honorably fulfilled their duty—they saved Moscow with their participation.

Ensuring the Red Army's success through rail transport during major military operations—Moscow, Stalingrad, Leningrad, the Caucasus, Orel-Kursk, Crimea, the Dnieper, Belarus, and others, all the way to Berlin—requires in-depth and detailed description. For each of these operations, operational and economic measures were developed: provision of railcars, timely delivery of locomotives, track inspections, and traffic management, often under enemy fire. The People's Commissar had to not only review and approve these measures but also directly communicate with railway managers, issuing instructions. If it were possible to collect and study my materials, in particular, the direct line conversations between the People's Commissar and railway managers, an instructive picture of the nature of leadership during the war would emerge. But... unfortunately, my archive, including these telegrams, remained in the People's Commissariat of Railways (now the Ministry of Railways). Did they remain? Did they survive?

A more comprehensive review should cover all the activities of the State Defense Committee and the People's Commissariat of Railways (NKPS) to ensure growth in loading and transportation, to regulate the rolling stock and train traffic, to ensure the most efficient use of railway lines, routes, and circuits, to maneuver railway transport with train traffic taking into account our army's maneuvers, to organize, as an exception, forced unloading, to expedite the delivery of essential cargo, to unbundle junctions, and to implement new plans for train formation and freight routing. Of particular importance was the work to increase capacity on key routes and sections—developing junctions, laying bypasses to allow trains to pass through junction and section stations without stopping, etc.

It is necessary to highlight the implementation of innovation and ingenuity of our advanced workers, machinists - Stakhanovites-Krivonosovites,

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Engineering, technical, scientific, and management personnel, including the People's Commissar and heads of railways: for example, the servicing of military trains by locomotive columns; the use of live blocking, which made it possible to increase traffic density and the concentrated passage of trains; the use of one-way traffic in exceptional cases, while observing the necessary caution stipulated by the temporary regulations; the repair of steam locomotives by the locomotive crews themselves using Lunin's method, the widespread use of wood-fired heating for steam locomotives using Bolonin's method, etc.

The creation of military-operational directorates was particularly important. This unified directorate was first established in the Moscow Junction during the tense moments of the battle for Moscow. It must be frankly stated that there was a danger of some disorganization in the Moscow Junction, where there were several railway directorates. At a meeting in the office of the People's Commissar of Railways with the heads of railways and the Moscow Junction, the Party Committee of Moscow, district committees, and deputy people's commissars, a decision was made to immediately organize a unified Military-Operational Directorate for the entire Moscow Junction. We appointed Deputy People's Commissar Comrade Garnyk—a staunch Bolshevik and a solid, skilled locomotive engineer—as the head of this military-operational directorate. When I reported this to Comrade

Stalin, he approved the decision and said that it should be applied to other junctions as well. The organization of the military-operational directorate was envisaged in the Military Mobilization Plan, and we deployed this special unit.
These glorious military-operational departments (MOD) of ours successfully coped with the task of organizing the work of all stations and road sections converging at the Moscow junction, and then on other roads.
The establishment of such administrations on all frontline roads, mobile locomotive columns with mobile repair facilities—a kind of mobile depot—and the militarization of mobile machine-track stations established before the war played a huge role in ensuring transportation, especially on frontline roads, where stations, depots, and tracks were systematically destroyed and required restoration. Above all, of course, high discipline and organization among railroad workers, preventing panic, especially during bombings and evacuations. Difficulties arose especially in winter, when frosts and snowstorms set in. It's impossible not to remember the selfless labor of the glorious railroad workers during this period with emotion.

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The restoration of the USSR's railways, barbarically destroyed by the enemy, is another great, glorious, and heroic chapter of the Great Patriotic War! It's no exaggeration to say that the heroism of the railway troops, the NKPS special forces, and the railway restorers of liberated roads rivals that of our Soviet Army on the fronts of the Great Patriotic War.
According to the Mobilization Plan, from the beginning of the war, we formed special units—the "Toremy," "Tvoty," "Vodremy," "Svyazremy," and "Podremy"—which reported to the Central Military Department of the People's Commissariat of Railways, and later to the newly created Central Military Reconstruction Directorate of the People's Commissariat of Railways. These purely railway-based special units, staffed with skilled workers and engineering and technical personnel, played a major role, and I object to the downplaying of their role and significance, as some historians have noted. A remarkable and fruitful integration of these special units with the railway troops resulted, which, at Comrade Stalin's suggestion, were transferred from the People's Commissariat of Railways to the People's Commissariat of Railways.
A special place was occupied by the Railway Troops Corps, which even before the war was subordinated to the People's Commissariat of Railways, but militarily to the People's Commissariat of Defense. This corps operated in the Far East and was then transferred to the West before the war, which, incidentally, refutes the legend that we were not prepared for a possible war.
There were also separate railway troops, subordinate only to the People's Commissariat of Defense. During the first stage of the war, recovery efforts were insignificant. The main task of the railway troops, including the Corps, and the NKPS special forces during these days was to conduct roadblocks along the army's retreat and evacuate railway assets. Meanwhile, the railway troops, including the Corps, were forced to take up defensive positions and engage in combat with the enemy. It must be said that, unfortunately, the enemy's rapid advance along the roads, as well as the lack of unified command and control over all recovery forces, negatively impacted the recovery forces. Often, due to their lack of situational awareness, they found themselves encircled and suffered significant losses not only in manpower but also in equipment.
After our army stopped the advance of the Hitlerite hordes near Moscow, Leningrad, Tula, Stary Oskol,

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In Voroshilovgrad, our recovery forces launched a broad-based effort to restore the railways. As early as September 1941, a resolution of the State Defense Committee and an order of the People's Commissariat of Railways (NKPS) established road restoration services, restoration sections, and restoration districts, establishing their operating procedures and management. However, the railway

troops operated separately. They did not coordinate their actions with those of the NKPS, and this hindered the successful organization of railway restoration work. I reported this matter to Comrade Stalin, and in January 1942, the State Defense Committee reviewed a major draft resolution submitted by the NKPS on the organization of military restoration work. This resolution, at Comrade Stalin's suggestion, transferred all railway troops from the NKPS to the NKPS, which established the Main Directorate for Military Restoration Work of the NKPS.

I remember how, in response to objections from some military comrades from the People's Commissariat of Railways, Comrade Stalin explained to them that it was necessary to concentrate all forces, resources, and leadership for railway restoration in a single center—namely, the People's Commissariat of Railways (NKPS), which would be responsible for the overall operational capability of the railways, leaving no room for blaming the People's Commissariat of Railways (NKPS) for its failure to restore the roads. "Otherwise," Comrade Stalin said, "we will not restore the roads and will disrupt all our military plans." Comrade Stalin immediately proposed appointing Comrade L.M. Kaganovich, People's Commissar of Railways, as head of the newly created Main Military Restoration Directorate of the NKPS. This proposal was accepted by the State Defense Committee.

Energetic work was immediately launched to form the Main Directorate of Railway Reconstruction and Development, which included forces from the Railway Troops Corps, led by General Prosvirov, to expedite the restoration of damaged railway sections. A monumental effort was accomplished with honor and heroism by our glorious railway restorers—both the railway troops and the railway special units, especially the bridge units, where the best bridge specialists were concentrated. Railway workers in general, who during the war had served as operators, locomotive operators, wagon builders, trackmen, and signalmen, simultaneously became restorers of their beloved railway transport to ensure victory over the enemy.

The restoration unfolded as military operations progressed.

Initially, this included the restoration of railways in the territories of the liberated nations of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Yugoslavia, Hungary, and Germany. Of the total number of main lines restored outside the Soviet Union, 8,549 km were completed in Poland, 8,998 km in Germany, 2,378 km in Romania, 3,267 km in Czechoslovakia, 4,828 km in Hungary, and 397 km in Yugoslavia.

The most difficult task was the logistical supply. The fact is that the railway received almost no new locomotives or cars from 1942 to 1944. The railways and the People's Commissariat of Railways (NKPS) made enormous efforts to repair rolling stock and track equipment. I especially want to emphasize the remarkable, one might even say, great role of our depot and depot workers—engineers, mechanics, turners, blacksmiths, all the workers and engineering and technical personnel. The same must be said about the track workers, their yards, mobile machine-track stations, and the welders who welded together pieces and scraps of rail into a single track that replaced the glorious Kuznetsk plant rail during the war. And not only the track, but also switches and individual sections of bridge trusses, etc. Without this, without the restoration of old rolling stock and track, we would have perished, because we were not receiving new ones. Anyone who has even a little understanding of the economy, especially the wear and tear on the railways, will understand how difficult it was, and some railway workers used the word “catastrophic”.

Suffice it to say that during the Great Patriotic War, the People's Commissariat of Railways (NKPS) repaired, restored, and manufactured spare parts, tools, rails, fastenings, turnouts, and various other materials worth two billion rubles on the roads and at its own expense.

In 1943 and 1944, when we brought this issue to the attention of the State Defense Committee, to Comrade Stalin, we received some assistance, but the apparatus didn't follow all the instructions, and the actual assistance was extremely inadequate. Naturally, we renewed our complaints and continued to raise questions about improving the logistics of rail transport, although I personally

made some enemies in the process. But after much patience, I believed that in the interests of the state and defense, it was essential to seriously strengthen the railway system.
The railway workers, using their meager resources, produced purely military products at their factories and depots, including bathhouse trains, laundry trains, armored trains, etc.

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After the initial restoration, which allowed trains to pass through, a more fundamental, capital restoration of the railways was carried out, with the replacement of temporary bridges with permanent capital bridges and structures, including to increase the capacity of the restored railways. Construction of new railway lines and secondary tracks was underway across the entire network. Reconstruction of stations and railway facilities occupied a significant portion of the work. During the war, approximately 10,000 kilometers of new railway lines were built.
All of this and many other indicators reflected the genuine, profound, and unostentatious heroism of labor that was demonstrated by the glorious, modest, and unboastful multi-million strong team of railway workers with their wonderful families—wives and children—who were closely connected to the railway as a great part of our glorious, beloved Motherland.
As People's Commissar, I personally received many letters and telegrams expressing gratitude for the transport of troops and weapons. For example, telegrams from Comrades Sokolovsky and Bulganin read, "We thank you for the assistance provided to the front," or a letter from them: "With your assistance, we received transports with ammunition on time, and this greatly helped us successfully develop military operations, in particular, the capture of Yelnya." And here's a telegram that is especially revealing "now": "The transports with tanks have arrived. We express our heartfelt gratitude to you for the assistance provided to the front. Vatutin, Khrushchev, Korneets, Ivanov." I must say that the People's Commissar often had to personally monitor the progress of particularly important echelons.
The party and government highly valued the work of railway workers—approximately 100,000 people were awarded orders and medals, including approximately 150 railway workers awarded the prestigious title of Hero of Socialist Labor.
All of us, leading railway workers, including myself as People's Commissar and my deputies, were delighted to receive this award from the Party and government as a sign of recognition of our selfless work for the good of our beloved Motherland and the Great Leninist Party. Without false modesty, I will say that November 20, 1943, was a particularly happy day for me personally, when Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin presented me with the certificate conferring the title of Hero of Socialist Labor.

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This document states:
"To the Hero of Socialist Labor, Comrade Lazar Moiseevich Kaganovich.
For your exceptional services to the state in providing transportation for the front and the national economy and outstanding achievements in restoring the railway system under the difficult conditions of wartime, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, by its decree of November 5, 1943, awarded you the title of Hero of Socialist Labor.

Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR M.I. Kalinin. Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR A. Gorkin"

Chapter 16

IN THE BATTLE FOR THE CAUCASUS

During the Great Patriotic War against Hitler's fascism, I was fortunate to take direct part in the battles for the Caucasus (as a member of the Military Council of the North Caucasian Front, the Black Sea Group of Forces, and a member of the Military Council of the Transcaucasian Front). The defeat of the fascist hordes near Moscow thwarted Hitler's plans for a "blitzkrieg" and debunked the myth of the fascist army's invincibility. The enemy advance was halted, and the Red Army launched a counteroffensive. However, the fascists launched new offensives on Voronezh, Stalingrad, Donbass, and the Caucasus. They sought to seize Donetsk coal, Baku oil, and Georgian manganese, opening the way to the Middle East, displacing England, and establishing German imperial dominance in Asia and then Africa.

In July 1942, Nazi troops launched an offensive in the North Caucasus, threatening Transcaucasia as well. After discussing the situation, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's Headquarters took a number of measures to strengthen the troops of the North Caucasus Front and to strengthen the command of the troops in the North Caucasus. By a decision of July 28, 1942, the Headquarters reorganized the North Caucasus and Southern Fronts, merging them into a single North Caucasus Front. Semyon Mikhailovich Budyonny was appointed commander of this front, R. Ya. Malinovsky and Ya. T. Cherevichenko were appointed his deputies, and A. I. Antonov was appointed chief of staff. Comrade Stalin proposed appointing L. M. Kaganovich a member of the Military Council of the North Caucasus Front. Back in April 1942, when he transferred to work as deputy

As Chairman of the State Defense Committee's Transport Committee, I had already asked Comrade Stalin to send me to the front, and in July he fulfilled my request and made this proposal, noting that Comrade Kaganovich knew the North Caucasus and had personally fought with Budyonny during the Civil War. The proposal was accepted, and on July 29, I flew to Krasnodar with Bodin, Chief of the General Staff's Operations Department. The situation I found in Krasnodar was complex; measures to implement the General Headquarters order had already been developed at the first meetings of the Front's Military Council. By this point, the discussion was no longer about fully restoring the situation on the left bank of the Don, but about strengthening the defensive line along the left bank of the Kuban and around Krasnodar.

On July 28, Comrade Stalin issued a general order that gave a truthful assessment of the current situation, with the enemy striving at any cost to seize Kuban and the North Caucasus, with its oil and other riches. The order firmly stated: "To retreat further would mean to destroy ourselves and, along with it, our Motherland. Not a step back without an order from the high command. This is the call of our Motherland." Based on this order, the front command issued a specific order. The Military Council, the army political agencies, and the party organizations launched a major political outreach effort among the troops: over 200 political workers were dispatched to units, and approximately 1,500 communists were sent from rear units to active units. Close ties were established with the Krasnodar Regional Party Committee, which sent several thousand communists to the front's military units. The Krasnodar Regional Committee, headed by First Secretary Comrade Seleznev, held a meeting attended by front-line Military Council member L.M. Kaganovich took a number of measures to intensify the construction of defensive fortifications around Krasnodar. At the same time, the Krasnodar Regional Committee, together with the Military Council, prepared the Party underground and organized partisan detachments. Similar work was carried out in Stavropol Krai, where M.A. Suslov served as the regional committee secretary.

Troops of the North Caucasus Front waged fierce battles, defending the approaches to Krasnodar. For over two weeks, the enemy was unable to break through to the city. Only on August 12, following orders from the front command, did our troops retreat to the left bank of the Kuban River. Of course, there were serious shortcomings and mistakes in the defense of Krasnodar, but it would

be wrong to portray the enemy as having captured Krasnodar easily. The battles for Krasnodar exhausted the enemy, which

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This later helped us in the battles for Tuapse and Novorossiysk. On August 5, the Supreme Command Headquarters sent a directive to the front commander on the need to cover Maykop and the Maykop-Tuapse road and prevent the enemy from reaching the Black Sea coast. This crucial directive became the overall objective, defining our entire Tuapse defense line. By decision of the Front Military Council, I was dispatched to the Maykop sector of the front to strengthen its defenses. Simultaneously, together with Baibakov, People's Commissar of the Oil Industry, we took measures to remove oil equipment and disable the Maykopneft enterprises and wells.
From Krasnodar, the front headquarters moved to Armavir, but unfortunately, we didn't have the chance to stay there for long. We moved to Belorechenskaya, then to Khadyzhenskaya, then to the village of Georgievskaya, 15 kilometers from Tuapse, and then to the Tuapse area itself, where the front command firmly established itself, defending Tuapse to the end, never allowing the enemy to capture it and break through to the coast, despite their desperate efforts to capture Tuapse at all costs. It was in Tuapse that Stalin's order, "Not one step back," was carried out.
Having captured Armavir, the enemy concentrated large forces in the Armavir-Maikop-Tuapse direction. They sought to capture Tuapse, Novorossiysk, Lazarevskaya, and, through the pass, Sukhumi, cutting the Black Sea coast defense line into pieces and facilitating the destruction of our military units and the conquest of the Caucasus. These points became crucial in the defense of the entire Black Sea coast and all of Transcaucasia. Troops of the North Caucasus Front, the Black Sea Group of Forces, and the Transcaucasian Front waged a desperate, heroic struggle for these strongholds of the Battle of the Caucasus, particularly the passes, Tuapse, and Novorossiysk, in the fortification and defense of which I was directly involved.
Initially, the enemy expected to easily capture Tuapse through Khadyzhenskaya, Shaumyan, and Georgievskaya, but they encountered stubborn resistance from the troops of the North Caucasus Front, particularly the 17th Cossack Cavalry Corps under the command of the renowned General Kirichenko. Visiting the divisions and regiments of this corps and observing its actions, I became convinced that this corps had not been affected by the negative aspects of the retreat and possessed all the qualities of a combat-ready and maneuverable large military unit, which I reported to Stalin. This corps played a major, if not decisive, role at that time.

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in stopping the enemy's initial, rapid advance toward Tuapse. In this regard, Comrade Stalin's instructions to the Front's Military Council are highly instructive and important. They were issued in connection with the 47th Army's retreat to a new line, but also had a general significance. "It must be taken into account," Stalin wrote, "that retreat lines are not, in themselves, an obstacle and are of no use if they are not defended. The defense of mountain lines must be built on persistent counterattacks ahead of the main positions on all approaches to these positions, so as to create the greatest possible obstacles for the enemy's advance in each direction, wearing him down with small and large battles of annihilation. It is clear from all indications that you have not yet succeeded in creating a proper turning point in troop actions, and that where the command staff is not panicked, the troops are fighting well and counterattacks are producing results, as is evident from the actions of the 17th Cavalry Corps. You need to take control of your troops, force them to fight, and properly organize your defenses in the foothills, achieving true tenacity in the actions of all individual units ahead of the main positions and the main forces at the main lines. Suvorov said: "If I have intimidated the enemy, even though I haven't yet laid eyes on him, then I have already won half the victory; I am bringing troops to the front to finish off the intimidated enemy." Ensure that all our

troops act like the 17th Cavalry Corps. (It seems to me that today's historians underestimate the 17th Cavalry Corps and General Kirichenko personally.)
In accordance with this directive, an expanded meeting of the Front Military Council was convened, with the army commanders participating. At my suggestion, a large meeting of the political workers was also held (at the edge of the forest near Georgievskaya Station), at which Budyonny and Kaganovich spoke. Having pointed out the current situation, we called on the political workers to do everything possible to fulfill Stalin's directive. L.I. Brezhnev, then deputy head of the front's political directorate, responded on behalf of the political workers. After this, all these hundreds of political workers, primarily from the party organizations of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, dispersed to their units and began work in the indicated direction, which had a significant impact on improving the situation in the units, which were not in full order after the retreat.
It must be said that, in addition to the Cavalry Corps and other similar units, our frontline aviation stood out—our glorious pilots, among whom were the female pilots of the Taman Aviation Regiment. Our aviation significantly helped in repelling the enemy. Despite

Despite his quantitative superiority, our pilots dealt him serious blows.
The fascist enemy, forced to halt its direct offensive on Tuapse from Khadyzhenskaya, concentrated its forces against Novorossiysk, hoping to break through to Tuapse through Novorossiysk. We took this into account and launched active battles for Novorossiysk, primarily for the defense of Novorossiysk, where I had departed at that moment in accordance with the decision of the Front Military Council. I will only note here that there, in Novorossiysk, I became even more convinced of the correctness of the latest instructions from Headquarters. Observing the command of the 47th Army and visiting divisions and marine detachments, I saw that while fighting spirit prevailed among the units, confidence was lacking among the 47th Army's leadership, proper communication with the troops was lacking, and a lack of direction and disorganization reigned. In late August or early September, the Front Military Council adopted a serious resolution with corresponding assignments for the commander of the 47th Army. The battles for Novorossiysk against the Germans and the counterattacks of our troops were fierce, especially those of our 77th Division, which, through stubborn fighting and suffering heavy losses, held back the enemy advance. Comrade Abramov, a member of the Army Military Council, was killed in one of the counterattacks. There were, of course, some units that retreated disorganized under the enemy onslaught. Throughout the battle for Novorossiysk, efforts were underway to strengthen defensive positions in the city itself and in its immediate vicinity. With the active leadership of the city's party organizations and workers, barricades, hedgehog-shaped structures of rails and beams were erected, buildings were selected for firing positions, and so on. However, this did not correspond to the extensive plans and work that had been begun in 1941 and partially continued in 1942, but remained far from complete.
The fierce, bloody battle for Novorossiysk raged for nearly a month. Day and night, fighting raged inside the city. The German invaders paid a high price for capturing Novorossiysk. But they were never able to completely capture the entire city—the Oktyabr cement plant and the workers' district around it remained in our hands. This became a symbol of our struggle—October blocked the path of German imperialism and fascism. When, after the war, I was in Novorossiysk as People's Commissar for Construction Materials, I was very pleased to see a railway car riddled with bullet holes and shell fragments, but still standing near the Oktyabr cement plant. It was later raised.

and placed it on a pedestal, and on the pedestal they made a remarkable historical inscription: “Here on September 11, 1942, the valiant soldiers of the Soviet Army and the Black Sea Fleet blocked the enemy’s path to the Caucasus, and 360 days later, in cooperation with the naval landing force and

units from Malaya Zemlya, they began the assault on Novorossiysk and on September 16, 1943, having defeated the fascist troops, liberated the city."
Particular mention should be made of the serious and major role of the Black Sea Fleet, the Azov-Black Sea Flotilla, led by Commanders Oktyabrsky, Gorshkov, and members of the Military Council, Comrades Kulakov and Prokofiev.
I was directly involved in organizing the glorious and heroic landing on Malaya Zemlya. A veteran personnel officer, I personally oversaw the selection of commanders and political officers for the landing force and its units, including such a strong and courageous airborne corps commander as Gordeyev and the worthy political instructor Ryzhov.
After the plan to move to Tuapse via Novorossiysk failed, the Nazi command again switched to the Tuapse direction to attack Tuapse via Shaumyan.
By this time, Stavka had reorganized the North Caucasus Front into the Black Sea Group of Forces, subordinating it to the Transcaucasian Front. This was undoubtedly the right move, as the entire course of military events had merged the fronts. It was necessary to consolidate command in a single center, and the material support of the troops stationed on the coast required significant reinforcements. While also dealing with supply issues at the front, I saw that the front was acutely short of food supplies for the troops and forage for the horses, primarily due to the lack of a railway line.
At that time, the Transcaucasian Front had more reserves to provide assistance to the Black Sea Group of Forces, primarily in the Tuapse direction.
At this new stage, the defense of Tuapse, this crucial section of the Black Sea coast, took on an even more acute and fundamental character. It was a difficult and intense duel of forces. Despite the enemy's numerical superiority being almost two to one (the Black Sea Group of Forces had no tanks at all, while the enemy had tanks, and we had five times fewer aircraft), the enemy failed to capture Tuapse. All the city's defenders knew that the capture of Tuapse by the enemy would lead to the encirclement and destruction of two of our armies—the 47th and 56th.

This meant seizing the routes leading directly to Transcaucasia. Political workers at our front, including Comrade Yemelyanov, the head of the political department, and his deputy, Comrade Brezhnev, did everything possible to ensure that every soldier understood this and fought like a lion for the approaches to Tuapse. The talented General Ivan Yefimovich Petrov, newly appointed commander of the Black Sea Group of Forces to replace Comrade Cherevichenko, and the Military Council, of which Korets and Kaganovich were members, established close ties with the troops of the 18th Army, which was directly defending Tuapse, and with the 56th Army, stationed in the center of the Black Sea Group of Forces. Together with Comrade Petrov, and separately, I visited the divisions and regiments of these armies, assisting their command.
Back in late August, the Tuapse Defensive Region was established, and Rear Admiral Comrade Zhukov, commander of the Tuapse Military Base, was appointed commander. The Military Council and I personally maintained close daily contact with him.
In September, the command, together with the Tuapse party leadership, launched a major effort to build the Tuapse defensive region. This was a major undertaking, in which the engineering troops played a primary role. Despite their underequipment, numerical inadequacy, and the resulting weakness, I can testify, as a member of the Military Council directly involved with them, that they worked selflessly, selflessly, and many of them heroically. We often had to inspect the progress of the work on site, including in the mountains, and take appropriate measures. Although, as they said, they were reprimanded for failing to meet the work schedule, especially after their well-founded criticism of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's Headquarters, they knew that we were helping them in a businesslike manner and, when necessary, would defend them from unfounded accusations. Many positions remained unfinished, but a great deal of work had been accomplished on the defensive fortifications. The local population, including women, was also involved in this

construction work. The communists and advanced workers of Tuapse declared martial law, organized themselves into armed detachments with our assistance, went into barracks, and underwent military training under the command of commanders appointed by the Military Council. We also used them to reinforce our army. The battle for Tuapse was fought on its outskirts—in the area of operations of the 18th Army, to which the group's command, Petrov, and Military Council member Kaganovich, were dispatched to take action on the spot, as the situation had become threatening. The command

The 18th Army (Kamkov), located 10 kilometers from Tuapse, had extremely poor communications with the main army and was unaware that the enemy had captured Shaumyan, thus posing a direct threat to Tuapse. From the 18th Army command post, I traveled to the 83rd Division, which had arrived from Central Asia and was composed of Uzbeks, Kyrgyz, and Turkmens, commanded by the outstanding specialist Comrade Luchinsky. The division had been moved to Indyuk Station to halt the enemy advance. There, at a divisional meeting, I spoke separately with the Uzbeks and held a briefing with the divisional command staff. As a deputy of the Supreme Soviet representing the Uzbek Republic, I was very pleased and gratified to see the fighting spirit and readiness to fight for the Motherland of the Uzbek, Turkmen, Kazakh, and Tajik soldiers, as well as the high level of the division's command and political leadership. I felt all of this especially during the meeting, when enemy aircraft flew over us and not a single soldier, especially the commander, moved or budged from his place, continuing to listen to my report and applaud in those parts where I spoke of the inevitable coming victory over Hitler's fascism under the leadership of our Leninist Party and the Great Commander Comrade Stalin.

I also visited the 353rd Division, commanded by Comrade Kolchuk, whom I knew from his service in the railway troops in the Far East. Together with him, I rode up Mount Indyuk—specifically, the half of the mountain that was in our hands and under fire from the other half, which was in enemy hands. All possible measures were taken to assist and strengthen our positions to prevent the enemy from capturing the entire Mount Indyuk.

Looking ahead, I will say that this mountain and the Indyuk railway station have become especially memorable for me throughout my life, because at the end of October, while traveling to the front lines with Comrade Tyulenev, the commander of the Transcaucasian Front, Comrade Isakov, a member of the Military Council, and Air Force Commander Vershinin, we, along with the newly arrived Armenian division we were assigned to, were bombed by enemy aircraft. As a result, Isakov and Kaganovich, members of the Military Council of the Transcaucasian Front, were wounded there.

Having reviewed the situation in the 18th Army on the ground, we took a number of measures to strengthen it and appointed a new army commander, A.A. Grechko.

This was the most critical period of the battle for Tuapse. In desperate victorious battles, units of the 18th Army under direct

The leadership of the Command and Military Council of the Black Sea Group of Forces, the Transcaucasian Front, and the overall leadership of the Supreme Command Headquarters successfully concluded these battles by routing the most powerful Semashkh group of enemy forces. Its remnants fled across the Pshish River, and their advance on Tuapse left, as the soldiers joked, only a "pshish." There were still some intense clashes with the enemy, but the threat of Tuapse's capture was already fading. The city of Tuapse was subjected to savage, merciless bombing literally hourly. The once-glorious Black Sea resort town was reduced to piles of rubble, but behind them stood firm and fought the heroic defenders of the Soviet city, preventing the enemy from reaching the Black Sea. Tuapse stood firm and is rightfully considered a hero city.

We celebrated the anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Soviet Tuapse, protected from the German invaders. I've delivered many reports, but never before have I experienced such excitement as I did when delivering my report at this solemn meeting of the Tuapse Soviet, the City Committee, the Krasnodar Regional Committee, the Military Councils of the Front and Fleet, workers and collective farmers, and the Red Army soldiers, sailors, partisans, and commanders we had summoned. My report and the speeches following it expressed complete confidence in our victory over the fascist invaders. The workers, Red Army soldiers, sailors, and partisans vowed to fight until complete victory over the enemy, to drive them from their native land, and to finish them off in their lair. "Death to the German fascist invaders!" — this slogan captured the hearts and souls of all Soviet patriots and became a great mobilizing force in the upcoming offensive battles with the enemy.

Stalin's report on the 25th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution at the ceremonial meeting in Moscow instilled even more courage and confidence in our souls and minds. We all understood that a difficult struggle for victory still lay ahead, especially in a situation where the Allies were in no hurry to open the second front they had promised but were not implementing. But we all confidently sensed our own increased might and strength, and although new enemy offensive attempts on individual fronts were still inevitable, all of us, from the soldier to the Military Council, clearly recognized that the defensive period of the war was successfully ending and a general offensive period was beginning on all fronts, including the Caucasian Front, which would bring us final and complete victory over the insolent, treacherous,

A bestial, cannibalistic enemy of our Motherland and all of humanity. It's no exaggeration to say that by the end of 1942, our country and its glorious army had grown even stronger for the decisive battle, and all of us, party workers at the rear and the front, did everything necessary to achieve Victory.

In November, the Supreme Command Headquarters summoned to Moscow the commanders of the Transcaucasian Front, Comrade Tyulenev, the Black Sea Group of Forces, Comrade Petrov, and the member of the Military Council, Comrade Kaganovich. At the meeting, attended by members of the Politburo and the State Defense Committee, our reports were heard and instructions were given regarding the upcoming offensive operations. In connection with the transfer of the Black Sea Group of Forces to the subordination of the Transcaucasian Front, Comrade Stalin proposed appointing Comrade Kaganovich as a member of the Military Council of the Transcaucasian Front, which was accepted. In addition to the official meeting, I had a separate conversation with Comrade Stalin, in which I covered party and political issues and answered his questions. I was touched by the interest Stalin showed in my health in connection with my injury. During dinner, members of the Politburo and State Defense Committee joked that Kaganovich had become a seasoned military man, applying his "NKPS-like grip" to demands for assistance to the front. Stalin, smiling, said, "Of course, the complaints and tears of the military, as well as those of those in the rear, must be viewed critically, but it is very good that Comrade Kaganovich is deeply involved in military affairs and the needs of the front." And then, turning to me, he said, "It is clear that you are captivated by the frontline situation and work, but keep in mind that we cannot and will not leave you there for long —we need you here." I admit that although I was truly captivated by the work at the front, I received Comrade Stalin's words about my need here with understandable trepidation. When they raised a toast to my health, Comrade Stalin asked me if my injury had affected my health. I replied that I was quite healthy and capable of any workload.

We spent two days in Moscow, of which I spent only a few hours with my beloved family, and in unfavorable weather, we flew via Emba and the Kazakh steppes to Tbilisi. I left Moscow in a cheerful, good mood, never imagining that three months later I would renew my "NKPS grip" at the People's Commissariat of Railways.

Upon arrival from Moscow, the Military Council of the Front: I.V. Tyulenev - the front commander, members of the Military Council P.I. Efimov, L.M. Kaganovich, Charkviani, Bagirov with the participation of Maslennikov,

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Petrov and others—reviewed and approved measures to implement the Headquarters' assignments to prepare an offensive operation against German forces along the entire front—both in the Northern and Black Sea Groups of Forces. Front headquarters, initially under Comrade Antonov, and then under Comrade Rozhdestvensky, who replaced Comrade Antonov, who had been transferred to Moscow to the General Staff, and the chiefs of staff of the Northern and Black Sea Groups of Forces, vigorously reworked the existing plans and measures. After their initial development, these plans were further refined, particularly based on critical instructions from the Headquarters of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief.

Without attempting to outline the plans and their revisions here, I will note that they were painstakingly and thoroughly developed by all of us and highly qualified specialists. We couldn't always see what was visible from the lofty tower of the General Staff and the Supreme Command Headquarters, but we worked not schematically, but based on the facts of the local situation at each sector of the front. And this front was very large and complex, beginning with the Caucasus Mountains and the vast Black Sea coastline and extending to the Kuban, Stavropol, and even Don steppes. The front united many armies and, to a certain extent, the operational activities of the Black Sea Fleet and its Azov Flotilla, which played a crucial role in the battles for the Caucasus. Of particular importance, of course, were the air force, artillery, engineering troops, and all the logistics services that supported the front in the absence of rail communications.

There is no need to mention the primary and most important work of the political organs of the front and the army, which, together with local party organizations, ensured the political preparation for the offensive.

Since I was unfamiliar with the situation in the Northern Group of Forces, soon after arriving in Tbilisi from Moscow, I asked the Military Council for permission to travel to the Northern Group. Comrade Antonov, the Chief of Staff, accompanied me. In the Northern Group, we first heard a report from Chief of Staff Zabaluev on the progress of the offensive plan and the measures to support it, at the Military Council, attended by Group Commander Maslennikov and Council member Suslov. It was clear that the plan was lagging behind, and the measures to support it were insufficiently developed. Preparations were proceeding extremely poorly, especially in the area of rear management.

We were in the 9th Army (commander Koroteev). We, of course, first of all reported our impressions and conclusions to the

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The Military Council of the Northern Group of the Front, but the main conclusions were addressed to the Military Council of the Transcaucasian Front upon arrival in Tbilisi. Our main conclusion was that Maslennikov, the commander of the group's troops, had little connection with the troops, and that his command was heavily formalistic and schematic, due to his poor understanding of the facts of life. Political work was carried out satisfactorily, but we assumed that before the offensive, political work at the party needed to be strengthened, especially in national units, such as the Azerbaijani Division, which we visited. The Military Council of the Transcaucasian Front issued the corresponding instructions. Thus, the visit to the Northern Group proved not only informative but also, to a certain extent, instructive, and, most importantly, practical in terms of correcting the shortcomings existing in the Northern Group of Forces of the Front. Comrade Antonov, of course, helped me understand military matters, and I believe I also helped him in assessing the overall situation.

Naturally, in my work at the Military Council itself, in addition to participating in matters of general leadership, I had to focus primarily on political party work and personnel matters. Although I must say that Military Council member Comrade Yefimov, as a veteran military political officer, worked skillfully and energetically, I think that, to the best of my ability, I enriched the political work with my long-standing experience in party work.

I had to deal with the organization of the partisan movement, providing assistance to them and establishing their connections with the troops on the North Caucasus Front and in the Black Sea Group of Forces.

I was also involved in the work of the engineering troops, which played a major role, especially during the offensive. They needed assistance, and I tried to help them with both criticism and actual material support. Of course, I was especially involved in transportation. Since there was no rail connection to the center, except for the Transcaucasian railway, which was in good working order, our main transportation link was across the Caspian Sea from Krasnovodsk, where supplies for Transcaucasia arrived via the Central Asian railway lines—this was the only route. In October and November, there was a traffic jam there. Since pressure through correspondence was ineffective, I proposed to the Military Council that I be sent to Krasnovodsk. Upon arriving in Krasnovodsk, I put my transportation experience to good use. Together with sailors and local organizations from Turkmenistan

Corresponding measures were taken in Krasnovodsk—supplies for our front were sent to Baku. From there, our Transcaucasian Railway (comrade Kiknadze in charge) delivered them. Automobile transport, which I also managed, played a major role in this. I also had to handle military orders from enterprises in Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. I must say that the Georgian, Armenian, and Azerbaijani republics, as well as the enemy-free regions and republics of the North Caucasus, including Dagestan, provided the front with tremendous work and exceptional assistance.

In December and January, the front commander, Comrade Tyulenev, and I, as a member of the Military Council, traveled to the Northern Group of Forces and the Black Sea Group of Forces to inspect the preparations and progress of the offensive and to provide assistance. We arrived at the Northern Group just as the offensive was beginning along the entire front. Initially, everything was going well, but then communications between the group and army headquarters and the troops were disrupted, and contact with some units was lost. The pursuit of the enemy slowed and, in some places, was completely halted. The front and group commanders received a sharp telegram from Stalin, in which he reproached them for being separated from their troops and that, in this situation, the mobile units could be encircled by the Germans. Headquarters ordered them to restore communications and report this to Headquarters. Together with the Military Councils of the Northern and Black Sea Groups of Forces, we developed a new plan of action.

Front Commander Tyulenev and Military Council member Kaganovich also left for the Black Sea Group of Forces. On the spot, the offensive plan was refined and fleshed out, including Petrov's beloved brainchild, the "Battle Plan Table" (I personally really liked it; I think it was instructive even for economic managers: it provided not only the number of combat operations but also the full provision of ammunition, fuel, and so on). Unfortunately, not everything could be foreseen, for example, the condition of the roads, which changes depending on the weather. When Petrov and I later drove to the foothills through which our artillery was being dragged along the muddy mountain roads, I half-jokingly told him, "We didn't account for these difficulties in the battle plan table—we'll have to work here and help pull out the artillery." "Yes, we will," Petrov agreed, "otherwise the offensive might stall." After this operation we went our separate ways - Tyulenev went to the 46th Army, where Leselidze was then in command, and I went to the 56th Army, which was commanded by Grechko, preparing

It was ready for the offensive on Krasnodar. I knew the 56th Army, having been there when it was stationed in the Fanagoriyskaya area and Ryzhov was its commander. The 56th Army was not in bad standing, and the divisional command staff was well selected. I remember when I arrived at the 395th Division, I was pleased to meet the division commander, Uzbek Rakhimov Umar-ogly. He was a well-prepared and highly capable commander, a combative and courageous leader; I quickly became friends with him, and he with me, calling me "the deputy from Uzbekistan." During the war, he developed into a major military leader and received the rank of general. After the 395th Division, I rode on horseback to the 20th Guards Rifle Division together with the newly appointed division commander, Arshintsev. This Guards Division made no less a favorable impression than the 395th, one might even say a better one. After visiting the battalions and having a very interesting conversation with a group of scouts in the forest, we held a meeting of the division's commanders and political officers to discuss the state of preparation and the objectives of the upcoming offensive.

The 56th Army was redeployed to the main axis of the offensive—Krasnodar. Arriving at army headquarters, I learned that Army Commander Grechko was stationed at a special command post 20 kilometers away, directly on the front line beyond Stavropolskaya Station. After Chief of Staff Kharitov reported on the situation at the army's location, I asked for someone to escort me to Grechko. They began to argue that it was now inaccessible by car, that the road ran along the front line, that it was under fire, and that they couldn't risk a member of the Politburo Central Committee, and therefore couldn't escort me there. I didn't back down and began to demand a guide and a riding horse more forcefully. Finally, Comrade Kalchenko, a member of the Military Council and an old Ukrainian compatriot of mine, declared that he knew nothing could be done with me and that he would ride with me himself, taking a guide. We arrived there on horseback in the dark. True, the road did run along the front line and was under fire, but we made it safely. Grechko greeted us with a very surprised question: "How did you get here? How did you find the way?" Grechko briefed us on the situation, his plans and activities, and told us about a meeting of the division and rifle corps commanders that he had scheduled for early the next morning. Kalchenko and I, along with him, participated in this operational meeting, which took place at the edge of the forest. The meeting was short but very informative; there were also arguments about how, who, and when.

Advance. I remember the corps commander, the main striking force of the offensive, speaking particularly pointedly. Grechko, summing up everything that had been said, tied up all the loose ends, clearly defining everyone's role and tasks. He took into account my comments from my preliminary conversation with him, in particular, that it was a shame not to invite at least the senior political officers to this meeting, as they face enormous tasks both during the offensive and in defending Krasnodar itself. Therefore, I had already decided not to speak, but my comrades asked me to speak. Having emphasized the importance of the directions and orders of Army Commander Comrade Grechko, in my short speech I emphasized that the task set before them by Supreme Commander-in-Chief Comrade Stalin, the Military Council, and the commander of the Transcaucasian Front, and accordingly by Army Commander Comrade Grechko, it's not easy that we're not just talking about recapturing Krasnodar, the capital of Kuban, from the enemy, but also about moving forward—to Tikhoretskaya and further on to Bataysk and Rostov. I spoke about the tasks of the political departments and asked that this be conveyed to the political officers. I spoke, in particular, about preparing the army's rear, supplies, and motor transport. In conclusion, I conveyed greetings from the Military Council of the Transcaucasian Front and wished them success and victory.

Returning to the headquarters of the Black Sea Group of Forces, which was located near Gelendzhik, I first reviewed the situation near Novorossiysk and the progress of the struggle to recapture it. After discussing the situation and objectives, we decided that Comrades Tyulenev,

Petrov, and Kaganovich would go to the 18th Army—the main force of the offensive on Novorossiysk. It was already under the command of Comrade Leselidze. By this time, the 18th Army had been strengthened, receiving fresh combat forces and many new commanders. The army was especially bolstered by the glorious sailors of the Black Sea Fleet, whom we organized into landing forces that landed on Cape Hako on February 4, 1943. This became the heroic force that received the historical name "Malaya Zemlya."
The Black Sea Navy (Commander Oktyabrsky and Military Council member Kulakov) and the Azov-Black Sea Flotilla (Commander Gorshkov and Military Council member Prokofiev) deserve considerable credit for organizing the landings. These sailors were the first landing forces sent to Malaya Zemlya. I was directly involved in organizing them. Seeing them off at the pier with a farewell speech, I witnessed their fighting spirit, their revolutionary and patriotic readiness for a heroic battle with the enemy.

Unfortunately, due to my departure for Moscow at the request of the Central Committee, my contact with them was severed, but even in Moscow I received news from them that was dear to me. Here, for example, is a letter from "Malaya Zemlya" from the corps commander, Comrade Gordeyev, and his deputy for political affairs, Comrade Ryzhov: "Greetings, dear Lazar Moiseevich! Taking advantage of Comrade Mitin's presence, on behalf of the soldiers and commanders of the 20th Airborne Rifle Corps, we send you ardent greetings from the heroic defenders of "Malaya Cleared Land." Having landed on Mys Khako on 4/2, 1943..., the soldiers and commanders of the 255th and 83rd Marine Brigades destroyed tens of thousands of fascist scum and will destroy even more. We honorably justify your hopes and the trust you placed in us. The sailors of the 255th and 83rd Brigades are proud that these brigades were created at your request, and with this in mind, they fight the enemy with utmost steadfastness. We wish you good health and success in your great work."
The 18th Army command devoted great attention and care to the airborne troops of Malaya Zemlya. Comrade L.I. Brezhnev, the head of the 18th Army's political department, visited Malaya Zemlya more often than anyone else. Naturally, I maintained contact with Comrade Brezhnev, whom I had met at the front when he was his deputy head of the front's political department, and I often had occasion to interact with him in work and converse. Once in Moscow, I received a letter from Comrade Brezhnev. Brezhnev wrote to me from Malaya Zemlya:

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“To you, dear Lazar Moiseevich, my warm front-line greetings!
Yesterday, a group of lecturers from the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), led by Comrade Mitin, arrived in our army. This is a great help. Comrade Mitin and I arrived last night at Malaya Zemlya. This is the land that the brigades you organized recaptured from the enemy in February. Today, Comrade Mitin delivered a report to the command staff of the airborne group. After the report, we had a long conversation about combat operations and, of course, warmly remembered you and your role in preparing the landing. Many songs are now being sung about Malaya Zemlya, many stories have been composed, and many poems have been written. Comrades are writing you letters, and I add my feelings to their words and am taking advantage of Comrade Mitin's visit. I am writing these lines at Malaya Zemlya. I am working as the chief of the political department of the 18th Army. I am happy with my work; it is my element. I have not forgotten all your instructions and the school of teamwork. My health is good. Comrades Gordeyev, Potapov, Vidov, Bushev, Kosonogov, Ryzhov, all on the Malaya, all send you their warmest greetings. Comrade Leselidze is in command,

Comrade Kolonin, member of the Armed Forces, Pavlovsky Chief of Staff. Comrade Mitin has become thoroughly familiar with our affairs; we ask him to convey to you everything he has seen and everything that was conveyed to him for you.
With respectful greetings, L. Brezhnev."

Returning to the 18th Army, where we—Tyulenev, Petrov, and Kaganovich—arrived, I can say that we found organized work to address the existing problems in the army and prepare for an offensive. There were flaws, shortcomings, and oversights in the plans and in the work, but they were corrected with our assistance. It must be said that Army Commander Leselidze, outwardly modest, taciturn, and no Hercules, was, in fact, particularly when discussing military operations, a principled staunchness, defending his opinions and proposals. Most importantly, he possessed a highly qualified knowledge of military affairs and was a firm, far-sighted commander. He was undoubtedly an outstanding and talented army commander. The Military Council of the Transcaucasian Front and its commander, Ivan Vladimirovich Tyulenev, provided every possible assistance to the 18th and 56th Armies, which were entrusted with important combat missions. Working in the Military Council alongside Tyulenev and other comrades, I was completely absorbed in the struggle at the front to achieve the Great Goal—the complete and final defeat of the archenemy of our Motherland and all of humanity—Hitler's fascism. The front even distracted me from my beloved railway transport. However, the moment apparently came when the Central Committee and the State Defense Committee decided to return me to the fold of railway transport. I was unable to complete my participation in the operations to liberate Krasnodar and Novorossiysk. Stalin's telegram summoned me to Moscow to continue my work as People's Commissar of Railways. But even in Moscow, I remained deeply engrossed in the interests of the Transcaucasian Front and the progress of its military operations. The frontline environment brings people together quickly and powerfully—I developed a deep respect and warm friendship for the comrades with whom we forged victory over the enemy of our Fatherland. It's hard to even list how many friends and comrades I made at the front. For example, I became friends with Comrade Tyulenev, the front commander, a distinguished veteran of the Red Army dating back to the Civil War. Although we sometimes had disagreements over business matters, this did not hinder our friendship and affection. When I left, he personally wrote me a greeting "as the immediate commander of the troops of the Transcaucasian Front, in memory of

"fierce battles and the defeat of the German hordes in the Caucasus in 1942-1943."
I found it especially valuable to get to know the peoples, workers, and party members of the Caucasus and Transcaucasia better, as well as their leaders loyal to Lenin's Party. As a member of the Front's Military Council, I saw and felt the enormous contribution made to the victory over the enemy by the peoples of the Georgian, Azerbaijani, and Armenian republics, the Krasnodar and Stavropol territories, the Rostov region, the Dagestan republic, and other republics and regions of the Caucasus, along with the glorious troops of the Transcaucasian and North Caucasian fronts and the Black Sea Fleet.
And today, in my declining years, I can say with all my heart that I am happy that I had the chance to take part in the battle for the Caucasus!
Glory to the peoples of the North Caucasus and Transcaucasia - the Georgian, Armenian, Azerbaijani republics and their communist and Bolshevik organizations!
Glory to our heroic Soviet Army, which defended our Motherland, including the North Caucasus and Transcaucasia, and defeated the most evil, insidious enemy - Hitler's fascism!
Eternal glory and eternal memory to the heroes who fell in battle and with their blood ensured the victory of our entire Socialist Fatherland!

Chapter 17

POST-WAR YEARS

THE BEGINNING OF RECOVERY

After the greatest military feat in history in the Patriotic War, the Soviet people, under the leadership of their Leninist Party and its Central Committee, accomplished the greatest labor feat in history in the restoration of the incredibly devastated national economy, cities and villages of our Motherland.

This was not simply a restoration of the old, but simultaneously a construction of the new. This became possible only by preserving and strengthening the revolutionary socialist independence of our Fatherland and consolidating in foreign relations the fruits of victory achieved in a bitter, bloody struggle.

Before the war, our country was the only one in the world to overthrow imperialist rule in October 1917 and launch the construction of socialism in a capitalist encirclement. All the world's imperialists sought to destroy the Soviet state, conquer Russia, and turn its peoples into slaves of global capital.

The most rabid, predatory German fascist element of global imperialism began a war for global domination and, having conquered the European capitalist countries, rushed to attack the Soviet Union. Given the experience of "Munich" (the Munich Betrayal, 1938 - editor's note), Hitler counted on the British imperialists, and then the American ones, eventually joining his campaign against the Soviet Union. But historically, the British and American imperialists did not recognize Hitler as their leader, did not want the fascists to achieve world domination, and opposed him. And when the Soviet state withstood the initial sudden, heavy blows and Hitler's "blitzkrieg" clearly failed,

The British and Americans entered into an agreement with the Soviet Union to achieve victory over their own arrogant imperialist "brother"—German imperialism, obsessed with the delusional idea of achieving world domination. Objectively, regardless of the subjective ultimate goals of the Anglo-American rulers, this military coalition with the Soviet Union and the participation of the British and American peoples in the war against the fascists was a great and noble historical act, which the Soviet people and their leaders highly value and will never forget. However, it would be a pipe dream to ignore the instructive facts that have occurred and continue to occur: immediately before the war, British and French politicians thwarted negotiations on measures to counter the escalation of the German fascists; the events during the war, expressed primarily in the Anglo-Americans' repeated failures to reach an agreement with the Soviet Union on opening a second front; and especially the facts of the post-war hostile Anglo-American policy against the Soviet Union. At the heart of all this lay the long-held calculations of the world imperialists that, by destroying the Soviet Union and all its viable forces, they would turn the peoples of the USSR into their slaves, their complete colony, their "living space," and thereby finally secure their world domination. The pre-war calculations of the Anglo-French-American imperialist rulers boiled down to the idea that they would succeed in sending the Germans against the Soviet Union in order to destroy it with their own hands and simultaneously undermine the war-weary strength of their rival, Germany.

During the war, being our allies, the most reactionary imperialists counted on the fact that without a second front, both the Germans and the Soviet Union would emerge from the war bled dry, on crutches, destroyed and so weakened that they would not be able to play an independent role in the world for a long time, and then the greatness of the British Empire would shine again, and next to it

or above it, as the American imperialists dreamed, the American "Uncle Sam" would sit with his dollar bag and electric chair.
Modern history has played a cruel joke on all these calculations of old and new imperialist politicians - these calculations of theirs failed because history created after the First World War in October 1917 such a powerful objective and subjective historical force as the State of Soviets, the socialist economy, socialist culture and such

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The multi-million revolutionary cadres of the working class, collective farm peasantry, intelligentsia and the glorious invincible Soviet Army, who, under the leadership of their brilliant Leninist Communist Party, performed a historical miracle - and in this unprecedented war, Socialism and the Soviet system were victorious!
Our Great Soviet Union emerged from the Great Patriotic War as a powerful, strengthened force not only domestically but also with enormously increased moral and political authority and influence in Europe, Asia, and throughout the world. Our Party, its Central Committee, the Soviet government, and the Soviet peoples can be proud that the policies of the Party and government, the conduct of their leaders, led by Stalin, and their diplomatic representatives, led by Molotov, rose to the occasion of the great historical changes in the world that occurred after the victory over fascism, and held high international honor, the banner of Lenin, and the Great Soviet State he created.
This made it easier to solve the most difficult task within the country: restoring the destroyed economy.
After all, American politicians offered us aid through the so-called "Marshall Plan" they had implemented in European countries. Given the colossal destruction our country had suffered, accepting this aid might have been tempting, but we saw how this Marshall Plan was leading to the enslavement of European countries. For us, this concealed the "hope"—the imperialists' calculation that they would inject, penetrate, and inject capitalist germs and elements into our socialist economy and, of course, as they could have hoped, into our culture, ideology, and politics. But it was not to be. The Soviet government rejected these offers. And here our Party, its Central Committee, and our leader—the unbending I.V. Stalin—once again demonstrated their strength, fortitude, and ability to look forward, in a Leninist way.
With their own efforts, the heroic Russian proletariat and its allies, led by Lenin, carried out the October Revolution, created the Soviet state, won the Civil War, rebuilt the economy on the basis of the New Economic Policy (NEP), implemented the Great Five-Year Plans, and defeated our Motherland's greatest enemy in the Great Patriotic War. Now, with our own efforts, without relying on or accepting aid from the imperialists, which is "charitable" in words but predatory in practice, we ourselves must rebuild the devastated economy.

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With this, the party went to the working class, the collective farm peasantry and the intelligentsia, and the people supported their party.
Even before the end of the war, as our glorious army liberated cities, villages, and industrial centers, the Soviet people and the Soviet state, under the leadership of the Party, began rebuilding the devastation. Based on the decision of the Central Committee and the Soviet government of August 21, 1943, "On urgent measures to restore the economy in areas liberated from German occupation," railway lines, factories, plants, power plants, mines and pits, state and collective farms, cities, and villages were raised from the ruins. By the end of the war, thanks to the enormous efforts of the Soviets, the Party, workers, and collective farmers, thousands of kilometers of railway lines, more than 6,000 industrial enterprises and power plants, had been not only temporarily but also completely restored. Rear-area regions assisted collective and state farms in the former frontline with tractors, livestock, and equipment; 1,500 machine and tractor stations and over a thousand

machine and tractor workshops resumed operations. Even during these wartime years, the mighty strength of the Soviet and collective farm systems became evident. No capitalist country had ever experienced such devastation, such a mobilization of the entire economy for war. Yet, despite this, our country transitioned from wartime to postwar times, from a wartime economy to a peacetime economy, without crises, systematically, and without the slightest infringement of its independence, as had happened in capitalist countries, when America, having suffered the least from the war and having won, dictated its terms to the capitalist countries and governments of Europe. Moreover, the Soviet Union cooperated with the people's democracies, mutually assisting them.
The first wave of demobilized soldiers—thirteen seniors—were cared for by the entire people, the Soviets, collective farms, and the Party. They were placed in jobs, and reconstruction efforts accelerated even further. Thanks to our planned economy, the transition of factories from military to civilian production proceeded smoothly, increasing the output of consumer goods, though not immediately, of course, as the transition initially led to a slight reduction in production volumes. The inevitable difficulties that arose during the transition were resolved through the joint efforts of Party, Soviet, economic, and trade union bodies.
Already in August 1945, on the instructions of the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars, they began to draw up the Fourth Five-Year Plan for the restoration and development of the national economy.

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Naturally, the five-year plan prioritized the restoration and construction of new heavy industry enterprises—ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy, mechanical engineering, and ore and coal mines. All members of the Politburo of the Central Committee and Deputy Chairmen of the Council of Ministers, under the leadership of I.V. Stalin, focused their efforts primarily on restoration and construction work in their respective sectors, along with, of course, ensuring the fulfillment of production and transportation plans. As a member of the Politburo and Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, I was charged with overseeing the Ministry of Heavy Industry Construction and the Ministry of the Building Materials Industry.
The level of construction materials production in 1945 was a legitimate concern for the Central Committee and the Government; suffice it to say that in 1945, the percentage of production compared to 1940 was: cement – 29.6%, window glass – 45.1%, brick – 18.6%, lime – 33.1%, etc. It's perfectly clear that without a dramatic increase in construction materials production, any serious restoration and construction was out of the question. Even reduced capacity could have ensured the plan was met. For example, cement capacity was 4 million tons (compared to over 7 million in 1940), yet only 1,550,000 tons of cement were produced in 1945. The Central Committee and Council of People's Commissars' decree exposed the shortcomings that were leading to the plan's failure and issued specific instructions for their correction. The Council of Ministers emphasized the special responsibility of the Ministries of Heavy Industry Construction, Military and Naval Construction, and Fuel Plant Construction, whose role as contractors in the restoration and construction of construction materials industries was growing.
At one of the Politburo meetings, Comrade Stalin, who spoke on this issue, said that our decisions were correct, but that merely making a decision was not enough; these correct decisions needed to be backed up by organizational action. "I," Stalin said, "propose appointing Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Politburo member Comrade L.M. Kaganovich as Minister of the Construction Materials Industry of the USSR." The Politburo unanimously accepted this proposal. Fully aware of the particular importance of this matter in the modern period, I took up this task with all the zeal and energy of a Bolshevik. Although, even when I was People's Commissar for Heavy Industry, I was familiar

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I traveled to the factories to study the industry more thoroughly, and most importantly, to understand the state of affairs, consult with local people, and take appropriate measures in conjunction with local party and Soviet organizations. In a short time, I visited more than 35 enterprises, including the Novorossiysk cement plants, the Donetsk and Yekaterinoslav group of cement plants, glass and slate factories, the Volsk cement plants, the Moscow region cement and slate plants, and others. I saw colossal destruction, especially in Novorossiysk, and the unsatisfactory progress of restoration work. In conjunction with party, Soviet, and trade union organizations, measures were taken on the spot to boost production, fulfill the plan, and accelerate restoration work. A group of senior officials from the Ministry of Heavy Industry Construction, headed by Deputy Minister Comrade Ilyich Kuznetsov, accompanied me. Nefedova, who was responsible for the restoration of these plants, refined the designs on-site, provided additional manpower and equipment to construction trusts, and developed schedules with strict deadlines for restoration work. These same issues had to be revisited several times later due to schedule delays, but the practical, practical measures taken yielded tangible results.

As in other sectors of the economy, in accordance with the April 1946 resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) "On the Agitation and Propaganda Work of Party Organizations in Connection with the Adoption of the Law on the Five-Year Plan for the Restoration and Development of the National Economy for 1946-1950," extensive mass political work was launched in the construction materials industry to explain the status, importance, and objectives of the industry in 1946 and throughout the five-year plan. Mass socialist competition and shock labor were organized and promoted in the cement, glass, and other industries in conjunction with party, trade union, and Komsomol organizations. This major movement played a crucial role in fulfilling the 1946 production plan, which many workers had considered impossible in the first half of the year. Progressive individuals from among the workers, engineers, technicians, and management made the plan a reality. Following the individual industry meetings, the board of the Ministry of the Construction Materials Industry, with the approval of the Party Central Committee, convened an All-Union Conference of Workers in the USSR Construction Materials Industry, at which I delivered a report. At that broad conference, or, as it is now called,

They say the forum was attended by activists from all industries—cement, glass, brick, roofing, and others—representatives from all the republics, representing the republican industries. Naturally, the most active and creative were the leaders of socialist competition, who set the tone at the meeting. This was very important, as there were also whiners who didn't believe the plan could be fulfilled—production capacity, they said, had still not been restored, and they were providing little to restore it. But, firstly, I had just reported to the meeting that the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars had decided to increase capital investment in our industry; secondly, even the existing capacity was underutilized; Thirdly, even if these whiners had some truth in their mouths, there was a higher, more powerful truth—the objective conditions of the socialist nature of our industry and the revolutionary Bolshevik nature of our working class, its leading force—the communists, who, in the Leninist spirit, know how to overcome any difficulties and achieve victory. It was precisely this Leninist spirit that dominated this and other activist groups in the building materials industry. Although the Central Committee and Council of People's Commissars resolution and my report criticized the whiners, the majority of industrial workers were proud that, from that moment on, the building materials industry has been ranked among first-class industries, on par with metallurgy and other key branches of heavy industry. They understood well that this placed great responsibility and obligations on them. The Ministry's Board and the participants of the All-Union Conference did not limit themselves to the current implementation of the 1946 plan. Having examined all the pressing issues and measures ensuring the quantitative and qualitative fulfillment of the plans, they developed fundamental, profound questions of raising industry to the level of the five-year plan's objectives and its reconstruction. These included questions of organizing equipment

repairs, producing spare parts, creating a domestic machine-building base, decisively reducing accidents, developing and implementing sound and professional technological processes based on the mechanization of labor-intensive work and operating procedures, enhancing the culture and qualifications of personnel, increasing labor productivity using new technology and strengthening labor discipline, developing the Stakhanovite movement and socialist competition, and improving working conditions and the wage system in the direction of

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its increase, restoration of the director's fund by deducting four percent of the enterprise's profits with the use of this fund for the construction and repair of housing, cultural and domestic affairs, children's institutions, rest homes, etc.; development of scientific research and rationalization work. In discussing the five-year plan, many, including myself, proposed in my report higher growth rates than those accepted for cement, window glass, slate, brick, roofing tiles, gypsum, tiles, standardized houses, and so on. Everyone considered the acceleration of the restoration and new construction of construction materials plants to be crucial. "We must," I said in my report, "rebuild quickly. These rates are dictated by the need to strengthen the power of our state, the need to give the people what they deserve. We must elevate the cultural and prosperous life of the people, and without a home, without an apartment, without a school, a club, without a factory that produces consumer goods, it is impossible to elevate cultural and prosperous life. This means we must build more and faster, and since the destruction of the war is so extensive, the construction tasks of this five-year plan are entirely exceptional.

"No five-year plan," I said, "has seen such a scale of construction as the current one. I deal with these issues extensively through the Council of Ministers, and I feel and see it every day. It must be said that we are seriously lagging behind in construction technology, and this largely depends on building materials, on the introduction of new types of building materials. For example, we must develop the mass production of concrete blocks and local natural stone blocks, processed blocks, tuff and others, ceramic slabs, fiberboard, hollow brick blocks, facing bricks, and so on. The production of building materials must outpace construction. A builder should not wait for building materials. It is a crime when machinery is idle and workers stand and wait for cement, bricks, glass, radiators, boilers, and so on that are not delivered on time. We, the building materials industry, must set ourselves the task of providing builders with enough building materials to outpace construction. This will accelerate construction. But to achieve this, builders must first and foremost support and shore up the very knot they're sitting on, that is, quickly restore our factories, especially cement plants. We must not only restore old factories, but also build and reconstruct over 350 of our own.

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Enterprises. In the cement industry alone, we must build 35 new cement plants. We must invest up to 11 billion rubles in our industry in this five-year plan." I told him about Comrade Stalin's promise that if we utilize capital investments well, the Central Committee and the Government will spare no expense and will increase them. Needless to say, this was received with great enthusiasm. But we must, I emphasized, improve the operation of existing plants, extract the maximum possible from their capacity, and at the same time reconstruct, expand capacity, and build new plants—this is our General Task.

It was precisely in connection with these large and complex tasks that the issue of improving industrial management and personnel became pressing. "It must be said frankly," I said in my report, "that the greatest shortcoming in the work is that living, operational production management is being replaced by paperwork. Many departments and trusts are overwhelming their factories with paperwork. Managing an enterprise means delving into life, into production. Let me give you an example: to start up one kiln at the Proletary plant in Novorossiysk, they lacked electrical

equipment. They wrote a lot of paperwork, but in reality, it was a failure. When they got the right people in line, then the equipment appeared.
We need to implement socialist leadership methods from top to bottom: less paperwork, more action. The most important thing in leadership is monitoring compliance. The workload, of course, overwhelms us so much that it distracts us from monitoring compliance, but each of us must check ourselves, must ask ourselves daily: How are you fulfilling the Party's instructions on monitoring compliance? The "love" for writing new directives and orders is terribly strong. The easiest thing is to write a new order, but monitoring its implementation—"we're not up to that." Take, for example, the issue of preparing for winter. It would seem that the order has been written—check it and ensure its implementation. No, we're ready to write a new order, but the old one isn't being implemented. This is a disaster, a fatal undertaking for us.
We need to delve deeper into technology and economics, we need to ensure that we and all our employees are technically and economically literate, so that they conscientiously study technology and production economics both from books and in life, without citing the fact that there is no time - we need to be able to find time for study.
We need to trust people in leadership and give them the opportunity to take initiative. Trust and verify—that's our rule.

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At work. If necessary, pull the person up, give them directions, but give them the opportunity to show initiative, then both you and they will have enough time.
Don't take everything into your own hands—this applies to all of us, including me as the People's Commissar. All of us who hold some form of power suffer from this—concentrating everything around ourselves. This is wrong. This, of course, doesn't mean farming out the matter, but rather trusting, monitoring, and assisting, without refusing to lead or discipline when necessary. At the same time, the most important thing in cultivating a state-like attitude toward work is to avoid nepotism and to place the interests of the state above personal relationships. The Party has always posed and continues to posit the issue this way: refusing criticism and self-criticism for the sake of peace, for the sake of friendship, for the sake of good relations between Ivan Ivanovich and Ivan Fyodorovich means the death of our great cause. We have such comrades in the construction materials industry, too. Our work is so difficult now, we face such complex and responsible tasks, that we, as Bolsheviks, must be intolerant of shortcomings, of outrages, and, if necessary, criticize and teach each other a lesson—there's nothing wrong with that. People might say: harshly, rudely—it doesn't matter, it's okay, as long as the matter is corrected. It's better, of course, without rudeness, but even an orchestra has a drum. When necessary, they beat it, so that even the deaf can hear it. Of course, I'm not inviting rudeness; rudeness is not necessary, but a proper reprimand is a good thing and beneficial for the cause and for anyone with a conscience. If someone has a conscience and honor, if you tell them publicly, they'll be eager to get back into the fight to correct the matter and prove they're a good worker.
If we, the leadership, have the dominant desire to lead concretely, if we have connections with the factories, if we see things through to the end, if we have Bolshevik tenacity, if we check on execution, and if we have Bolshevik intransigence, we will cope with our tasks."
1946 was a turning point in the construction materials industry. It laid a solid foundation for the new, further development of this industry as an integral part of our advanced socialist industry. Since 1946, I have been associated with this industry, leading it first as minister, then (after a break in 1947, when I served as First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine) as Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, and again in 1956 as Minister of the Construction Materials Industry. Had conditions permitted, I would have written more extensive memoirs (if any)

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I would have told you more fully about this most important branch of the national economy and its most important part - the cement industry, about its remarkable modest people - the Stakhanovites, advanced workers, engineers and managers who have invested and are investing all their creativity, initiative and energy to ensure the construction of the foundation of communism in our Soviet country.

BACK IN UKRAINE

In the massive effort to rebuild and develop the national economy after the war, the Party and state paid particular attention to agriculture, as the restoration of agriculture took place under the difficult conditions of the 1946 drought, which added new natural challenges to the devastation of war. These difficulties were particularly severe in the republics, regions, and territories occupied by the Germans during the war, particularly in Ukraine. In February 1947, the Plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) discussed the issue of "Measures for Reviving Agriculture in the Postwar Period." The Plenum adopted a detailed resolution on this issue, which played a significant role in overcoming these difficulties and in the restoration and further development of collective farm agriculture. This resolution assessed the achievements in agriculture before the war. "If," the resolution states, "during the difficult years of the war, our army experienced no food shortages, if the population was supplied with food, and if industry with raw materials, then this reflected the strength and vitality of the collective farm system and the patriotism of the collective farm peasantry." Of course, the war delayed agricultural development and led to a reduction in sown areas. After the war, the Party and the Government implemented a number of measures to restore agriculture. These measures improved its condition but did not restore its pre-war status. The Central Committee pointed out a number of shortcomings hindering the rapid and successful achievement of such an agricultural revival that would lead to the creation of an abundance of food and raw materials in the shortest possible time. The Central Committee Plenum particularly emphasized the task of increasing wheat production as the main food crop and identified a number of territories and regions where the restoration of grain production, including wheat, was unsatisfactory.

In particular, the Plenum of the Central Committee considered it necessary to note the serious lag in the production of spring wheat in the Ukrainian SSR.
Following the Central Committee Plenum, the Secretariat of the Central Committee raised the question of strengthening the leadership of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine at the Politburo meeting, relieving Comrade Khrushchev of his post as First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine and retaining him in only one position—Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of Ukraine. When the question arose of who to propose as First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, Comrade Stalin said that at the present time, we needed someone who wouldn't need to spend a long time studying Ukraine—there was no time. "We have Comrade Kaganovich on the Politburo, who worked in Ukraine and knows the conditions. He will be able to master the job immediately, so I propose that Comrade Kaganovich be nominated for the post of First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, and Comrade Khrushchev be retained as Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of Ukraine." All members of the Politburo agreed with this proposal. I agreed without any reservations.
Khrushchev, in my opinion, took the Central Committee's decision to relieve him of his duties as First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of his duties with

anger. Khrushchev had previously worked with me for many years, under my leadership. He even repeatedly said he was proud of this, and now, after the decision was made, he personally told me he was pleased that I had been appointed First Secretary of the Ukrainian Central Committee. I took this as a sincere statement on his part, and I must say that we had worked together in Ukraine in 1947 as well.
So, at the end of February 1947, I left for Kiev, where a few days later, on March 2, the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine was convened, at which I was unanimously elected First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine.
It's easy to see that my primary goal was to unite the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine and its activists to achieve the objectives set. Having given Central Committee members and regional committee secretaries the opportunity to travel to the field to brief the activists and gather relevant material, we convened an expanded Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine on March 10, with the participation of district committee secretaries, to review, develop, and adopt practical proposals for implementing the resolution of the February Plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) "On Measures for Promoting Agriculture in the Postwar Period." This was a very important Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, at which Central Committee members self-critically exposed shortcomings and errors in their work and made serious, practical proposals.

The Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, based on all the speeches, including those of me and Comrade Khrushchev, developed a practical resolution that played a major role in the revitalization of collective farm agriculture in Ukraine. The practical work undertaken by Ukrainian party and soviet organizations to implement the resolutions of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine played a decisive role in this. On June 25, 1947, the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine was reconvened, at which the following issues were considered: "On the harvesting of agricultural crops in 1947 " and "On the procurement of grain and other agricultural products from the 1947 harvest." After the Plenum, in order to successfully complete the harvest and fulfill the grain procurement plan, which was not so easy at that time, members of the Politburo of the Central Committee of Ukraine went to the localities - to collective farms, to the districts, to the regions (including the Dnepropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kharkiv and Poltava regions).
Of course, the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, and I personally as First Secretary of the Central Committee, were not only concerned with agriculture. As always, work on industry occupied a significant place, and above all, purely party and ideological work. In terms of industry, for example, we showed particular concern for the construction of Azovstal and even for its equipment. After we raised this issue with the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), equipment began to arrive and construction accelerated. I made a special trip to Mariupol. But our particular attention and concern was focused on Zaporizhstal, which the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and Stalin personally were particularly interested in and concerned about due to the delay in its restoration and the country's great need for its products. On Comrade Stalin's advice, I traveled to Zaporizhzhia and, together with the regional committee and its first secretary, Comrade Brezhnev, as well as the head of construction, Comrade Dymshits, and the plant director, Comrade Kuzmin, took measures to accelerate the plant's restoration.
I remember a heated argument that arose at a convened meeting over the sharp gap revealed in the reports between the plan fulfillment in monetary terms and the physical volume of work, which was much lower than the actual monetary value. When I asked why they couldn't plan and report on plan

fulfillment in physical terms, the builders declared it impossible. The only person who agreed to the possibility of planning and reporting on the physical volume of work was the construction manager, Comrade Dymshits. This was the decision made. This later spread to others.

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Construction projects of the Ministry of Heavy Construction. Comrade Brezhnev, who agreed with my proposal, strictly monitored the implementation of the adopted decision and the general resolution "On Accelerating the Restoration of Zaporizhstal," adopted by the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine. We were focused on our machine-building giant, the Kramatorsk Plant. We were also focused on speeding up the construction of the pipe-rolling mill and commissioning the country's largest "Bolshoy Stifel" mill at the Nikopol South Pipe Plant, as well as the restoration of the locomotive-building giant, the Voroshilovgrad Plant; the development of the turbojet engine project at the Kharkov Aviation Institute, and so on.
In Stalino-Donetsk, we held a large party and economic meeting of metallurgists from across Ukraine, attended by Comrades Tevosyan, Yudin, and Kaganovich. After visiting metallurgical plants in Donbas and Dnepropetrovsk, I was prepared to deliver a practical presentation at this meeting on the state of Ukraine's ferrous metallurgy and assistance in utilizing existing production capacity and expanding new ones.
In Stalino and Voroshilovgrad we held meetings of party and economic assets of the Donbass coal industry.
Energy supply issues were a particular concern for the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine and the Council of People's Commissars. A draft resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Council of People's Commissars, "On measures to improve the energy supply of the national economy of the Ukrainian SSR in 1947 and 1948," was developed, and memos with proposals for the construction of the Dnepropetrovsk, Kremenchug, and Kiev hydroelectric power stations were prepared and sent to Comrade Stalin. The restoration and commissioning of all units of the Dnepropetrovsk hydroelectric power station in Zaporizhzhia was under constant supervision. (I particularly remember the story of the unsatisfactory design of the thrust bearings supplied by an American company, and we had to appeal to the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) on this issue.) Even then, the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine developed and sent to Comrade Stalin a draft resolution, "On measures to assist the Ukrainian SSR in developing rural electrification in 1947."
I have primarily cited the major issues we raised with the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), but we also, of course, addressed all other sectors of the country's industry and economy. Thus, we held all-Ukrainian conferences of individual sectors of industry (sugar, light industry) with the participation of the leadership of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, in particular Kaganovich.

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Khrushchev, Korotchenko. Of particular importance was the all-Ukrainian conference of regional and district industrial committee secretaries, secretaries of party committees, and activists of large industrial enterprises held at the end of July to discuss industrial development and plan fulfillment. This conference was directly chaired by Comrade D.S. Korotchenko, Secretary of the Central Committee for Industry, and I actively participated, delivering a speech. The Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine and the Council of People's Commissars were also involved in urban restoration, the general plan for Kiev, and even the Kiev tram system, cultural and scientific organizations, and their facilities. Naturally, the underlying concern was for the working masses, with whom ties were strengthened not only through speeches at meetings of workers,

collective farmers, and intellectuals, but also through maintaining organic business ties with them at enterprises, especially with the workers of the glorious and heroic Kiev "Arsenal."
The Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, its Politburo, and the Orgburo reviewed and made decisions on matters of personnel, propaganda, and agitation. The speeches of the Orgburo members, including mine, were self-critical; they were essentially a review of the implementation of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) resolution on ideological work and the fight against deviations in Ukraine.
In my speech, for example, on the report of the Propaganda and Agitation Directorate, I pointed out that, "in criticizing, we are not throwing out all the good that was done, but our demand is that you fully implement the decision of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). From the standpoint of directives, you conscientiously explained the resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), conducted a one-time campaign, and then everything died out. This is not a practical, but a political error. You don't understand that this is not like production—you just do it and hand it over. Here we are dealing with a long process. Ideological work and the ideological struggle against all kinds of deviations must be persistent, persistent, and prolonged. Our ideology always remains militant, offensive, and must not weaken for a single moment. Even more so, the fire that burns away everything in its path that is unsuitable for proletarian ideology—Marxism-Leninism—must not go out. You haven't made the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)'s decision a permanent and sustainable tool for your ideological struggle and work. We're not going to pin any deviations on you, but we can say that this isn't a simple practical error, but a manifestation of a certain opportunistic weakness in practice, and you, Comrade Nazarenko, as the head of agitation and propaganda, shouldn't be offended. You, for example, should have

At our request, you provided materials assessing the current situation in literature, on the historical front, in science, art, and so on. You didn't do this because you lacked the guts. By "gunpowder," we mean not only skill but also the spirit of courage. Meanwhile, the decision of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) clearly states that the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine underestimated the importance of ideological work; for a Bolshevik, this is quite strong and pointedly stated, and you acknowledged this assessment as correct, but you failed to decipher and specifically reveal the state of affairs on the relevant fronts. It's partly possible that no active "will" was expressed. You've spoken here, even boasted about what was done at the Academy of Sciences, but it's a fact that after the Central Committee's directive that criticism of bourgeois-nationalist ideology should not be organized in the press, a certain Krynyakevich, who at one time even welcomed the arrival of the Germans as "Ukraine's permission," appears in the plan of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR as a co-author of a work on the fight against nationalist concepts.
The scope of the ideological struggle is broader than the national question. It cannot be denied that the Germans left certain traces of their ideology in Ukraine. We still have many hidden Banderites in Western Ukraine, and a considerable number of repatriated people. They introduce elements of their hostile ideology, and we must not defend ourselves, but rather ideologically attack. This applies to all forms of nationalism. It applies to Great Russian chauvinism, to the so-called "Valuevshchina," which asserts that Russia was and will remain united. This, of course, also applies to Ukrainian nationalism, Jewish chauvinism-Zionism, and any other form, which we must combat. We must develop all our mass political work deeply, strengthening our Marxist-Leninist positions. The 30th anniversary of the Great October Revolution is approaching. This includes both agitation and in-depth propaganda, but both aim at the same goal: strengthening the fraternal international alliance of all workers and toilers of all nations against the bourgeoisie and its remaining lackeys, strengthening the Soviet Union as a state uniting all the republics, their national socialist statehood, and their culture. We must especially intensify our ideological work in the western regions, as

hostile bourgeois ideology is still strong there. We must absolutely organize a group of authors on the history of Ukraine to definitively expose Hrushevsky's nationalist legacy.

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We mustn't limit ourselves to rally propaganda, which is useful and necessary, but must be reinforced by in-depth theoretical lectures. This also applies to the international situation, which needs to be covered more deeply and seriously. The population has grown politically. The war has sharpened all issues. For example, I went to a collective farm, and they told me: "One man from the region arrived and said that the British and Americans were coming and that we wouldn't have collective farms." I, of course, explained it to them, but the important thing is that such provocative, pogrom-like rumors are being spread. And our lectures shouldn't be dispassionate and merely educational, but militant, as this is a front in the ideological struggle." Without hiding the difficulties and the still-existing unmet needs, I have truthfully highlighted them. It is necessary to mobilize people to overcome them and ensure progress—this is achieved through both agitation and propaganda.

Using examples of specific tasks, including the implementation of the five-year plan, I spoke of the two-pronged process of winning over the masses—through agitation and propaganda. Speaking about the press, I particularly emphasized the unacceptability of newspapers being overcrowded with long articles, leaving little space for short pieces covering local realities.

We approached other reports with equal depth and urgency. For example, in the Personnel Department's report, I particularly emphasized that the central criticism of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) was the frequent turnover of personnel. Today, it's clear that the turnover rate, while previously low, remains. The turnover rate among senior staff was 48%, half of the district executive committee chairmen were replaced, 78% of the first district secretaries of the LKSMU, and so on. I don't want to place the blame solely on Comrade Epishev, who is in charge of this matter, but he, of course, bears responsibility for this. A more serious approach to personnel selection, election, and appointment is essential; then turnover will be lower, and, of course, overzealous management, which has the power to replace and fire people and uses it ineptly, must be reined in. Their administrative urges must be curbed. The staff must be stabilized. If a person is confident that they are securely in place, their productivity will undoubtedly be much greater. While criticizing, it is necessary at the same time to support the person so that he is confident that he stands firmly on his feet.

Among the many other questions that were raised were questions about universities, technical schools, the ideological training of personnel, and others.

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It must be said that the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, the regional party committees, city committees and district committees during this period achieved a greater division of labor with the Soviet and trade union bodies and, by implementing party leadership of state, economic and social life, received the opportunity to devote more energy and time to party-political, ideological work, imbuing it with the ideas and principles of Marxism-Leninism.

At the same time, it's essential to always remember that knowledge is not conviction. One can know a great deal and yet be convinced of little. Therefore, along with knowledge, communists must cultivate a deep ideological conviction in the righteousness of our Great Cause.

I expressed confidence that the Bolsheviks of Ukraine and its leading capital city party organization, Kiev, will be in the forefront of the fighters for the international revolutionary struggle, for the victory of the world proletarian socialist revolution and socialism throughout the world!

Returning from Ukraine to Moscow at the end of 1947, knowing the Ukrainian and Kiev organizations, I was sure that this is how it would be.

XIX PARTY CONGRESS

At the end of 1947, Comrade Stalin raised the issue of dividing the USSR State Planning Committee and organizing a new independent organization for the use and distribution of all material resources of the state across all types of products, including the means of production and consumption, including food products and consumer goods. This was caused by the increasing complexity of the country's economic life, especially after the war, and the management of the national economy - centralized and republican. The proposal was accepted by the Politburo, and the State Committee for Material and Technical Supply of the National Economy of the USSR - Gossnab of the USSR - was created. It was deemed necessary to appoint to this post the Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and a member of the Politburo. Considering that I have experience in transport and heavy industry (and Gossnab was transferred to: Glavneftesbyt, Glavmetallosbyt, Glavuglesbyt, Glavlesosbyt, Glavkhimsbyt, Glavenergosbyt, Glavselkhozmashsbyt, etc.), it was decided to appoint the Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, a member

The Politburo of Comrade Kaganovich L.M. as chairman of the newly created State Committee for Material and Technical Supply of the National Economy - Gossnab.

I had to take on this difficult and "grumbling" task and crack this tough nut. I had to devise and establish the organizational structure of this new agency—Gossnab—based on its work, organize this new state institution, and, most importantly, recruit personnel and launch this new machine, into whose jurisdiction the government had transferred billions of dollars in material assets for the proper, planned distribution and use.

I do not have the opportunity now to cover in detail all this difficult and complex work, but I dare to think that, although the original structure and essence of the work have undergone significant changes, the foundation for the current Gossnab of the USSR was laid then, in the first period of the creation of the State Committee for Material and Technical Supply of the National Economy of the USSR. Therefore, if possible, I will cover in more detail the work of Gossnab of that period in an expanded version.

As Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, I oversaw the work of the Ministry of Heavy Construction, the Ministry of Construction Materials, the Committee on Architecture, and other agencies. As Chairman of Gossnab and Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, I was particularly responsible for the logistics of all modes of transport: rail, river, sea, road, and air. And as a member of the Politburo, I dealt with general state and general party affairs, including traveling to the regions on behalf of the Politburo.

Back in August 1952, the Central Committee published a resolution of the Central Committee Plenum on convening the 19th Party Congress in October 1952. The Central Committee simultaneously published the "Draft Directives of the 19th Party Congress on the Fifth Five-Year Plan for the Development of the USSR for 1951-1955" and the "Draft Charter of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)."

The Central Committee proposed that all party organizations initiate a broad discussion of these projects and all congress issues within their own party organizations. Comrade Molotov opened the congress with a brief introductory address. The Secretary of the Central Committee, Comrade Malenkov, delivered the report of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). The report demonstrated the great and heroic period our country had gone through

under the leadership of its heroic party, its Central Committee, its leader, Comrade Stalin, and the Soviet government—a historic victory over the fascist enemy.

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The people's heroic efforts to restore the national economy were widely portrayed, and new, ambitious tasks were set for the Party, the working class, the collective farm peasantry, and the entire people. Following a thorough and broad discussion of the report of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), the 19th Congress adopted the following resolution: "Having heard and discussed the report of Comrade G.M. Malenkov, Secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), resolves to approve the political line and practical work of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)." This resolution was adopted unanimously. The directives on the five-year plan, reported to the congress by Comrade Saburov, were adopted with amendments submitted by the congress delegates.
The Congress approved the amendments to the Charter of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), as reported by Comrade Khrushchev and introduced by the Central Committee.
The Congress heard Comrade Kaganovich's report on the proposals of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) for revising the Party Program and adopted the following resolution: "The 19th Party Congress determines that, since the 8th Party Congress (1919), when the current Party Program was adopted, fundamental changes have occurred both in the area of international relations and in the area of building socialism in the USSR, as a result of which a number of provisions of the Program and the Party tasks set forth therein, insofar as they have already been implemented during this period, no longer correspond to contemporary conditions and the primary tasks of the Party. Based on this, the Congress resolves:
1) Consider it necessary and timely to revise the existing Party Program.
2) When revising the Program, be guided by the main provisions of Comrade Stalin’s work “Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR.”
The 19th Party Congress elected a commission chaired by Comrade Stalin to revise the Program and instructed the Central Committee to submit a new draft for consideration by the next Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union." |
Representatives of almost all the communist and workers' parties of the world attended and participated in the 19th Congress. In their speeches, they all warmly greeted our Party, its leadership, and Comrade Stalin personally, promising them every revolutionary support. At the end of the Congress, our Party leader, Comrade Stalin, addressed them with a response from our Party, first of all expressing, on behalf of our Congress, gratitude to the fraternal parties and groups for their friendly greetings, their wishes for success, and their trust. "It would be a mistake to think," he said.

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"Comrade Stalin said, 'That our Party, having become a powerful force, no longer requires support. This is untrue. Our Party and our country have always needed and will continue to need the trust, sympathy, and support of fraternal peoples abroad. The uniqueness of this support lies in the fact that any support for the peace-loving aspirations of our Party on the part of any fraternal Party simultaneously signifies support for its own people in their struggle to preserve peace. Clearly, our Party cannot remain indebted to fraternal parties and must, in turn, provide support to them, as well as to their peoples, in their struggle for liberation, in their struggle to preserve peace. As is well known, it is doing just that. Representatives of fraternal parties, admiring the courage and successes of our Party, have awarded it the title of "Shock Brigade" of the world revolutionary and workers' movement. By this, they expressed the hope that the successes of the "Shock Brigade" will ease the situation for peoples languishing under the yoke of capitalism.' I believe our party lived up to these hopes, especially during the Second World War. Of course, it was very difficult to fulfill this

honorable role while there was only one "shock brigade." Now, from China to Korea, to Czechoslovakia and Hungary, new "Shock Brigades" have emerged in the form of people's democracies—now our party's struggle has become easier, and its work has become more prosperous. Those communist, democratic, or workers' and peasants' parties that have not yet come to power and that continue to operate under the heel of draconian bourgeois laws deserve special attention.

Answering the question of why these parties' work would not be as difficult as it was for the Russian communists of the tsarist period, Comrade Stalin emphasized: "Previously, the bourgeoisie allowed itself to indulge in liberalism. Now, not a trace of liberalism remains. The principle of the equality of peoples and nations has been trampled, replaced by the principle of full rights for an exploiting minority and the lack of rights for the exploited majority of citizens. The banner of bourgeois democratic freedoms has been thrown overboard. I believe that you, representatives of the communist and democratic parties, will have to pick up this banner and carry it forward if you want to rally the majority of the people around you. There is no one else to raise it. There is every reason to expect success and victory for fraternal parties in countries dominated by capital."

This was the confident, wise Leninist direction of the entire policy, strategy and tactics of the fraternal parties in their struggle for conquest

The working class, for a revolutionary victory over the domination of monopoly imperialist capital, striving for a new division of the world, a new war. The 19th Congress warmly and enthusiastically greeted Comrade Stalin, who expressed the will and greatness of our Party, which had achieved great victories. The 19th Congress, with its decisions and Comrade Stalin's speech, which, unfortunately, was his last, strengthened our Party as Lenin's "Shock Brigade" of the world proletarian socialist revolution! The delegates to the 19th Congress and representatives of fraternal parties warmly greeted Stalin's address with greetings to fraternal parties. In this greeting, Stalin said: "You, comrades, must learn not only from our achievements, but also from our mistakes." This is a very important statement—it means that Stalin acknowledged that we had made mistakes. Personally, I believe that if Stalin had lived, he would have delivered a self-critical report. Some say Stalin was already ill during the 19th Congress. This, in my opinion, is incorrect. I saw that Stalin presided over the Congress; Malenkov's draft report was discussed by the Presidium under Stalin's chairmanship, and several amendments were introduced. I remember when I asked Stalin why he wasn't himself delivering the Central Committee's report, he told me that young people should be promoted, let them grow—Malenkov, as Secretary of the Central Committee, would deliver the report. He then added what he had previously told us, several members of the Presidium. "I generally believe," Stalin said, "that after the age of 70, leading comrades should retire from direct leadership; they can be advisors, but not managers." Immediately after the Congress, Stalin presided over the Central Committee Plenum and, after that, the work of the Presidium. He was engaged in the major issues of the recovery period. I remember how he summoned me and said: “We have colossal destruction, all our plans and promises will be thwarted if we do not solve the main problem - provide building materials. Cement factories, glass factories - they need to be restored, provide glass, cement, roofing, bricks, and so on. Therefore, I propose appointing you Minister of Construction Materials. How do you feel about this?” I, of course, immediately replied that I agreed. Many such examples can be cited. Stalin, together with Molotov, was invariably involved in foreign policy issues. In connection with the invention of new atomic weapons in the West, Stalin was especially involved in the development of the production of these weapons here in the USSR. He put all of us - members of the Politburo - to the service of this matter. It must be said that directly

Beria, Pervukhin, and others were involved in production. But Stalin himself was in charge of the operation.
I am sure that every objectively thinking Soviet person will say, must say, that, despite the mistakes that took place, Stalin did so much great work for the growth of the power of the Soviet state created by Lenin that its representatives can negotiate with Western capitalist states as an equal in upholding the cause of peace among peoples.

Chapter 18

LAST YEARS IN THE PARTY LEADERSHIP

THE DEATH OF STALIN

Stalin died unexpectedly. Although some of us visited him less frequently at home during the last period of his life, we were pleased to see at meetings and official sessions that, despite his war fatigue, Stalin seemed well. He was active, alert, and continued to discuss matters vividly and meaningfully. When I was summoned to the "Near Dacha" that night, I found Beria, Khrushchev, and Malenkov there. They told me that Stalin had suffered a stroke, was paralyzed and speechless, and that doctors had been called. I was shocked and burst into tears.
Soon the remaining Politburo members arrived: Voroshilov, Molotov, Mikoyan, and others. Doctors arrived, led by the Minister of Health.
When we entered the room where Stalin lay with his eyes closed, he opened them and looked around at us, peering into each of us. It was clear from his gaze that he was still conscious, trying to speak, but was unable to, and closed his eyes again. We all looked at Stalin, who was in grave condition, with deep sorrow and sadness. For several days, the battle to save Stalin's life raged, and the doctors did everything they could. We, members of the Politburo, were present the entire time, leaving only for short periods.
When his death occurred, we gathered on March 5th to draft an appeal to all Party members and all working people of the Soviet Union. In this appeal, we expressed the profound feelings of grief, sorrow, and anguish of the entire Party and the people.
In the appeal of the Central Committee, the Council of Ministers and the Presidium of the Supreme

The Council said: “The heart of the comrade and brilliant successor of Lenin’s work, the wise leader and teacher of the Communist Party and the Soviet people, Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin, has stopped beating.
Together with Lenin, Comrade Stalin created a powerful Communist Party, nurturing and forging it. Together with Lenin, Comrade Stalin inspired and led the Great October Socialist Revolution, founding the world's first socialist state. Continuing Lenin's global work, Comrade Stalin led the Soviet people to the historic victory of Socialism in our country. Comrade Stalin led our country to victory over fascism in World War II, which radically changed the entire international situation. Comrade Stalin armed the Party and the entire people with a grand and clear program for building communism in the USSR.
The death of Comrade Stalin, who devoted his entire life to selfless service to the great cause of communism, is a grave loss for the party, the workers of the Soviet country and the entire world."
The appeal of the Central Committee and the Government not only expressed feelings of sorrow, but also proclaimed the most important tasks of future policy, in which the main thing “was and is the unshakable policy of preserving and strengthening peace,” fidelity to the banner of proletarian internationalism, the struggle for the cause of peace, democracy and socialism, and most

importantly, “to preserve the unity of the party, to further strengthen the ties of the party with all the working masses, for in this inseparable connection with the people lies the strength and invincibility of our party.”
What is especially important for a correct understanding of the current situation is that this appeal of the Central Committee and the Government in connection with the death of Stalin was developed and adopted unanimously by all members of the Central Committee, the Government, the overwhelming majority of the Party and the Soviet people.
I recall this episode: together with Khrushchev, I was included in the Commission for Stalin's funeral, and when we were riding in the car with Stalin's body, Khrushchev touched my hand and said: "How, Lazar, are we going to live and work without Stalin? It will be hard for us." I remember my response: "In 1924, when Lenin died, the situation in the country and in the party was more difficult: there was the NEP, the NEPmen, the restoration of the ruined economy was not yet complete, Trotskyist and other oppositionists were operating in the party - but we survived, and even moved forward, because cadres loyal to Leninism

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"We rallied around the Central Committee, which led the party along the Leninist path. If we firmly adhere to this Leninist path, along which Stalin led us, we will survive and move forward successfully."
Khrushchev shook my hand and said: “You are right – we will all go together along this path that Stalin led us.”
Khrushchev, like all of us, actively participated in drafting the Central Committee's address. I don't think Khrushchev was sincere and not being cunning, as some believe.
On March 7, 1953, a joint meeting of the Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU, the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR was convened, at which an important resolution was adopted.
The introductory section of this resolution specifically emphasized that "in this difficult time for our Party and country, the most important task of the Party and government is to ensure uninterrupted and correct leadership of the entire life of the country, which, in turn, requires the greatest unity of leadership, preventing any disarray or panic, so as to unconditionally ensure the successful implementation of the policies developed by our Party and government in both the domestic and international affairs of our country." Needless to say, this directive was of great importance for uniting the Party and the Soviet people.
In proclaiming its commitment to the policy being pursued, the Central Committee, of course, relied on Lenin's dialectical method—to follow the actual needs of life and make necessary additions and changes to decisions and working methods. An example of this approach was that, immediately upon forming the leadership bodies, the Central Committee introduced a significant change to the very structure of the leadership bodies. Instead of two centers within the Central Committee's leadership—the Presidium and the Bureau—a single body was created—the Presidium of the Central Committee, essentially the Politburo.
In the same way, in the Council of Ministers, instead of two bodies – the Presidium and the Bureau – one body was created – the Presidium of the Council of Ministers.
Without disagreements or disputes (as the inventors now portray it), the personal composition of the leadership was established. Comrades Malenkov, Beria, and Voroshilov were elected to the Presidium of the Central Committee.

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Molotov, Kaganovich: Khrushchev, Bulganin, Mikoyan, Saburov, Pervukhin. The candidates were Comrades Shvernik, Ponomarenko, Melnikov, and Bagirov. Voroshilov was elected Chairman of the

Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, and Shvernik was recommended by the Chairman of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions.
Georgy Maximilianovich Malenkov was appointed Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR. Comrades Molotov, Beria, Bulganin, and Kaganovich were appointed First Deputy Chairmen of the Council of Ministers.
Molotov was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs; Mikoyan was appointed Minister of the United Ministry of Domestic and Foreign Trade; Bulganin was appointed Minister of War; Beria was appointed Minister of the United Ministry of Internal Affairs and State Security; Pervukhin was appointed Minister of the United Ministry of Power Plants and Electrical Industry; and Saburov was appointed Chairman of the State Planning Committee.
Khrushchev was transferred to the Central Committee as a permanent secretary of the Central Committee, relieving him of his job as secretary of the Moscow Committee.
Of crucial importance was the decision adopted by the same resolution to reduce the number of ministries by merging them.
In addition to those mentioned, the following ministries were merged:
The Ministry of Automobile and Tractor Industry, the Ministry of Mechanical Engineering and Instrument Making, the Ministry of Agricultural Machinery, and the Ministry of Machine Tool Building into one — the Ministry of Mechanical Engineering; the Ministry of Transport Machine Building, the Ministry of Shipbuilding Industry, the Ministry of Heavy Machinery, and the Ministry of Construction and Road Machinery into one — the Ministry of Transport and Heavy Machinery; the Ministry of Power Plants, the Ministry of Electrical Industry, and the Ministry of Communications Industry into one — the Ministry of Power Plants and Electrical Industry.
At the session of the Supreme Council convened on March 14, all these recommendations of the Central Committee and the entire composition of the Government were approved.
On March 14, the Central Committee Plenum granted Malenkov's request to relieve him of his duties as First Secretary of the Central Committee due to the difficulty of combining his duties with those of Chairman of the Council of Ministers. The Central Committee Plenum elected the Secretariat of the Central Committee. It included Comrades Khrushchev, Suslov, Pospelov, Shatalin, and Ignatiev, but no First Secretary was appointed.

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In early July 1953, a Central Committee Plenum was held. Having heard and discussed Comrade Malenkov's report, "On the Criminal Anti-Party and Anti-State Actions of L.P. Beria," aimed at undermining the Soviet state in the interests of foreign capital and expressed in treacherous attempts to elevate the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs above the Government and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Plenum decided to remove L.P. Beria from the Central Committee of the CPSU and expel him from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.
The Central Committee and the Council of Ministers engaged in intensive and productive work on the practical leadership of the country, the Party, and the economy. In September 1953, a Central Committee Plenum was held, which heard and discussed Khrushchev's report "On Measures for the Further Development of Agriculture." The Central Committee adopted a resolution drafted by the Presidium of the Central Committee. The entire Presidium of the Central Committee, particularly Khrushchev, Malenkov, Kaganovich, Molotov, and Andreyev, participated in drafting this resolution.

KHRUSHCHEV - FIRST SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Six months later, around March 1954, the Central Committee again discussed the issue of agriculture and made a practical decision to further increase grain production in the country and

develop virgin and fallow lands. This resolution offered an even more critical assessment and corresponding conclusions.
The Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars developed measures to ease the plight of the collective farm peasantry, particularly by reducing taxes, and instructed Malenkov to deliver a report to the Supreme Soviet (this is currently attributed to Khrushchev). The work of the Central Committee and the Council of Ministers was mobilizing, both in the areas of industry and in improving conditions within the Party. In short, it can be said that if Khrushchev's style from his first year as First Secretary of the Central Committee had been maintained in 1955-1956 and beyond, the results would have been different. But it wasn't long after his election as First Secretary of the Central Committee that Khrushchev began to demonstrate, as if to say, "You think I'm not a 'real' First Secretary; I'll show you that I am." Along with demonstrating good, positive initiative, he began to show off.
It is appropriate here to tell how the election of Khrushchev as the First took place

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Secretary. From March to September, Khrushchev was one of the Central Committee's secretaries—the Secretariat was, in a sense, a collective one, and, by the way, I'll say that wasn't bad. During the September Plenum of the Central Committee, during a break between Plenum sessions in the break room, where the Presidium members usually exchanged opinions on various issues, Malenkov, to everyone's surprise, said: "I propose that Khrushchev be elected First Secretary of the Central Committee at this Plenum."
I say "unexpectedly" because the raising of such an important question was usually announced in advance. When I later asked Malenkov why he hadn't told anyone about this proposal, he told me: just before the opening of the Central Committee Plenum, Bulganin approached him and insistently suggested that he introduce a motion at the Plenum to elect Khrushchev as First Secretary of the Central Committee. "Otherwise," Bulganin said, "I will make the proposal myself." "Thinking that Bulganin wasn't acting alone here, I," Malenkov said, "decided to make the proposal." At the meeting, Bulganin was the first to enthusiastically exclaim, "Let's decide!" The others reluctantly agreed, not, of course, because, as they might say today, they were afraid to object, but simply because if a First Secretary were to be elected, there was no other candidate at the time—that's just the way it was.
I must say here that I knew Khrushchev better than anyone else, longer and more than anyone else, with all his positive and negative qualities. It could be said that I was directly involved in Khrushchev's promotion and advancement to general Party leadership beginning in 1925 (I will discuss this entire process separately). I considered, and continue to consider, him a mature and growing Party worker, a worker by birth, capable of leadership at the regional, territorial, and republican levels, and in collective leadership at the all-Union level. But I was unsure of his ability to fulfill the role of First Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, especially given his insufficient cultural and theoretical background, although with intense, as they say, self-improvement, this can be acquired. His practical experience, however, was considerable.
In any endeavor, especially in the work of a newly promoted employee, a real-life test is required as they grow and develop. The key point is that the circumstances were such that we had no other candidate for the Secretariat. Therefore, we all voted for this proposal with the firm intention of assisting Khrushchev in every way possible as he mastered his new role.

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Thus, in the example of Khrushchev's promotion to First Secretary of the Central Committee, chance and necessity are linked. Without delving into the depths of philosophy here, it should be noted that Marxist-Leninist dialectical materialism proceeds from the premise that lawful historical necessity does not exclude chance, which is a complement and a form of manifestation of necessity.

Chance may or may not exist; it does not necessarily follow from historical necessity or the laws of development, but, as a rule, chance and necessity are interconnected. Historically, there have been instances where individuals promoted "by chance" grew and developed through their careers, relying on and following objective, lawful historical necessity, and matured into leaders. But when they, these accidentally advanced individuals, ignored the objective laws and needs of society, when subjective expression of will - voluntarism took precedence over objective necessity and scientific consciousness, allowing the brain to become overgrown with weeds, then the plant did not mature, and the collapse of this accidentally advanced individual was inevitable.
Unfortunately, this is exactly what happened to Khrushchev - it is not a question of position, but of the essence of behavior in the party-political leadership, although there were positive aspects to his work, he had abilities and a natural intelligence, previously reinforced by modesty, and later undermined by arrogance and voluntarism.
The Presidium of the Central Committee, consisting of Voroshilov, Molotov, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, Malenkov, Khrushchev, Bulganin, Saburov, and Pervukhin, worked collaboratively and actively, meeting regularly and not only discussing issues but also participating in the drafting of decisions, and if significant amendments were made after discussion, they participated in the commissions for the final editing of Central Committee decisions. It should be noted that, as First Secretary, Khrushchev naturally played an active role in raising issues and preparing them, particularly on matters of construction and agriculture.
It must be said that Khrushchev played a significant role in the expansion of construction on a larger scale, particularly in the introduction of panel and concrete construction. Pressure on the builders was required, and Khrushchev did so frequently and undemocratically, and the Presidium of the Central Committee supported him in this. True, in the interests of unity, the Presidium allowed for lax responses to Khrushchev's mistakes, when

For example, he overemphasized the role of builders to the detriment of architecture under the slogan of preventing embellishment and cheapening, ignoring that the role of architecture is not limited to embellishment. He even abolished the Academy of Architecture and weakened architectural oversight, which led to a decline in construction quality.
Khrushchev's great activity in agriculture wasn't, of course, because he was, as was later portrayed, a great "expert" in agriculture. I can testify that before his tenure as Secretary of the Moscow Regional Committee, he knew little about agriculture simply because he had worked for so long in industrial and urban areas. When he was elected Secretary of the Moscow Regional Committee, I advised him to devote his attention to studying agriculture and put him in close contact with Mikhailov, the Secretary of the Moscow Regional Committee for Agriculture, who had a thorough and expert understanding of agriculture. It must be said that Khrushchev accepted my advice without offense and diligently devoted himself to studying agriculture. Benediktov, the future People's Commissar of Agriculture, assisted him in this, and I, even though I had transferred to the People's Commissariat of Railways, assisted him with advice. When he became First Secretary of the Central Committee, I told him that the first commandment of the Central Committee is to give primary attention to agriculture, the village, and the alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry.
It must be said that Khrushchev devoted himself diligently and assiduously to agriculture, actively and proactively delving into issues of agricultural development and raising them for Central Committee decisions. Unfortunately, it was here, most likely, that he began to display his eccentric, know-it-all tendencies. This led, for example, to his attack on the great scientist Williams's teachings on crop rotation, which caused harm. Fortunately, local practitioners did not succumb to this anti-Williams "innovation," and the Presidium of the Central Committee did not officially approve of it, although, unfortunately, it did not repeal it. Khrushchev zealously and actively supported Lysenko's incorrect and unfounded claims to command agricultural science, despite the fact that Khrushchev himself, of course, had little understanding of this science.

The issue of corn development was correctly raised. This issue had been raised for a long time, especially in Ukraine. I remember, even before Rakovsky was a Trotskyist, he, with his extensive experience in Romania, spoke in the press and at meetings for the comprehensive development of corn crops. Khrushchev rightly advocated for corn, but he failed to observe scientific requirements in zoning, the possibilities

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and the feasibility of its planting, but demanded the widespread development of corn crops regardless of local conditions, thereby undermining this good idea. Unfortunately, these mistakes by Khrushchev led to the undermining of the very idea of developing corn crops, whereas it is necessary, having corrected Khrushchev's mistakes, to plant corn in every possible way in suitable areas—in Ukraine, the Caucasus, Moldova, etc.

The well-known organizational measures adopted by the Central Committee of the Party and the Government to decentralize collective farm management and grant them greater rights were a positive and timely move. However, the abolition of the MTS without any other form of communication or technical assistance to the collective farms produced negative results. Decentralization itself—granting collective farms greater rights without economic measures—failed to produce the desired results. Khrushchev, of course, tried to make a number of proposals (including some erroneous ones), which were adopted by the Presidium. But these measures, primarily organizational and administrative in nature, failed to produce the desired effect. Khrushchev's barbs, a self-proclaimed democrat, had the opposite effect.

It must be said that Khrushchev was actively involved in agricultural work. He championed and defended the collective farm movement and state farms and took steps to implement the aforementioned Central Committee Plenum resolution and other decisions. Unfortunately, however, he soon monopolized his leadership of agriculture and made political mistakes that hindered the implementation of the Central Committee's decisions.

Such a mistake was the policy of liquidating small collective farms and, consequently, small villages and hamlets, and building large estate settlements. These settlements, according to Khrushchev's plan, were to be built as urban-type settlements, with multi-story buildings, without estate plots, cows, poultry farming, and so on, which contradicted the Agricultural Artel Charter, adopted with Stalin's personal participation in 1935. This subsequently led to the ruin of thousands of small villages and hamlets and the failure to build collective farm estates. This led to the mass exodus of peasants from the villages to the cities, which began under Khrushchev and continued under Brezhnev.

I personally told Khrushchev that this could not be done, that if it was necessary to consolidate collective farms, it would be possible to create collective farm brigades from small collective farms without liquidating inhabited villages and hamlets, but he had already “bitten the bit” and did not take the advice into account.

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The Presidium of the Central Committee as a whole failed to halt this process. That was its mistake. If the successes of Khrushchev and his “close associates” were attributed to Khrushchev himself, then in his failures he liked to look for someone else to blame.

While he had adhered to the norms of collective leadership until the end of the first half of 1955, in the second half of 1955, Khrushchev began to flagrantly violate these norms. Eccentricity, in the dictionary's definition of "out of the ordinary," or the desire, as they said in Odessa, to "show off," began to manifest itself more and more.

The first person to whom Khrushchev began to demonstrate that he was a “real” leader and manager was the Council of Ministers and its Chairman Malenkov – this capable, modest, businesslike, not quarrelsome, but principled statesman and party leader.

It's possible to find flaws in any leader, even the most diligent one, especially if it's a party leader who's taking charge. In short, after several attacks on Malenkov, Khrushchev proposed relieving him of his duties as Chairman of the Council of Ministers. It must be said that the members of the Presidium, including, of course, myself, who knew him well from my work on the Moscow Committee and the Central Committee, initially disagreed with Khrushchev's proposal. However, when he insisted again, in order to avoid creating a crisis in the Central Committee leadership, we agreed to Malenkov's release while retaining him as a member of the Presidium of the Central Committee, as a leading figure in the Party.

Khrushchev nominated Bulganin for Chairman of the Council of Ministers, although Molotov would have been a more natural choice. Some comrades suggested that Khrushchev was counting on Bulganin's short-lived tenure. Soon after Bulganin's confirmation, for example, when we, members of the Presidium, visited an exhibition of light industry products, Khrushchev publicly attacked Bulganin after he'd made a remark about artificial silk, saying, "See, he's Chairman of the Council of Ministers, but he doesn't understand anything about economics, he's talking nonsense," and so on. We were all shocked by Khrushchev's outburst, especially since Bulganin, even before serving as Chairman of the Moscow City Council, had been director of the largest Moscow electrical plant—that is, he was an experienced manager at a time when Khrushchev was still completely unfamiliar with economics. But we didn't emphasize this attack, for the sake of unity.

At the meetings of the Presidium of the Central Committee, issues were regularly discussed

Foreign policy. Molotov, as Foreign Minister, made his proposals, most of which were approved. But Khrushchev, rightly paying attention to Molotov's proposals but being less competent in these matters, went so far as to propose dismissing Molotov as Foreign Minister. I personally opposed this, arguing that Molotov not only had extensive experience in foreign policy but also possessed the ideological and political strength to defend the interests of our country. But since Molotov himself declared his readiness to move to another position, the Presidium of the Central Committee relieved him of his duties as Foreign Minister and appointed him Minister of State Control.

I can mention one more episode here. Back in 1954, while vacationing in Crimea, Khrushchev, Molotov, Voroshilov, and Kaganovich and I had met, of course, and once during a walk in the park, when I asked how work was going, Khrushchev said to me, "Not bad, but Molotov doesn't recognize me, so my relationship with him is strained." I told him he was mistaken, that Molotov was a decent man, a committed Party member, and incapable of engaging in intrigue. "You should self-critically examine yourself—are you attacking him and his proposals too often and too easily? If you change your attitude toward him, everything will be settled." But, unfortunately, he didn't follow my advice.

Naturally, the Central Committee's work between the 19th and 20th Congresses encompassed all aspects of the life of the Party and the country, from industry to culture and Party life. A great deal of work was carried out, and, at the direction of the Central Committee Presidium, First Secretary of the Central Committee Comrade Khrushchev delivered a report on this matter to the 20th Congress. We approached and arrived at the 20th Party Congress united. The Central Committee report reflected the work of the entire Central Committee and its Presidium, as well as its principled line. All members of the Presidium carefully worked on the draft Central Committee report, discussing it several times. During the discussion of the Central Committee draft, many amendments were introduced. I will not outline the nature of these amendments here, which included amendments on fundamental issues. Among a number of amendments, I included, for example, the following: I proposed, in the section of the report refuting the imperialist fabrications about the Soviet Union's desire to impose communism by exporting revolution, to add: "The struggle for socialism and communism was underway in capitalist countries long before the emergence of the Soviet Union. The struggle of the proletariat for socialism and communism is embedded in the very class

contradictions of the capitalist system. Marxism-Leninism scientifically substantiated the inevitability

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The victory of socialism and communism long before the October Socialist Revolution in Russia. Hence our confidence that this victory will come without the export of revolution. We reject the "export of revolution," knowing from history that revolution triumphs as a result of objectively created, acute internal class contradictions within each country.

On the question of war, it must be emphasized that the Communists—the leading force in the Soviet Union—have been pursuing Lenin's peace policy for 40 years and have resolutely opposed the outbreak of war whenever the imperialist powers are preparing for war and thwarting the strengthening of peace among nations. I proposed not to enter into polemics with the Marxist-Leninist theory of imperialism and war, especially since the subsequent formulation about the absence of the fatal inevitability of war does not give grounds for interpreting that Marx and Lenin spoke of the fatal inevitability of war. On the contrary, Lenin, for example, always fought to prevent war through active revolutionary action by the world proletariat and the working masses who follow it, and by all those who support peace in general.

There were, of course, other similar amendments. All amendments were introduced and discussed without any acrimony or polemical fervor.

Our main goal was to march toward and reach the 20th Congress united. And the Central Committee's report emphasized: "Today, our Party is united as never before; it is closely united around the Central Committee and confidently leads the country along the path indicated by the great Lenin. Party unity was built over years and decades; it grew and strengthened in the struggle against numerous enemies." (This refutes the subsequent assertion (in July 1957) that the group of Malenkov, Kaganovich, Molotov, and Shepilov, who had joined them, had been undermining unity since Khrushchev's appointment as First Secretary of the Central Committee.)

The 20th Congress had come to an end. But suddenly, a break was called. The members of the Presidium convened in the back room designated for relaxation. Khrushchev raised the question of hearing his report on Stalin's personality cult and its consequences at the Congress. A printed red booklet—a draft of the report—was immediately distributed to us.

The meeting was held in abnormal conditions—cramped quarters, some sitting, some standing. It was difficult to read this voluminous notebook and consider its contents in the short time required to comply with the standards.

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The internal party democracy has to make a decision. All this in half an hour, as the delegates sit in the hall, waiting for something unknown to them, the agenda of the congress having been exhausted.

It should be noted that even before the 20th Congress, the Presidium of the Central Committee considered the issue of illegal repressions and the mistakes committed. The Presidium formed a commission tasked with reviewing the cases of those repressed, conducting field visits, and formulating general conclusions and specific proposals. Following the Presidium's discussion of this issue, it was planned to convene a Central Committee Plenum after the 20th Congress and hear the commission's report with relevant proposals.

This is precisely what Comrades Kaganovich, Molotov, Voroshilov, and others were saying when they voiced their objections. Furthermore, the comrades said we simply couldn't edit the report and make the necessary amendments. We said that even a cursory review showed the document to be one-sided and flawed. Stalin's work cannot be portrayed solely from this perspective; a more objective account of all his positive deeds is needed, so that workers would understand and rebuff the exploitation of the enemies of our Party and country.

The meeting dragged on, the delegates grew restless, and so they adjourned without any votes, and went to the congress. There, an addition to the agenda was announced: a report by Khrushchev on Stalin's personality cult.
After the report there was no debate, and the congress concluded its work.
Following the 20th Congress, the Party held Party meetings in an organized manner; all members of the Central Committee Presidium and other members of the Central Committee delivered reports and speeches. The reports covered all the issues on the Congress agenda, including the final, extraordinary question of the personality cult. It is important to emphasize that Presidium members Kaganovich, Molotov, Voroshilov, and others, in their reports on the 20th Congress, addressed the issue of the personality cult honestly and disciplinedly, in accordance with the resolution of the 20th Congress. The meetings approved the Congress's decisions. It must be noted, however, that sentiments varied among Party members. Some were dumbfounded, hesitant to endorse such a one-sided approach. The enemies of our Party exploited all this to strengthen their anti-communism, with foreign apologists of imperialism and White émigrés becoming particularly unbridled.
Our fraternal communist parties found themselves in a difficult situation; the uncertainty and hesitation in their midst became even greater.

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More so than within our own party. Studying the incoming information, the Presidium of the Central Committee recognized the need for a broader, more objective presentation of the issue of Stalin's personality cult than that given at the 20th Congress. Therefore, a meeting was convened with comrades from fraternal communist parties to develop a general resolution on the personality cult. After serious and in-depth discussions involving not only members of our Presidium of the Central Committee, but also comrades Thorez, Ulbricht, Rakosi, and others, a major resolution of the Central Committee was adopted on June 30, 1956—"On Overcoming the Personality Cult and Its Consequences." This resolution has had and continues to have great significance.
Following the adoption of this resolution, reports were delivered at party meetings within our party and in fraternal parties. Members of the Central Committee Presidium spoke again. Accordingly, party organizations conducted extensive outreach to the masses.
Both the Party and the people highly appreciated the fact that the Party itself and its Central Committee self-critically exposed the mistakes and lawlessness that had occurred, which had harmed not only the true enemies of the people but also innocent people. The Soviet people welcomed the measures taken by the Party and government to ensure that such things would not be allowed to happen again.
However, in practical work, particularly in agriculture, the measures were insufficient. This worried the Presidium of the Central Committee. On this issue, as on a number of other matters, there were disputes within the Presidium, particularly with Khrushchev, who, after the 20th Congress, began to overstep his bounds, violating collective leadership methods. He began to behave as the Ukrainian song goes: "I sing myself, I walk myself, I lie myself, I kick myself. I do it myself!"
This could not help but cause discontent.

JUNE 1957

It would seem that after the 20th Party Congress business work should have improved, but, unfortunately, this did not happen.
After the 20th Congress, the last remnants of Khrushchev’s former modesty disappeared—as the saying goes, “his hat stood on end.”
Having come to feel like a "leader," he, first of all, stopped diligently preparing questions for Presidium meetings. Collective leadership was grossly violated, and most importantly, this led to

grave errors in the essence of political and economic leadership. He went to Gorky, for example, and suddenly we learned that at a rally he announced that, in pursuance of the alleged

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By the expressed will of the Gorky workers, all payments on government bonds were deferred for 20 years. Later, however, this decision was formalized by a vote—a telephone poll—but the deed was done by Khrushchev himself.

Everyone knows what discontent this caused among the population and undermined trust in the state.

For some time now, Khrushchev had begun to take an active role in foreign policy matters. This, of course, was a good thing. I myself advised him to do so—since Lenin's time, not a single foreign policy issue had been decided without the Politburo, and Stalin submitted all foreign policy matters to the Politburo and handled them himself. Therefore, as First Secretary of the Central Committee, he had to adhere to this principle. At first, Khrushchev adhered to this procedure, but then he began to act arbitrarily. Demonstrating that he had "mastered the technique," as an unrivaled "expert" in diplomacy, Khrushchev began to amend or simply reject almost all Foreign Ministry projects, especially after Molotov was dismissed as Foreign Minister on his proposal (even though he had strictly pursued a policy of peace).

There was one issue on which the Presidium did not support Molotov: Yugoslavia. Molotov was holding back the restoration of relations with Yugoslavia, including at the state level. The Presidium of the Central Committee decided to restore state relations while maintaining differences along party and ideological lines. Khrushchev actually went somewhat further along party lines, violating the Central Committee's directives.

In fact, Khrushchev had gone wild and started giving interviews to foreigners without prior approval from the Politburo, thus violating the previously established procedure. For example, the Politburo might suddenly learn that Khrushchev had spoken on television about international issues without telling anyone in advance. This was a gross violation of all the principles of party leadership in foreign affairs. The Politburo had never granted such a right to speak publicly without its permission and prior review, even to highly erudite diplomats. Moreover, we were aware of his lack of competence, elegance, and oratory skills, and we were concerned that he might "go off the rails." We raised this issue at the Presidium. The discussion was extensive and heated. Khrushchev promised the Presidium not to allow such occurrences in the future, while respecting the existing procedure. After the events of 1957 and the change of the Presidium, he, as the absolute "master," abolished this procedure and spoke at full speed himself.

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anywhere and however he wanted. Here, literary "assistants," modern "robots," were the primary workers—they wrote and wrote, and he read and read until his tongue tired, but his head rested.

Khrushchev demonstrated his greatest organizational "talent" in the "great" reorganization of the state apparatus. I won't recount this entire reorganization in detail here—it's well known. Almost all economic ministries were eliminated. National Economic Councils were created. The very idea of economic councils could have been beneficial while ministries, albeit reduced in size, were retained, if these economic councils had been closely linked to territorial, republican, and regional centers and had a certain number of enterprises that were fully subordinate to them. This particularly applies to local industry, broadly defined. But while the economic councils initially aligned closely with regional divisions, they soon began to drift away from these divisions.

Some members of the Presidium of the Central Committee proposed creating a Supreme Council of the National Economy of the USSR. Khrushchev initially declared this "conservative resistance" to the entire reform, but then he himself began creating economic councils in the republics, including the Economic Council of the RSFSR, which was then followed by the All-Union Council of the

National Economy. Within each of these, sectoral and territorial bodies were created—it was a continuous, permanent reshuffle. Then, when life made it clear that the modern process of industrial specialization required appropriate organization, sectoral committees were created in place of the abolished ministries—first within the Gosplan, and then independent state committees, with almost the same rights and functions as ministries (and for greater importance, even called ministries, but castrated and, therefore, powerless). Therefore, this surrogate
state committees in combination with gigantic economic councils could not withstand the harsh criticism of real life.
Regarding local economic councils, I personally believe that regional executive committees could have such economic bodies under one name or another. These bodies should unite certain groups of enterprises—consumer goods, metalworking, construction materials, food, and the like—so that they can meet a significant portion of the population's needs. They would play an important role in the territorial cooperation of enterprises, for example, in the manufacture of machine parts.

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In particular, motor transport, and generally reduce long-distance and oncoming traffic. These bodies (economic councils or other names) should be subordinate to regional executive committees and councils; they should be profitable and improve the standard of living of the population, especially their workers.
Here too, with his questions about economic councils, Khrushchev ruined a good idea. If properly organized, it could have been beneficial, if not for Khrushchev's desire to discover his "eureka" on a global scale.
A national plebiscite was organised, the proposals were accepted, but they did not prove sustainable.
One might assume that the goal here was to achieve a "side effect," or perhaps even a primary one—to sift through, sift through, or, in Trotskyist terms, shake up the personnel of ministries and their local bodies and replace those "unreliable" and disloyal to the new leadership with others, their own. It's doubtful that this produced the desired results, and this "great" Khrushchev reorganization did harm the national economy.
Particularly absurd and contrary to the foundations of our party building was the division of the regional party leadership bodies into industrial and economic ones, carried out at his suggestion. The harm of such an innovation is so obvious that it requires no proof.
It's well known that the most pressing issue was livestock farming. Even before the 20th Congress, this issue was raised with utmost urgency at the Central Committee Plenums and at the 20th Congress itself. The Central Committee's report warned against a frivolous approach to this matter. But after the congress, having failed to achieve any significant progress in implementing the congress directives on livestock farming, Khrushchev radically altered the congress's instructions. Khrushchev made this change not in a formal proposal for serious discussion and decision, but again at a rally at the opening of the Agricultural Exhibition in the spring of 1957.
Without reporting to the Presidium of the Central Committee, the Council of Ministers, without even speaking to any of the comrades (apparently, again, in order to surprise everyone), Khrushchev, in the presence of all the members of the Presidium, proclaimed a new general task for the party and the state. "We," he said, "set our general task in the field of animal husbandry to be to catch up with and surpass the United States by 1960 in the development of animal husbandry, in terms of livestock numbers." While proclaiming this attractive, enticing goal, he did not provide any business calculations, because he had none. "We," he concluded,

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He said, "We can and must accomplish this task. The entire party, the people, the collective farmers must take on and accomplish this task."

This was a rally call, not a scientifically sound plan, never discussed anywhere—neither in the Presidium of the Central Committee nor in the Council of Ministers. All members of the Presidium were outraged by this new subjectivist outburst from Khrushchev. In violation of custom, the Presidium members did not attend a joint lunch after the rally, but went home. Khrushchev was embarrassed by this, although he initially approached us with the boastful air of the inventor of a "great idea." The Presidium of the Central Committee was convened for the following day, where we discussed this issue. The Presidium members, each in their own way, criticized Khrushchev primarily for not having presented his proposal in advance. The Presidium members suggested that Khrushchev report to the Presidium his calculations and measures to ensure the feasibility and reality of achieving the stated task.

Khrushchev, while admitting that his actions were wrong, essentially defended the correctness of his speech, but did not provide any calculations or justifications.

The Presidium instructed Gosplan to perform the necessary calculations and report back to the Presidium its target dates for catching up with and surpassing the United States in cattle numbers. Gosplan spent weeks calculating, and finally, at a meeting of the Central Committee Presidium, presented its calculations and conclusions on the possibility of catching up with the United States in cattle numbers by 1970-1972, more than 10 years later than Khrushchev's stated target date. The meeting was heated. Khrushchev called the Gosplan officials conservatives, grew angry, and raised his small fist in a threatening gesture, but was unable to refute Gosplan's figures.

The Presidium members were inclined to accept Gosplan's proposals, but the Bureau decided to instruct Gosplan to further refine the issue. At the same time, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Central Committee were instructed to develop measures to accelerate the development of livestock farming in the relevant regions. Unfortunately, Gosplan's calculations also proved too rash. Livestock farming turned out to be the most critically underperforming sector of our agriculture. Of course, Khrushchev can't be blamed solely for this, but his voluntarism was particularly evident here.

Along with “gaining positions” in government and economic affairs, Khrushchev decided, in order to gain the aura of a “democrat” and “cultured” person, to take up literature and art.

How successful he was in this can be seen from one of his speeches before the events of June 1957. At one of the country government dachas, the Central Committee of the Party and the Council of Ministers of the USSR organized an open-air dinner for writers and artists, together with the Government and members of the Presidium of the Central Committee.

Before lunch, people strolled through the large park, rowed boats on the pond, and chatted. Groups and pairs improvised amateur performances, and some Central Committee members sang along with the guests. It was a truly relaxed and pleasant atmosphere.

This mood continued for some time even after we sat down at the tables and began snacking. Then began the main part of the presentation: He—Khrushchev—spoke... Although this speech was later transcribed quite smoothly in print, it was a "record," although no stenographic notes were kept at the table (and even if they had been, it's unlikely there would have been a single stenographer capable of transcribing what was said). And at a regular podium, when he spoke without a pre-written speech, his speech was not always consistent with logic and, naturally, with turns of phrase. And here, not an ordinary podium, but tables adorned with architectural "orders" made from glass and other industrial products, filled with stimulating content for "diction." One can imagine the "cultural" fruits that such a hybrid combination of the contents on the table with the contents in Khrushchev's head and on his tongue yielded. It was an unrivaled "masterpiece of oratory."

I won’t attempt to recount the entire course of his speech, but I’ll say what stuck in my memory. First of all, Khrushchev tried to “chew” for artists, writers, and actors much of what he said about Stalin’s personality cult at the 20th Party Congress, with the difference that there he read, and here he “expressed” himself orally – impromptu, and therefore it looked more “elegant.”

It must be said that some of the audience perceived the "hot" passages as a pleasant surprise, for which they would have been willing to award him the title of "Laureate of Belles-Lettres." I remember when Khrushchev emphasized the culpability of the Central Committee leaders, particularly Molotov, for the suppression of Russian literature and art, the writer Sobolev particularly went beyond the "sea coast" and, like a sailor, almost went to the "sea bend." But this caused not only confusion but also discontent among the majority of the audience, not to mention the leading party cadres present.

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Khrushchev's attack on Molotov, a member of the Central Committee Presidium, among the non-party intelligentsia was an extraordinary act and had far-reaching goals. It's not for nothing that the saying goes, "What's on a sober man's mind is on a drunk man's tongue."
His next "number" was a critique of certain writers—also with a specific selection. I recall that the extravagant targets of his attack were two women writers: Marietta Shaginyan and the poetess Aliger. I won't recount the content of his criticism of them, but in any case, it wasn't a defense of the Party-Leninist positions in literature and art. Both Shaginyan and Aliger deserve credit—they spoke up after his speech, both boldly and logically, objecting to Khrushchev. I recall the general laughter evoked by the plump and pretty Aliger's first words, when she turned to Khrushchev and said, "You see—I am that very same terrible Aliger!" In any case, no matter how hard Khrushchev's inner circle tried to gloss over his speech after this "dinner," it brought confusion rather than unity to those present, with the exception, of course, of those who enjoyed the fight at the top. They not only clearly sensed this but also heard it from the lips of the newly minted "defender" of the intelligentsia "injured" by the Soviet regime. However, even among the wavering intelligentsia, there was a significant portion that was shocked and disconcerted by the attack on Molotov, whom they had always considered a genuine, cultured Russian intellectual. And this one, they thought, although he was cozying up to us, was an unreliable ally; the "New Leader" was going out of his way to defend us.
The best part of the intelligentsia present left the dinner confused, and some even indignant.
Thus, the newly-minted “dialectician” Khrushchev turned the positive into the negative, but he also achieved a new aggravation within the Presidium of the Central Committee.
If before this he could count on a majority in the Presidium of the Central Committee, then after this speech of his with an attack on a member of the Presidium, one can directly say that the majority of members of the Presidium took a more critical position in relation to Khrushchev and his methods of leadership.
In the simplicity of his thinking, he considered it sufficient that the Secretariat of the Central Committee was his fortress; what else did he need?
The majority of the members of the Presidium of the Central Committee, who had endured for a certain time in the name of the unity of the Party and the Central Committee, finally realized that they could no longer tolerate such mistakes in policy and such leadership.

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It cannot be said that Khrushchev is incompetent and ill-suited for the role of First Secretary of the Central Committee, that sooner or later the party and the Central Committee must get rid of him - better sooner than later.
By this point, Khrushchev's relationship with the members of the Presidium had become strained. At meetings, he would abruptly cut off comrades who were speaking. I've already mentioned Molotov and Malenkov, but this also applied to Voroshilov, me, Kaganovich, and others. Although I must say that Khrushchev initially treated me with restraint. Moreover, when he went on vacation in 1955, he suggested that Kaganovich be assigned to deliver a report on the 38th anniversary of the October Revolution.

In 1956, he called me from vacation about the agenda for the 20th Congress. He told me the following: "Molotov proposes including the Party Program on the agenda for the 20th Congress. Apparently, he, Molotov, means he will be the rapporteur on this issue. But if we are to include the Party Program on the agenda, you should be the rapporteur, because you were already working on it at the 19th Congress. But overall," he said, "we are not ready for this issue." I replied that I also believed we wouldn't have time to prepare this issue, so it couldn't be included on the agenda for the 20th Congress.

These facts, incidentally, refute the accusations in the July 1957 Plenum resolution that I and the entire so-called group fought against Khrushchev from the very beginning of his election as First Secretary of the Central Committee. On the contrary, Khrushchev, while displaying the attitude indicated toward me, simultaneously launched into sharp attacks on important issues. For example, when the Vice President of the Academy of Sciences, Bardin, submitted a request to the Central Committee Presidium for appropriations for the "Year of Technological Progress" (as I believe it was called) and I supported Bardin's proposal at the meeting, Khrushchev shouted, "Look at you, you're rich! You have millions. You're supporting Bardin in a friendly way." I had actually known Bardin since 1916, working in Yuzovka and also at the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry. There was no friendship there. I simply supported a valid idea for the sake of technical progress, whereas Khrushchev, who verbally supported technical progress, contradicted himself and opposed the Academy of Sciences' proposal. His fury intensified when the Presidium of the Central Committee granted the Academy of Sciences' request.

Another example. In 1955, the Central Committee decided to create the State Committee on Labor and Wages. The post of chairman of this committee

Two candidates were put forward—Shvernik and Kaganovich. It was decided to appoint Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers Kaganovich as part-time chairman of this committee. As a long-time trade unionist, I agreed.

One of the first tasks was drafting a new pension law. I got involved and presented my first draft. And then, during an exchange of opinions in the Presidium, Khrushchev attacked me for proposing pension rates that he considered excessively high. I expected an objection from the Ministry of Finance, but I never imagined I would encounter such an attack from Khrushchev, who always demonstrated his "philanthropy" or, more accurately, his "love for the workers."

I told him I hadn't expected him to oppose it. Trying to justify his attack on the grounds of state interests, he said the state couldn't withstand Kaganovich's proposal. His anger grew even more intense when I countered: "You're not the state. The state has reserves for pensioners. We could, for example, cut back on bloated staffing levels and other unproductive expenses." The Presidium created a commission headed by Chairman of the Council of Ministers Bulganin, which adopted the draft with some amendments. Bulganin delivered a report on this draft at a session of the Supreme Soviet. Here, Khrushchev again contradicted himself.

I could cite other examples of his attacks on other members of the Central Committee Presidium. For example, such businesslike, good, so to speak, obediently loyal members of the Presidium as Pervukhin and Saburov were driven to the point of extreme dissatisfaction by Khrushchev, especially by his hypertrophic exaggeration of his "creativity" in any issue—familiar or unfamiliar—and the latter were in the majority. A moment arrived when, as they say in Ukraine, "they snapped their patience," and not so much from personal dissatisfaction as from Khrushchev's improper approach to resolving major issues, in which he disregarded objective conditions.

And so, at one of the meetings of the Presidium in the second half of June, the dissatisfaction of the members of the Presidium of the Central Committee with Khrushchev’s leadership burst out into the open.

I remember that at this meeting, the issue of preparations for the harvest and grain procurements was on the agenda. Khrushchev proposed raising the issue of a trip by the entire Presidium of the

Central Committee to Leningrad for the celebration of Leningrad's 250th anniversary. After discussing the harvest and moving on to the issue of the trip,

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Voroshilov was the first to object to Leningrad. Why, he asked, should all the Presidium members go? Don't they have anything else to do? I supported Voroshilov's concerns and added that we had a lot to do with the harvest and preparations for grain procurement. Certainly, several Presidium members would need to go out to their local areas, and Khrushchev himself would need to go to the virgin lands, where much remains unfinished. We, I said, deeply respect Leningrad, but the people of Leningrad wouldn't be offended if a few Presidium members went there. Malenkov, Molotov, Bulganin, and Saburov supported these objections. And then our Nikita stood up and began "scratching" the Presidium members one after another. He got so worked up that even Mikoyan, who was generally known for his ability to "quickly maneuver," began to calm Khrushchev down. But then the Presidium members rose and declared that this was no way to work—let's first discuss Khrushchev's behavior.
A proposal was made to entrust Bulganin with the chairmanship of this meeting. This was adopted by a majority of the Presidium, naturally without any prior agreement.
After Bulganin took the chairman's chair, Malenkov spoke. "You know, comrades," Malenkov said, "that we supported Khrushchev. Both Comrade Bulganin and I proposed electing Khrushchev First Secretary of the Central Committee. But now I see we were mistaken. He has demonstrated his inability to lead the Central Committee. He makes mistake after mistake in the content of his work, he has become arrogant, and his attitude toward the members of the Central Committee Presidium has become intolerable, especially since the 20th Congress. He is replacing the state apparatus, commanding directly over the Council of Ministers. This is not party leadership of Soviet bodies. We must decide to relieve Khrushchev of his duties as First Secretary of the Central Committee." This is the shortest summary of Malenkov’s speech, as well as that of other comrades.
Comrade Voroshilov spoke after Comrade Malenkov. He said he had eagerly voted for Khrushchev's election as First Secretary of the Central Committee and supported him in his work, but he had begun to engage in improper leadership behavior. "And I have come to the conclusion that Khrushchev must be relieved of his duties as First Secretary of the Central Committee. Working with him, comrades, has become unbearable." He recounted the times and ways in which Khrushchev had personally yelled at him, shown tactlessness, and mocked him. "We can't tolerate this anymore. Let's decide," he concluded.

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After Voroshilov, Kaganovich spoke. "The question we are considering is a difficult and distressing one. I was not among those who proposed electing Khrushchev as First Secretary of the Central Committee, because I have known him for a long time, both positive and negative. But I voted for this proposal, believing that the position obliges and compels a leader to develop and grow more vigorously in the course of his work. I knew Khrushchev as a modest man, a persistent student, who grew and matured into a capable leader on a republican, regional, and national level, as Secretary of the Central Committee within the Secretariat of the Central Committee.
After his election as First Secretary, he briefly displayed more of his positive traits, but then his negative aspects began to increasingly emerge—both in addressing the Party's substantive tasks and in his interactions with others. I, like other comrades, spoke of his positive work and highlighted his mistakes in matters of economic planning, where Khrushchev particularly displayed his subjectivist, voluntaristic approach, as well as in matters of Party and state leadership. Therefore, I support the proposal to relieve Comrade Khrushchev of his duties as First Secretary of the Central Committee. This, of course, does not mean that he will not remain a leading figure in the Party. I believe that Khrushchev will learn from these lessons and raise his performance to a new level.

But there is another aspect of Khrushchev's behavior that must be condemned: Khrushchev, as has now been established, was rallying his faction within the Central Committee Secretariat. He systematically discredited the Presidium and its members, criticizing them not in the Presidium itself, which is entirely legal and necessary, but within the Central Committee Secretariat, aiming his attacks at the Presidium, the highest Party organ between Central Committee Plenums. Such actions by Khrushchev are damaging the unity for which the Central Committee Presidium has thus far tolerated Khrushchev's whims. This will have to be reported to the Central Committee Plenum, which must be convened. I will also add one more fact, which I consider important. At one of the Presidium meetings, Khrushchev said: "We still need to sort out the affairs of Zinoviev-Kamenev and the others, that is, the Trotskyists." I remarked: "It's up to you to moo, but yours should remain silent." Khrushchev got angry and started shouting: “What are you hinting at all? I’m tired of this.” I didn't reveal this hint at the Presidium meeting, but I will now. Khrushchev was a Trotskyist in 1923-1924. In 1925, he reconsidered his views—he repented of his sin.

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It was in 1925 that I met him in Donbass and saw in him a sincere Leninist—a supporter of the line of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). I played a certain role in his subsequent development—his promotion—as Secretary of the Ukrainian Central Committee, and then as Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, responsible for personnel matters. I assessed him as a capable, growing worker from the blue-collar background, and I proceeded from the premise that the Party and the Central Committee do not hinder the growth of people who had made mistakes in the past but had overcome them.

I reported this to Stalin when Khrushchev was being elected secretary at the Moscow Conference. I was with Khrushchev at Stalin's, and he advised that Khrushchev speak at the conference about himself, and Kaganovich would confirm that the Central Committee knew this and trusted Khrushchev. That's how it was. Of course, past sins are forgiven and not brought up until a relapse. Khrushchev's statement back then was a relapse. And we're reminding him of his old sin so that such relapses don't happen again."

After Kaganovich, Molotov spoke. "No matter how hard Khrushchev tried to provoke me," Molotov said, "I refused to succumb to the tension. But it turned out that it was no longer bearable. Khrushchev strained not only personal relationships but also relationships within the Presidium as a whole when dealing with major state and party issues." Comrade Molotov elaborated on the issue of the management reorganization, considering it improper, and spoke about the inaccuracy of the accusation that he was against the Virgin Lands. This was untrue. It is true that he objected to an excessive increase and a sudden increase to 20-30 million hectares; that it was better to initially focus on 10-20 million, prepare it properly, and develop it well to achieve high yields. Comrade Molotov denied the accusation that he was holding back the peace policy—it was untrue, but apparently this fabrication was needed to justify the necessary steps in foreign policy. His statements against Yugoslavia were not about foreign policy, but about the Yugoslavs' anti-Party, anti-Soviet statements, for which we criticized them and should continue to criticize them. "We can no longer work with Khrushchev as First Secretary of the Central Committee," Molotov said. "I advocate relieving Khrushchev of his duties as First Secretary of the Central Committee."

After Molotov, Bulganin spoke. He began by highlighting the improper management practices of government bodies, including the Council of Ministers, and the uncomradely attitude even toward him personally. Bulganin spoke of the substantive errors in a number of decisions. "I," he concluded,

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Bulganin: “I fully agree with the proposal to release Khrushchev.”

Comrades Pervukhin and Saburov spoke. They both declared that they had previously treated Khrushchev well, just as Khrushchev had treated them. "But now we see that Khrushchev has become arrogant, presumptuous, and is making our work difficult. He must be released."
Comrade Mikoyan, true to his maneuvering tactics, said that while it was true that there were shortcomings in Khrushchev's work, they were correctable, and therefore he believed that Khrushchev should not be dismissed.
Khrushchev himself spoke after us. He refuted some of the accusations, but without defiance, one might even say with embarrassment. He acknowledged some of the criticisms, saying that I had indeed mishandled my comrades, and that there had been mistakes in handling substantive issues, but I promised the Presidium that I would correct these mistakes.
The Secretaries of the Central Committee spoke in defense of Khrushchev: Brezhnev, Suslov, Furtseva, Pospelov, although they stipulated that, of course, there were shortcomings, but we would correct them.
Central Committee Secretary Shepilov, the only one to speak differently, spoke honestly, truthfully, and convincingly about the unacceptable atmosphere of discrediting and harassing the Central Committee Presidium that Khrushchev had created within the Central Committee Secretariat. Khrushchev particularly denigrated Voroshilov as an "obsolete, conservatively backward" figure. (At the same time, Khrushchev hypocritically showed Voroshilov outward courtesy and "respect.") Shepilov described a number of incorrect decisions made by the Secretariat behind the backs of the Central Committee Presidium. In effect, Khrushchev had transformed the Central Committee Secretariat into a body operating independently of the Central Committee Presidium.
The Presidium met for four days. Bulganin, the chairman, conducted the meeting democratically, placing no time limits on speakers, and occasionally allowing the Central Committee secretaries to speak again.
Meanwhile, Khrushchev's Central Committee Secretariat, secretly from the Presidium, organized a summons to Moscow for Central Committee members, dispatching dozens of planes through the GPU and the Ministry of Defense to bring them to Moscow. This was accomplished without any decision from the Presidium and without even waiting for its decision on the matter under discussion. It was a genuine factional act, clever, but Trotskyist.
The majority of the Central Committee Presidium weren't such simpletons or poor organizers. Had they resorted to factionalism, as they were later wrongly accused of, they could have organized things more simply—removed Khrushchev. But we criticized Khrushchev in a party-like manner.

strictly observing all established norms in order to maintain unity.
Khrushchev handled the matter in a factional manner. Toward the end of the Central Committee Presidium meeting, a delegation led by Konev emerged from the Central Committee members gathered in Sverdlovsk Hall, declaring that the Central Committee Plenum members were requesting the Presidium to report to the Central Committee Plenum on the issues discussed at the Presidium. Some Presidium members reacted angrily to this act of convening Central Committee members to Moscow without the permission of the Central Committee Presidium, as an act of usurpation on the part of the Central Committee Secretariat and, of course, Khrushchev himself. Comrade Saburov, for example, who had previously idolized Khrushchev, exclaimed with furious indignation: "I considered you, Comrade Khrushchev, to be the most honest man. Now I see that I was mistaken—you are a dishonest man who allowed himself to organize this meeting in Sverdlovsk Hall, in a factional manner, behind the back of the Presidium of the Central Committee."
After a short break, the Presidium of the Central Committee decided: despite the fact that the Secretariat of the Central Committee had grossly violated the Party Charter, but respecting the members of the Central Committee and taking into account that they were waiting for the arrival of

the members of the Presidium, to interrupt the meeting of the Presidium and go to the Sverdlovsk Hall.
Having thrown off his mask of embarrassment and encouraged, Khrushchev walked into Sverdlovsk Hall next to Zhukov and Serov.
One can imagine the psychological state of the Central Committee Plenum members, brought to Moscow in such an emergency. Even before the Plenum opened, the Central Committee members had, of course, been informed of the Central Committee Presidium meeting (the Central Committee apparatus had already taken care of this). But when the Plenum opened, instead of the Presidium meeting report, which the Central Committee members were certainly expecting, they were presented with a "dish" about "the anti-Party group of Malenkov, Kaganovich, and Molotov."
That is, instead of the question “On the unsatisfactory leadership of the First Secretary of the Central Committee Khrushchev,” a completely opposite, contrived question was posed: “On the anti-party group of Malenkov, Kaganovich, Molotov.”
There was no report on the meeting of the Presidium of the Central Committee and the issues it discussed, but a whole complex of political accusations was strung together against the fictitious anti-party group of Malenkov, Kaganovich, Molotov, and the candidate for the Presidium who had joined them, Shepilov.
Sensing the absurdity and incongruity of the situation—to declare the majority of the Presidium of the Central Committee a faction—Khrushchev’s accusers resorted to a cunningly woven invention about a “group of three”—Malenkov,

Kaganovich, Molotov, singling them out from the seven members of the Presidium who spoke out against Khrushchev, condemned him and demanded his release (of the remaining four comrades - Voroshilov, Bulganin, Pervukhin, Saburov - the first three were even re-elected to the Presidium of the Central Committee).
Thus, by singling out three - Malenkov, Kaganovich, Molotov, an attempt was made to hide the fact that of the nine members of the Presidium, only two - Mikoyan and Khrushchev himself - were in favor of Khrushchev remaining as First Secretary, while the majority - seven - were in favor of dismissing Khrushchev as someone who was poorly implementing the political line of the Central Committee of the Party in practice.
Later, the "winners" came up with a new argument: that, using their arithmetic majority, this group wanted to change the composition of the party's governing bodies and alter the party line. But, firstly, it's absurd to talk about an arithmetic majority—what other kind of majority could there be when deciding certain issues? Yes, the majority in the Presidium of the Central Committee favored replacing Khrushchev alone, but is the composition of the party's governing bodies really just Khrushchev? Isn't the entire Presidium the governing body between Central Committee plenary sessions? Therefore, it's ridiculous to say and write that the Presidium wanted to change the composition of the party's governing bodies, that is, to replace itself.
The result is known: the proposed draft resolution, published in Pravda, “On the anti-party group of Malenkov G.M., Kaganovich L.M., Molotov V.M.” was adopted.
The adopted resolution states that "this group, using anti-Party, factional methods, sought a change..." Can the Presidium majority really be called a faction? There are no facts about factional methods, and none ever existed; no groups, no special meetings of any groups, either before or after the official Presidium meeting, no collusion. If there had been a factional group, we certainly weren't such poor organizers as to have found ourselves in a position where Khrushchev and his faction could have outwitted us—the Presidium majority—in such a way. It was Khrushchev and those who aligned themselves with him who acted in an organized manner as a faction, gathering Central Committee members secretly, behind the backs of the Presidium. And we—not a group, but the majority of the Presidium—preserving the unity of the Central Committee, met, discussed,

argued, and sought to resolve the issue without the factional maneuvering employed by Khrushchev and his cunning advisors.
They might say that Khrushchev was clever after all. Yes, but this cleverness is Trotskyist, anti-Party. However, understanding that

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three members of the Presidium and expel them from the Central Committee, its Presidium, simply by accusing them of factionalism and anti-party sentiment, was unconvincing for the Party; the new composition of Khrushchev's leadership, even before its election, drafted a resolution for the Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU, filled with other fabrications, politically principled accusations of the so-called anti-party group of Malenkov, Kaganovich, Molotov.
The draft is laced with accusations that aren't even worth refuting because they're all made up. Not a single fact or even a single quote is cited. There are no facts because they never happened. We all delivered reports and speeches, defending the party line, the decisions of the Central Committee and party congresses, including the 20th Congress.
In practical work, mistakes and shortcomings can be found in anyone. We had them too, but the resolution says little about them. Instead, it is full of general, unfounded, and scathing accusations. "At a time," the resolution states, "when the Party, under the leadership of the Central Committee, relying on nationwide support, is carrying out enormous work to implement the decisions of the 20th Congress... at this time, the anti-Party group of Malenkov, Kaganovich, and Molotov is speaking out against the Party line." Where? When? What were these actions? Facts, facts, no facts. One could cite dozens, hundreds of facts testifying to the contrary throughout the work of these comrades, refuting these unfounded, fictitious assertions about their desire to change the political line of the Party and the Central Committee.
The 1957 Central Committee Resolution states: "Over the past three to four years, when the Party has taken a decisive course toward correcting the errors and shortcomings generated by the personality cult and has been waging an intensified struggle against the revisionists of Marxism-Leninism, members of the now-disclosed and fully exposed anti-Party group have continually offered direct and indirect resistance to this course, approved by the 20th Congress of the CPSU." This assertion is completely refuted by the June 30, 1956 Resolution of the Central Committee of the Party, "On Overcoming the Personality Cult and Its Consequences."
This resolution of the Central Committee, adopted after the 20th Party Congress, states: “The 20th Party Congress and the entire policy of the Central Committee after Stalin’s death clearly demonstrate that within the Central Committee of the Party there was a formed Leninist core of leaders who correctly understood the pressing needs in the areas of both domestic and foreign policy.

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It's impossible to say that there was no counteraction to the negative phenomena associated with the personality cult and hindering the advance of socialism. Immediately after Stalin's death, the Leninist core of the Central Committee embarked on a decisive struggle against the personality cult and its grave consequences."
A comparison of these two Central Committee resolutions reveals that the 1957 resolution is a fabrication. After all, after the 20th Congress, the Presidium of the Central Committee was elected, constituting the aforementioned Leninist core of the Central Committee, and this core included Voroshilov, Molotov, Kaganovich, Malenkov, Bulganin, Mikoyan, Pervukhin, Saburov, Shvernik, and others. How can the Leninist core of the Central Committee be reduced to Khrushchev and Mikoyan, while the rest, especially Molotov, Kaganovich, Malenkov, and Voroshilov, are expelled and vilified? The Khrushchev faction needed all this to cover up the real mistakes and shortcomings

criticized at the Presidium of the Central Committee. All these "fundamentally political" accusations were concocted to justify their expulsion from the Central Committee.
This was an anti-party, anti-Leninist reprisal against old figures of the party and the Soviet state, a reprisal for criticizing the First Secretary of the Central Committee, Khrushchev, who imagined himself indispensable.
Moreover, after their expulsion from the Central Committee, Malenkov, Kaganovich, and Molotov worked honestly and diligently, as befits communists, at their assigned jobs and actively participated in Party organizations, working and fighting for the implementation of the decisions of the Party and its Central Committee. They received no reprimands or accusations whatsoever. Despite this, four years after the 1957 decision they were expelled from the party.
Seeking reinstatement in the party, they - now without a party card - remain loyal communists, Marxist-Leninists, proletarian internationalists, fighters for the line of the party and its Central Committee, for Socialism and Communism!
I hope, I believe, that the Party, its Central Committee, its Politburo will establish the truth and restore our rights as members of our native Leninist Party.

INSTEAD OF A CONCLUSION

In this part of my memoirs, I intended to illuminate the life and work of our party's Central Committee and the Soviet government. But, unfortunately, I have lost my sight and will be forced to curtail my plans. Even my first attempts at writing using the blind man's method demonstrate the extreme difficulty of completing even a condensed plan. But I cannot give in to difficulties—nature has left me little time, and I must write to the utmost, wasting no time, especially in these times of hardship for our homeland and my beloved Communist Party.
I may have to shorten my recollections of the past work of this period in order to have time to express my thoughts on the present situation and the tasks of overcoming difficulties.
Our Party and the Soviet state have endured many hardships and emerged victorious. We, true Bolsheviks, are confident that our Motherland and Party will emerge victorious at this time as well.
Our Communist Party, on its own initiative, proclaimed the need to develop Soviet socialist democracy and glasnost. This has had a positive impact on the rise of political life and creativity among the masses. But one cannot help but see that the opponents of socialism, especially its active enemies, exploit democracy, glasnost, and especially the multi-party system to repeat the arguments and slanders of White émigré and Western apologists for capitalism.
They, these false democrats, speculatively use the difficulties experienced by the country and the people in order to persuade wavering, unstable people to take the anti-socialist path,

That is, on the path of capitalism. Since this is not so easy to achieve, they are employing a method proven in the struggle against socialism: an attack on the vanguard of the revolutionary people—the Communist Party, the only true defender of the people exploited by capital.
History has shown the treachery of the apologists of capitalism-imperialism, who primarily target the leaders of the working class and its party. These enemies of socialism exploit the mistakes of their actions, launch a barrage against these leaders, and then openly attack the Party, its ideology, and its principles. This is precisely what modern anti-socialist forces have done in our Soviet country. Our Party has long since harshly criticized the mistakes and lawlessness that occurred in the 1930s, when, alongside legitimate repressions against true enemies of the people, innocent people suffered. Despite this, in 1987, on the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution, anti-socialist forces unleashed a renewed, vigorous Stalinist campaign, "enriching" the facts with vile slander. Unfortunately, some communists have learned this lesson. But, as the subsequent development of the Stalinist offensive demonstrated, they chose Stalin and his comrades, who

themselves do not deny their share of responsibility, as a target for their attacks on the Communist Party, the October Revolution, and even Lenin. These enemies of socialism are not interested in the humanity they falsely rant about. They seek the restoration of capitalism, the rule of the kulak—the NEPman. We, of course, treat honest researchers with great respect, but we must continue to expose the false, hypocritical politicians who parrot the White émigré narratives with unrestrained slander. We will overcome difficulties if we fight the enemies of socialism, without, of course, allowing mistakes and lawlessness.
Only by uniting all the advanced people of the people, first and foremost the working class, on the basis of an ideological and principled line, will we overcome all difficulties and move forward - to the complete victory of Socialism, and then Communism!

APPENDICES

LETTER FROM I.V. STALIN TO K.F. STAROSTIN ON NAMINING THE MOSCOW METROPOLITAN AFTER L.M. KAGANOVICH

On February 4, 1935, rumors reached the Party Central Committee that the Metro staff wanted to name the Metro after Comrade Stalin. Given Comrade Stalin's resolute disagreement with this proposal, and considering that Comrade Stalin equally resolutely insisted that the Metro be named after Comrade L. Kaganovich, who was directly and immediately leading the successful organizational and mobilization work on the Metro's construction, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) requested the Metro staff ignore Comrade L. Kaganovich's protests and make a decision to name the Metro after Comrade L. Kaganovich. Secretary of the Central Committee I. Stalin

LETTERS FROM L.M. KAGANOVICH TO I.V. STALIN

September 5, 1935
"Dear Comrade Stalin! I'll give you a brief update on NKPS matters. The main work now revolves around implementing the order 'On Locomotive Facilities and Schedules.' The other day, I listened to reports from road managers and even some depot managers over the intercom. It's clear the stagnant swamp has been stirred up: commanders are being forced to step up their game because the engineers and conductors are putting pressure on them. On the Donetsk Railway, instead of the 184 km a day a locomotive runs, some locomotives are now running 212-220 km. Engineers on the locomotive from Liman to Yasinovataya cover 102 km in their eight-hour round trip. These engineers and conductors spoke up and declared that for the first time, they are ordering lunch at home for a specific time and eating it with their families.

One driver said, “For the first time, I felt like an organized person,” and when he came home 8 hours later, his wife started asking him if the train had been cancelled, and she couldn’t believe that he had already left.
Levchenko has already cooled and placed 100 locomotives in reserve. However, there are significant difficulties, especially in creating schedules that prevent locomotives from sitting idle. I recently had a meeting with the lower-level schedulers, and it became clear that they're left to their own devices. No one supervises them, and their schedules are approved mechanically, without even

reading them. We're now changing this situation radically—we'll review each line's schedule with the People's Commissariat of Railways, and we'll approve new schedules by September 15th. Winter preparations are still poor. Things are especially bad in the east, of course. We've just sent a number of NKPS department heads and their deputies to the field, particularly in the east. The other day, on September 1st, there was a loading delay: on the 31st, they were given 77,900, but on the 1st, 68,000—a drop of almost 10,000 cars. I issued an order regarding this and reprimanded a number of railway managers for the carelessness and excesses they allowed on the 31st: having used up their empty cars, they didn't think about tomorrow. Apparently, the turbulence hasn't ended yet, and we have to be on guard.
I'll leave it at that this time. Warmest regards. How are you enjoying your vacation? I wish you all the best.
Yours, L. Kaganovich

August 1942
To Comrade Stalin!
The situation at the front remains grave. The troops of the former Southern Front are still unstable and susceptible to retreat and panic, which has infected some of the few remaining troops of the former North Caucasus Front, with the exception of the Cavalry Corps and the 47th Army. Worst of all is the indifference shown by some commanders to the losses of materiel, the chaotic retreat of troops, and even the loss of many important points and cities. The measures we took in early August, in pursuance of your order, seemed to improve the condition of the troops and their command; the extremely depleted divisions and individual units began to be replenished by those who had withdrawn disorganized and became at least somewhat capable of putting up some resistance and at least partially restoring the front. However, after the 5th, when the enemy broke through the Kuban line, and then the Labinsk line, the situation again deteriorated sharply. Tank fear and a feeling of hopelessness in the fight against tanks

Even some of the front staff were captured by enemy forces without tanks. This is confirmed by the fact that should the enemy approach and break through the line with even five tanks, the situation immediately seemed hopeless, and no serious measures were taken to suppress such a breakthrough, despite orders from the command. It must be said that the front command's orders are being poorly executed, and at the same time, the lies are rampant. As a result, the retreat has not been stopped in recent days, and we have lost Maykop, and the fighting is now taking place inside the city of Krasnodar. It must be said, however, that without the measures taken, Krasnodar would have been captured by the enemy long ago without a fight. Currently, the main objective is to halt the enemy advance on Tuapse and Novorossiysk. To this end, we have now deployed troops of the 236th Division of the 18th Army in the Maikop-Tuapse highway area, amassed the Cavalry Corps, deployed some RS units, occupied all mountain roads and trails, and begun constructing fortifications—machine gun and artillery nests. At the same time, we are taking measures, in accordance with Order 227, to fully restore the rear. To date, barrier detachments have been established in most divisions, penal companies have been created, and special personnel, including judicial and prosecutorial personnel, have been dispatched to detain disorganized units and individuals. A plan has been drawn up to form both troops and motor battalions from those retreating in the Tuapse and Novorossiysk area. L. Kaganovich

August 30, 1942
ENCRYPTION MOSCOW KREMLIN TO T. STALIN

1) At the moment, the situation is most acute in the Novorossiysk direction. The enemy is pressing there; three days ago, he already occupied the 27th ridge of heights in front of Novorossiysk and shelled Novorossiysk with artillery. As you know from our reports, we gave the order for an offensive with the aim of occupying Neberdzhayevskaya and Nizhne-Bakanskaya. Offensive battles continued for three days; our units pushed back the enemy, occupying the southern part of Neberdzhayevskaya, but, unable to hold these positions, they are consolidating their positions on the heights that were occupied by the enemy before our offensive. (During these battles, a member of the Army Military Council, Comrade Abramov, was killed and the Army Commander was slightly wounded.

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Comrade Kotov and the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Front, General Razuvaev, who was sent by us.) Although our positions have improved since the counteroffensive, the situation in Novorossiysk remains serious. Today, the Military Council urgently discussed new measures to strengthen the defense of Novorossiysk: additional fortifications directly near the city, more efficient deployment of existing troops in sectors, the establishment of additional resistance centers, the allocation of small detachments to operate against similarly small enemy detachments, etc. These measures will be developed and reported to you overnight. However, since the army command and even the front headquarters are not showing the necessary initiative and energy in taking action in connection with the new situation in the Novorossiysk sector—and are even showing a certain uncertainty—it would be very good if you, Comrade Stalin, sent a directive to strengthen the defense of Novorossiysk. From experience, I see that each of your telegrams mobilizes the forces of the front.
2) Following your critical instructions, we took a number of measures to strengthen the front and improve troop command and control. We visited the units and heard the armies' reports. Thanks to the application of the systematic counterattack tactics you outlined, relative stabilization of the front has been achieved in most sectors of the right flank and center, and we have intensified political work based on your order. We have achieved good results in strengthening discipline in the 12th Army and in the 383rd and 31st Divisions of the 18th Army, although there has not yet been a significant breakthrough in the remaining units of the 18th Army. There has also been some improvement in the 96th Army; its leadership is rather weak, but we are still monitoring it. The corps remains the best unit on the front; we have conveyed your assessment to them, and this has strengthened them even more. Currently, the corps, together with the 32nd Guards Rifle Division, occupies the central defense zone on the Maikop-Tuapse line. Until now, they have repelled all attacks, and the railway... We held Khadyzhenskaya Station. The enemy intensified their attack today. We're concerned about the Belorechensky Pass, the closest to us, located within the Transcaucasian Front's borders as its outermost point, with access to the coast at Lazarevskoye and Sochi. The enemy has reached the pass and is trying to force its way through. All our main rear areas are on the other side of Lazarevskoye. We requested that the borders of our front be expanded by transferring the 20th Division. This would certainly be beneficial not only for operational reasons but also because it would strengthen our rear.

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We sent the exact proposals in a special telegram. I ask you, Comrade Stalin, to satisfy our request.
L. Kaganovich

September 2, 1942
ENCRYPTION MOSCOW TO COMRADE STALIN

I report on the situation in the Novorossiysk region and the measures taken on the ground to implement your order to defend Novorossiysk:
1) The enemy, having encountered resistance and counterattacks in the Neberdzhaevskaya area, turned around through Verkhne-Bakanskaya. Having encountered resistance and counterattacks in this area, he directed his main attack through Anapa and Krasno-Medvedovskaya, seeking to seize two roads to Novorossiysk leading to Abrau-Dyurso.
We've given the order to counterattack the enemy's attempts to advance along the roads from Gudzevo to Novorossiysk. To this end, we're reinforcing the 83rd Brigade and adding two battalions to this sector.
2) The enemy is trying to bypass Novorossiysk from the northeast with the aim of cutting Novorossiysk off from the Novorossiysk-Tuapse land communication highway.
The 1st Naval Brigade was ordered to counterattack and retake Mount Dolgaya. Comrade Prokofiev, a member of the Army Military Council, was sent to the brigade. Air forces were tasked with operating in this direction. We are moving reserves from the 318th Division to the area.
3) There were two lines of defense on the front of the 47th Army, but in reality there were none. The measures we developed, which were transmitted to you through the front, provide for the creation of one strong line and the creation of strong points of resistance in the city of Novorossiysk itself. The prevailing philosophy here (in the army, navy and civilians) was that if Neberdzhaevskaya was lost, and if we also lost Verkhne-Bakanskaya, then Novorossiysk had to be surrendered, so nothing was done for defense on the approaches to the city or in the city.
The City Defense Committee is intimidated and shows no sign of even attempting to strengthen the city's defenses. A defensive plan has been outlined. Today, we are beginning the work outlined in the measures submitted to you.

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4) The state of the 47th Army is unsatisfactory, especially the 77th Division. The division commander is a coward and undisciplined. We will select another candidate for division commander today, and the current one should be brought to trial. Troop command in the army is disorganized. Currently, together with Commander Kotov, we are strengthening the headquarters and improving communications with the troops.
5) Political work is not offensive in nature against cowards and those who do not believe in the possibility of defending Novorossiysk. I have announced your directive on the defense of Novorossiysk and demanded its implementation. We are distributing 25 selected workers to divisions, brigades, members of the Military Council, and others, as well as one to each battalion.
Today I'm heading out to the Army's combat zone. All the specific details have been relayed to you, so I'll leave it at that.
Comrade Stalin, we will do everything to fulfill your order—to defend Novorossiysk and under no circumstances surrender the city to the enemy.
Yours - L. Kaganovich.
We've just received reports that the enemy has landed troops on Taman (Chushka Spit, Vesly, and three other points). Air forces have been ordered to carry out intensive bombing.
L. Kaganovich

October 1942
Hello, dear comrade Stalin!
In the first ten days of October, the situation on the Black Sea Group of Forces' front deteriorated sharply. Following a Headquarters directive, we fortified the main line between Maykop and Tuapse. The 32nd Guards Division heroically repelled enemy attacks for a month, and only toward the end did the enemy manage to capture Kurinsky. However, having sensed the difficulty of penetrating along the main line, the enemy took advantage of our carelessness and launched a

flanking attack—on the right, toward Mount Lysaya, and on the left, toward Fanagoriyskoye. We repelled the attack on the left, but on the right, the enemy not only took Mount Lysaya but also continued the attack along mountain trails, reaching Tunayka, Kotlovina, and approaching the main highway and railway in the Shaumyan region. The order had been issued eight days earlier, but unfortunately, the offensive never materialized; instead, the enemy is capturing one hill after another. Commanders from regiment to army level exaggerate the enemy's strength, thereby attempting to justify our inability to organize and command the enemy in mountainous and forested terrain. It even gets to the point where a battalion goes on the offensive and wanders off, while command searches for its location.

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Two, there are cases when two battalions, advancing on the same height but from different directions, fire at each other. I'm not writing this as a correspondent; I'm responsible for these outrages. I fight them, but unfortunately, not always, and even so far, mostly unsuccessfully. The commanders, of course, have one serious excuse: the incessant bombing. Our air force is powerless to counter them, and sometimes, due to their ineptitude, they even fire on their own. But it would be crude to reduce the entire matter to air force actions. Slowness, loss of time, clumsiness, and sluggishness in our actions, along with the inability to establish communication between units, are far more damaging.
1) Of the divisions present in the Maikop-Tuapse sector, three—the 32nd, 236th, and 383rd—are depleted and have no more than three thousand men each, and the 383rd has even fewer; two divisions—the 408th and 328th—are new arrivals, more fully-fledged, but raw and unseasoned, and the 328th has many who can't shoot at all. Two brigades—the 119th and 107th—have been in combat, but not in the mountains, and they need to at least get accustomed to the terrain. In view of all this, I propose focusing for the short term on defense and sporadic counterattacks, preventing the abandonment of height after height under the pretense of an offensive, and conducting fortifications along the new line where the enemy has broken through, particularly along the Fanagorskoye-Shaumyan-Toytkh-Altubinal line (along the Pshish River). Restore the battered units and ensure the recapture of the area by new ones.
2) We're living without reinforcements, and the fighting is serious. All the armies, not just the 18th, but also the 96th and 47th, are emaciated. The 47th Army is successfully fulfilling the task of preventing the Germans from using Novorossiysk (Tsemes) Bay. We even still hold one of the two Novorossiysk cement factories. The 47th Army also coped well with the Romanian divisions; there is evidence that the Romanians are bringing up a new 18th Division from Crimea. I beg you, Comrade Stalin, if you can, help with reinforcements, as we only have companies of 30 men each.
L. Kaganovich

October 1942
To Comrade Stalin.
As for myself, I can say that, firstly, I am very grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to work in the army. I work with great passion and the necessary energy. I am adapting.

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* The end of the letter is missing.

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I'm at work, but it doesn't always work out. Things are bad, and sometimes I have to swear. I can't stand it, I'm learning and retraining. The Transcaucasian Front is a bit wary, no matter how much we pretend to be a front. This wariness seems especially directed at me, though I'm very loyal and modest. Our Military Council even received instructions from the Military Council of the

Transcaucasian Front. They were about to complain to you, but then they swallowed their slack and decided not to bother you.
I haven't fully recovered from my injury yet, although I haven't stopped working. My arm hasn't healed yet, and there are days when it swells, but the doctor says it should be all healed in about 10 days. I would kindly ask you, Comrade Stalin, to instruct someone to send me some materials so I can stay at least a little informed and not feel so isolated.
I read your response to the correspondents with great pleasure. It's a well-deserved slap to the allies; you gave them a little punch in the teeth. We're bleeding here, and they're chattering, escaping with compliments, and doing absolutely nothing. Their chatter can't be covered up with overly delicate Foreign Minister language; both our people and theirs needed to know the truth. And as always, you did it—succinctly, simply, directly, and brilliantly. I kindly ask you to let me know when you'll be speaking on the October anniversary so I can listen to it on the radio. Goodbye.
I wish you health and strength to achieve complete victory over the enemy.
Yours, L. Kaganovich. Greetings, comrades.

December 1942
Hello, dear comrade Stalin!
It's been almost a month since I've been working in Tbilisi. During this time, I've primarily become familiar with the economic situation related to the front's needs and the operational situation. As I reported to you, I've visited the Northern Group twice. At the same time, I've become involved in the practical work of the Military Council, particularly in matters of logistics, supplies, and transportation. The situation is complicated by the difficulties of delivery, but at the same time, the Transcaucasian Front has great potential for utilizing the internal resources of the Transcaucasian Republics. Both Georgia and Azerbaijan are already contributing greatly to the front, but their potential is even greater, particularly in industrial production. What is needed:
1) The ammunition production program should provide for a significant increase in the most scarce ammunition - 76-mm regimental and divisional shells, 82-mm and 120-mm mines, it must be said,

that despite a solid ammunition production program, these most essential shells and mines are produced the least.
2) The main limiting factor is the poor delivery and shipment of metals and other raw materials. This can be remedied not only by improving shipment and delivery but also by increasing raw material resources within Transcaucasia itself through the reorganization of a number of industries, i.e., the construction of at least small-scale enterprises. It is essential to immediately begin construction of a coke plant and several steel foundries or small enterprises to process, primarily the large quantities of scrap metal available in Transcaucasia. The same applies to iron foundries. In this regard, we should draw on the experience of the People's Commissariat of Railways, which, under your direction, built numerous steel and iron foundries, which significantly assisted the People's Commissariat of Railways during the war. It is possible and necessary to design and begin construction of a metallurgical plant, including rolled metal, but first and foremost, it is necessary to establish small steel and iron foundries. To achieve this, it is essential to mobilize internal resources and obtain significant assistance from the People's Commissariat of Ferrous Metallurgy, the People's Commissariat of Electrical Industry, and the People's Commissariat of Machine Building. There is undoubtedly much that can be done in the field of explosives chemistry.
3) Much has been accomplished here in the production of uniforms and food products, particularly in the food industry, footwear, overcoats, and tunics. However, the program is currently being disrupted due to poor production organization, particularly the cooperation of various enterprises from different republics of the Transcaucasus. Of course, the lack of sole leather for footwear is a significant factor due to a lack of chemicals. This could be overcome if some of their production

was organized locally and some was managed by the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade. The most important thing is to improve the performance of enterprises in Armenia and Azerbaijan, as Georgian enterprises depend on them.
4) We sent you a special encrypted message regarding food supplies, and our requests have been largely met. The hay supply for horses is scarce, but the Military Council and the Central Committees of the republics are currently pressing hard on this issue. Regulating supply flows between the republics will be especially necessary for the implementation of orders.
5) In the army's rear, the main issue is the transportation of goods and delivery to the troops, since often what is available at the front, army warehouses, and even divisional warehouses is not available at the regiment due to poor delivery. We are now taking on the task of improving

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The NGO's remarkable decision to organize a motor vehicle management agency will greatly help this.
6) In order to resolve these issues, it is necessary to have a small apparatus, either at the Front Military Council or simply under my supervision, of at least 5-10 people. I ask you to make a decision on this matter and inform me.
Regarding the purely military, operational aspect, you are familiar with the situation from our reports. I consider it necessary to dwell on the following: the operation approved by Headquarters did not develop successfully. Regarding purely military work, I must tell you, Comrade Stalin, that, in addition to studying military matters, I adhere to a foundation that allows me to formulate questions firmly. This foundation is your orders, which provide excellent guidance even for non-specialists. And so, having relied on the basis of verifying the execution of your orders, I see, firstly, that the troops, including front-line command and control, are poorly monitoring their execution; and secondly, many are essentially negligent in their execution. This applies to the use of artillery and tanks, and especially to the issue of coordination. An analysis of ammunition consumption shows that 45mm shells and 50mm mortar shells are used sparingly, while the greatest expenditure is by long-range artillery, which primarily fires over large areas. They consume a lot, but have little effect, observation is poor, and therefore, even where they do hit their target, the adjustments are unsatisfactory. Artillery very often fails to pave the way for infantry and tanks, and the infantry is often late in using the paths paved by artillery. I believe the main reason is the serious shortcomings in the work of the Front and Group Directorates. The command is primarily focused on the operational aspect (referring to the functions of the Operations Department), but not on the comprehensive organization of combat support—both the participation of all types of weapons and the political and material aspects of the matter. This is precisely what happened with the operation you approved, Comrade Stalin; both the Front and the Northern Group prepared it very poorly. Even the troops were notified on the 26th, and the offensive (according to an accelerated schedule) was scheduled for the 27th. As a result, there was no serious development... cooperation, loss of tanks and artillery. Members of the Military Councils are rather passive in these matters. I must inform you that on the Transcaucasian Front, Comrade Tyulenev is not a self-critical person and shows no desire to expose the shortcomings of management for improvement.

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I had some clashes with him over this. Besides, he's apparently accustomed to his peculiar way of handling matters; he doesn't even inform the Military Council of any fundamental decisions. He's very fond of "yaqat" (speaking in English) and ostentatiously announcing to the members of the Military Council: "I've made a decision and given the order to redeploy a division, change the timing of an operation, and so on."
Things are still tough for us. We'll press on and hope to achieve improvements and success, just as our glorious Stalingraders did. It's clear that your words about a celebration on our street will soon

be realized. I beg you, Comrade Stalin, to occasionally, from time to time, give me your instructions and advice. After all, I feel a great responsibility as a member of the Politburo, but I could overlook, miss this or that important matter, or act incorrectly. "..."*

December 21, 1942
Dear comrade Stalin!
Today, December 21st, I convey to you my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes, as only a boundlessly devoted follower, disciple, and friend could wish. Today, we, your close disciples and friends, together with millions of patriots, pronounce these words with special strength and love: For the Motherland, for STALIN - the savior of the Fatherland and all working humanity - we are ready to give our lives.
Greetings to you. Yours, Lazar Kaganovich

From the negotiations of the People's Commissar L. M. Kaganovich on a direct line with the heads of the railways, the Authorized Representatives of the People's Commissariat of Railways

July 6, 1941
KAGANOVICH - NEKRASOV (BELARUSIAN AND SOUTH-WESTERN RAILWAYS).

Comrade Kaganovich, hello. Please report not only as the head of the railway, but also as the NKPS representative for the Southwestern Front. What is the situation in the direction of Nizhyn? What kind of damage was there? How many 7,000-ton trains are there?

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* The end of the letter is missing.

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How many are in motion, have they left the hub, and how many are in the hubs being loaded or loaded but not dispatched? Issue the following instructions to the command. Due to the bombing, loading must be especially expedited. Dispatch your people to the stations, load more densely, negotiate with the command and seat people on platforms along with the equipment—this will speed up loading and reduce the number of cars. Consult with specialists immediately—what easing of the formation process is needed? For example, can you be less strict in the distribution of rolling stock by type, while at the same time not overdoing it to maintain traffic safety. Assign a responsible employee to each formed train, tasked with the fastest possible release from the hub and its escort along the section. Maintain the line to Nizhyn in special condition; assign your best recovery forces to this line to avoid a prolonged disruption of traffic. Pay attention to Mironovka and Fastov. Stay connected to your superiors, don't attend meetings, and don't go to the stations even without an emergency. Focus on clarifying the situation and maintaining command. I urge you to do everything possible to dispatch the trains you have and complete loading. One last thing. You promised to load the Machine Tool Plant, but you haven't sent any cars there...
Good. Call the station managers now where loading is taking place and tell them I demand they load faster and keep up the pace even during the bombing. Goodbye. Stay healthy.

Summer 1941
KAGANOVICH TO MOLCHANOV AND MIKHIN (ODESSA RAILWAY)

Kaganovich and Kovalev are at the apparatus. Hello, comrades. What is your program of action? I approve of your plan; it's sound; all that remains is to implement it. For my part, I would like to add

the following instructions. First of all, remove grain and other cargo from the Kotovsk-Odessa section. Secondly, it is necessary to mobilize all sea and river transport assets through local party organizations to load grain and other valuables—I emphasize, grain first. Give them a short trip to Nikolaev-Kherson; we will be actively supplying empty trains there.

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From there, load the cars and send them to the rear. If the sea and river fleets have the capacity to transport them to Sevastopol, and especially to Novorossiysk as planned, then this must be done. Third. Today and tomorrow, concentrate your efforts on the fastest possible removal of the entire loaded flow from Odessa to Pomoshnaya to Znamenka. I advise implementing one-way traffic. The People's Commissariat of Railways will instruct the Stalinskaya Railway to accept the flow. After clearing the unloaded flow, accept empty cars from the Stalinskaya Railway, of which over 1,000 cars have accumulated there, for use primarily for loading grain. Let us know how many empty cars you can accept for both Odessa and Nikolaev. Fourth. The Kolosovka-Nikolaev line is a very important reserve. The whole issue is establishing a crossing. Send a group of your workers there, contact the builders, set strict deadlines for the construction of a simplified bridge on sleeper spur lines across the Ungul River... According to all indications, with vigorous work, a railway crossing of up to 400 cars per day can be established in a matter of days. Fifth. An order has been issued regarding passenger cars, but please inform me how many you can accept to ensure these cars are not jammed. Sixth. Plan in advance measures to ensure the complete removal of all locomotives, including those evacuated from other lines, and cars, as well as valuable railway equipment. Strengthen demolition equipment if necessary. Seventh. I authorize you, at your discretion, to use the live-block method to dispatch trains following each other at the appropriate time. Eighth. Regarding the prosecutor. I called the military prosecutor, Comrade Nosov, today, and he promised to take action and prevent such treatment of the railway chief from continuing. Continue to command confidently and in a businesslike manner, as you have done so far. Greetings to you and all the best people of the Odessa Railway.

Summer 1941
KAGANOVICH - TO SERGEEV (OKTYABRSKAYA RAILWAY). TO VOROBYEV (COMMISSION OF PASSENGERS)

Hello, Kaganovich, Gotsiridze, and I. We are dissatisfied with the pace of restoration work in Bologoye and Medvedevo. In wartime, every minute counts, and you don't even have an hourly schedule, and if you do in some areas, it's a sham. The main thing is

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The problem with management is that people are scattering. This means that managers are not showing the necessary firmness in establishing order, increasing discipline, and boosting productivity.
I suggest you break down all work at the junction into sections, and within each section, into teams or units. Assign a supervisor to each section and a foreman to each unit. Set a precise completion date and order of completion, keeping in mind the most essential and important work. Select for this purpose people from the construction, track, and restoration departments, as well as from employees of all other railway agencies, who are capable of organizing the restoration work.
I require you to first and foremost restore the tracks and sections that ensure the unimpeded departure of trains from Moscow to Leningrad. The materials you requested will be sent, but don't expect them today. Mobilize all internal resources to ensure that these materials are not cited as the reason for delays.

Report to me every three hours that the track has been restored. I instruct the heads of the traffic departments, under their personal responsibility, to make maximum use of the restored track for receiving trains. Coordinate with command the unloading of trains on the approaches to and beyond Bologoye. Trains destined beyond Bologoye are to be run in batches without stopping.
Briefly gather the communists, assign them to sections and teams, and ensure high productivity, discipline, and vigor in the restoration work. I authorize Comrade Vorobyov to remain until the restoration work is completed. I await the results, and good health to you.

Summer 1941
KAGANOVICH - KRAVCHENKO (COMMISSIONER OF THE NKPSPO FOR THE SOUTHERN FRONT)

Kaganovich, Filippov, and Levin are at the apparatus. I read the telegram from Vorobyov and Bolshakov. I consider... First. There's a lot of noise around the construction of the crossing, but little action. I propose that no new construction managers be appointed. The following are responsible for leadership and command: Bogdanov on the Bug, Zubitsky on the Ingul, and Levin, the line builder, should build all approaches and bypasses; Kalashnikov,

Vorobey, Vasilyev, and others are obligated to assist and oversee, not create new centers. Comrade Kravchenko, together with the builders, is to draw up a tight schedule today, as the situation demands hours, not days, to organize through traffic via the crossing. Your pile-driving calculations are based on a standard template. I'm amazed at how little ingenuity you have in such a tense situation. Why, for example, aren't you using the remaining section of the Bugaz crossing? Why can't you create a combined crossing—piles and barges? Perhaps the dock could be used as a crossing. The same with the bridge over the Ingul. Your deadlines demonstrate how little you've adapted to a military approach. I demand that you more seriously consider your plan, schedule, and combat approach.
Second. Regarding the locomotive ferry. If calculations show that bringing locomotives from Kolosovka to the Bug and ferrying them from the Bug to Nikolaev to the docks could yield significant savings in time and turnover—if this is truly feasible and not just a ploy to shirk—then this proposal could be accepted. I urge Comrade Kravchenko to calculate and report your proposals precisely. If communication is lost, then coordinate with Comrade Molchanov and act on your own responsibility, taking my instructions into account under all circumstances. Comrade Kravchenko, regarding the delivery of grain to Kherson, we must accept everything that arrives. At the same time, a railway ferry across the Dnieper needs to be built. What can you say about all these matters? There's been a lot of chatter about repairing the ferry; they've been talking about it for four days now, and nothing has been done. Please report to Comrade Filippov and me in two hours today on the schedule for the work on the Bug, the Ingul, and the Dnieper. Goodbye.

Summer 1941
KAGANOVICH - MOLCHANOV (ODESSA RAILWAY)

Hello, Kaganovich is on the line. Could you briefly report the situation on the road? How many cars are currently in the Odessa corner? Please provide the numbers, not the numbers. How many are on the Kotovsky branch, how many to Veselinovo? So, you have 4,201 cars. What are you planning to do with them? As for destroying them, isn't it too early? Weigh everything carefully. Regarding the transfer, wouldn't it be advisable to move some of the locomotives while they can, if there's no quick return?

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Through Kolosovka, along the Bug. Keep in mind that the situation is becoming more complicated from Pyatikhatka. Therefore, it is necessary to expedite the discharge of loaded cargo and determine the appropriate loading volumes for the most essential items from Nikolaev and Kherson. Investigate this and report back. Discuss with the command and the Regional Committee whether it would be advisable for you to be in Nikolaev now, and report back to me. Finally, I reiterate the special, crucial task of evacuating locomotives and railcars. That's all for now. Stay healthy. Goodbye.

Summer 1941
KAGANOVICH - ZAKORKO, TROSHINA (STALIN'S RAILWAY)

What's your plan of action? It's clear to me you don't have a plan; your answers are casual, just a routine daily work report. You don't even set approximate traffic volumes on individual lines, targets for hubs, or for the working fleet. You also don't have loading targets. I don't blame you for that, because we'll give you one now... In an hour, you'll receive a loading plan for evacuation cargo from us, which will be approximately 5,000 cars per day. You'll need to contact the shippers, ask the Regional Committee to assemble them, ensure timely loading, and oversee this loading with the utmost organization and firmness. You need to set precise targets for each section and each group of stations, both for loading and for the formation and dispatch of trains.
Ensure that assignments are carried out with the utmost rigor. Don't be demotivated by careless, confused, or panicky individuals. Punish them, and do not accept any citations. If there's a bombing at night, a railroad worker is required to make up for lost time with better work during the day. If there's damage, repair workers and construction workers are required to quickly restore it.
Regarding communications: force the signalmen to work like a military man and restore communications quickly. Don't let the traffic police cover up the disruption with a lack of communications; organize a trolley and vehicles for rapid restoration, and assign a mechanic, an assistant, and one armed guard to each of these "flying" operations. I consider it unacceptable that you have been out of contact with three people for an extended period.

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departments, is the result of the poor work of your communications specialists and the lack of management of the Road Administration.
Comrades Zakorko and Troshin, I demand from you personally greater firmness in leadership, confidence, and exemplary management. Maintain a group of knowledgeable and understanding people close to you, with whom you can consult in difficult situations. After receiving the loading plan, inform me of your precise work plan no later than 6 p.m. Report this conversation to the Regional Party Committee without wasting much time; this can be done by telephone. That's all for now. What do you think? I hope the Stalin Railway's leaders rise to the occasion and fulfill their combat missions with honor. Greetings. Goodbye.

August 18, 1941
KAGANOVICH, GOTSIRIDZE, GUSEV - BAGAYEV AND ZAKORKO (ODESSA RAILWAY)

Hello. Could you please report on the situation on the railway? What are your prospects for tomorrow? I generally accept your plan. However, I believe it is necessary to point out the following. First, it is necessary to change the periodic delivery of empty trains and the removal of

loaded ones for these days; that is, the calculation of deliveries and removals must be done literally hourly. Locomotives must be strictly calculated. No excess locomotives, compared to the volume of deliveries and removals, should be kept. Small batches of locomotives may be removed and delivered to enterprises and junctions. Do not keep large quantities of empty trains there; instead, quickly load and remove them. Assign a group of workers to immediately remove valuable railway property, including frogs, rails, switches, equipment, communications equipment, automatic blocking systems, and bridge trusses that can be assembled. Take all measures to comply with Comrade Stalin's instructions: not a single locomotive, not a single car, and so on. Maintain constant contact with command to stay informed, and keep us informed. Load the remaining equipment at Plant 29 quickly and transport it... Respond to the situation. If contact with us is lost, make the appropriate decisions in consultation with the Regional Party Committee. Please, Comrade Bagayev, summon Kravchenko and have him...

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Contact him with command. Be where command is located and fulfill your role as authorized representative, not flounder. Once Kravchenko gets the hang of things and establishes contact with Zakorko and command, then you, Comrade Bagayev, can leave for Moscow. You're needed here. Comrade Zakorko, how are you feeling? Very well. So, my criticism didn't make you feel any worse? Very well. Well, hello to you. We wish you all the best.

August 23, 1941
KAGANOVICH - BESHCHEV (DEPUTY PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE OF THE PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE OF THE LENINGRAD RAILWAY)

Hello. First of all, I demand that you report the most important information to me yourself. I cannot accept that you have failed to report to me on the most pressing issues all day today, and that you have not done so. Give me an explanation... You are obliged to report to the People's Commissar, and not wait for negotiations. You have the right to refuse to talk, but you do not have the right to withhold reports... The problem, Comrade Beshchev, is that you are personally leading too much in a staff-like manner. You need to transfer to the October Railway Administration; the entire staff also needs to be transferred to the October Railway Administration. You must roll up your sleeves and get to work on train movements. Keep in mind that today is very important, as many passenger trains have accumulated in Leningrad. Arguments about the bombing must be dispelled; keep the people working even during the bombing... Prepare the morning work now. It is already light and we can begin an increased supply of trains. You had better sort out the situation here and direct the movement. I expect serious action from you. Don't go to sleep now, keep working. By 10 o'clock, report how many trains you've delivered in total. I advise you, Comrade Beshchev, to take off your white gloves. Spend less time in your office. You are the traffic controller, the engineer, and you are responsible for ensuring the movement of trains. Don't look for loopholes or references to Severnaya, don't go to other offices. You need to manage traffic. Use the slightest opportunity to pass on information to me about the progress of trains and work. Goodbye.

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September 10, 1941
KAGANOVICH - NEKRASOV (COMMISSIONER OF THE NKPSPO FOR THE SOUTHWESTERN FRONT)

Hello, Comrade Kaganovich is on the line. I'm listening... Thank you, and hello to you too... I received your encrypted message. I'm responding. I agree: if you can't remove the rails, use your accepted method of burying them away from the track. Sending you empty rails is practically impossible at the moment, as you know, since the only route between Kiev and Poltava requires a one-way or nearly one-way approach.
Regarding the issue of removing all rolling stock and special equipment: I will now call Comrade Bagayev, clarify the situation and give him the appropriate task.
Comrade Nekrasov, I hope that even now, in this particularly challenging situation, you will be able, as you have been up until now, to maintain and maintain a firm and confident command and, taking your bearings, find a way out of this difficult situation. I wish you all the best. Try to serve the needs of the front these days and do everything possible to achieve this. Stay healthy. I shake your hand. Please pass on my regards to the entire team. I will personally shake your hand when we defeat the enemy, and there is no doubt that we will defeat him. The command of our great Stalin is our guarantee of this. Greetings to you.
Please convey my greetings to my fellow Kievites, represented by the leader of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine and the Government. We are all watching with great emotion the heroic struggle of Kievites, including the railway workers of the Southwestern Railway.
Victory will be ours. Goodbye. Call me anytime, whenever you need me. I'll always be there.

October 2, 1941
KAGANOVICH - UKHTOMSKY (GORKOVSKAYA RAILWAY)

Hello. I was given a draft order regarding the Gorky Road. Before issuing the order, I decided to talk to you and get some feedback.

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Explanation. Your fleet is small, and the volume of freight for the Gorky Railway has increased. Meanwhile, you're restricting the acceptance of trains from the Perm and Dzerzhinsky Railways—you're only handling 19-20 trains. The presence of delayed trains is a clear indicator of the railway's poor performance. Please explain all these issues. Provide a timeframe for eliminating these delayed trains. State exactly when you'll stop restricting train acceptance and how many trains you'll accept from the Perm and Dzerzhinsky Railways. I await your reply...
Comrade Ukhtomsky. From your explanation, I see that I can refrain from issuing orders now. However, while you have grounds for complaint regarding the Dzerzhinskaya Railway, and particularly regarding its formation, you are wrong regarding the Perm Railway. The Gorky Railway should be a major reserve for the NKPS and exemplary in its ability to cope with difficulties, some of which are encountered on frontline roads. Therefore, you personally and all your employees must radically change your approach and quickly complete the reorganization of the railways on a war footing. This means, first of all, stopping litigation. Then, when we defeat the fascist enemy, we will calculate who has done more work—the Perm Railway or the Gorky Railway. Think it over and report to me today on all your new measures... That's all for now. Goodbye.

October 8, 1941
KAGANOVICH - KRAVCHENKO (KUIBYSHEV RAILWAY), KUCHERENKO AND GUSEV (DEPUTY PEOPLE'S COMMITTEES OF THE NKPS)

Hello. I find it completely intolerable that, instead of responding to the substance of the measures you're taking to implement them, you've limited yourself to a dispatch message. I'm reprimanding

Comrades Kravchenko and Kucherenko. This attitude indicates the fundamental inaccuracy of your telegram. It's clear from it that you've fraudulently twisted the issue—unequal exchange of trains and locomotives, whereas every competent railway worker should understand that with a one-sided accumulation in the even direction and the opening of traffic in the opposite direction, there can naturally be no equal exchange—at least, it can't be demanded. You're turning into petty accountants instead of having a state-level understanding of a crucial national task.

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I am especially struck by Comrade Kravchenko, who has just returned from the front. How quickly he is turning into a rear-echelon rat. You must understand the situation. Take control of everyone and force them to work in a military manner. Hand over to the court the cowards, the self-seekers, the slackers and grabbers, the philistines and commoners who do not wish to work in a military manner, and report to us. Mobilize your best forces. That's all. Don't waste time on trifles. You are not a dispatcher, tell me the main thing. What will the esteemed nobleman Comrade Kucherenko say? Does Kucherenko have an apparatus? You are obliged to atone for your criminal inaction, don't feign virtue. And don't expect a greeting from me... But your duties are in the service! What do you get paid for? To check fulfillment, report to the People's Commissariat of Railways. That's what I can tell you, Comrade Kucherenko. We expect action from you, not promises. Why is Comrade Gusev keeping quiet? Good. That's all from me. Goodbye.

October 22, 1941
KAGANOVICH - TO BAGAEV (DEPUTY PEOPLE'S COMMISSARY OF RAILWAYS)

Kaganovich is at the office. I'm not satisfied with the train service. It's taking you too long to get to work and you're not taking any practical action.
I demand that you establish systematic contact with the NKPS. I have been trying for 24 hours and have barely achieved it.
Don't let any of your people go during the evacuation process; there will be much work to do. Keep the management of the railway in firm hands; don't bother gathering facts about the guilty parties. At the same time, do not stop the evacuation under any circumstances, especially from the Voroshilov plant; I oblige him; we need to load up. We'll send empty trains along the Kandrashevskaya Line. That's all. Try to report several times a day... Are you in contact with the command center for handling the junctions and depots? You must get in touch immediately... I'm not simply asking about communications, but about the removal of railway property and preparation for destruction at the last minute—have you ensured this?
Also, keep in mind that a number of platforms are loaded with machinery that could be used to load switches and other equipment. Whatever happens, it's the state's business. Well, that's all for now.

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November 4, 1941
KAGANOVICH - EGOROV (DEPUTY PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE OF RAILWAYS)
VOROSHILOVGRAD

Hello, Kaganovich speaking. I'd like a report on what's already been removed from the plant, and what equipment remains. I'd also like to know which equipment groups are being sent to Omsk and which to Ulan-Ude. I'd also like to know which personnel have already left, and which management personnel remain...

I also would like to ask about the armor plate. What dimensions are they? Can these armor plates be used on armored trains? I await your reply...
How many more train cars of equipment and people do you need to remove? Have you removed everything from the metallurgy plant? Yes, yes, about this plant. It's absolutely necessary to remove everything possible from the open-hearth furnace shop. And don't let the term "valuable equipment" get to you. Everything at the Voroshilovgrad plant is valuable equipment... For example, you didn't say anything about the electric furnaces. Please tell me, have the electric furnaces been removed? Okay, give me their numbers...
You must pay special attention to the deployment of personnel. It would be good to provide at least a few passenger cars for the engineers and designers, if possible, and try to make the workers' quarters as comfortable as possible. Provide stoves, of course. Without Voroshilovgrad personnel, it will be almost impossible to establish locomotive construction. These are the most qualified and valuable locomotive construction personnel in our country. Give me the numbers of the personnel routes. We will keep a close eye on them for promotion. Try to embark as quickly as possible. Please convey to the plant's personnel that the People's Commissariat of Railways will do everything possible to ensure the placement of personnel. We will now send a special representative to Omsk to prepare for the reception of plant workers and engineering and technical personnel, and if the management of the OR plant takes over the Omsk plant, then all the cards are in their hands. That's all I have. One more thing. If the plant has locomotive ramps and other important spare parts, such as drawbars and pipes, they must be removed... Well, very well. God bless you. Goodbye. All the best.

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November 23, 1941
KAGANOVICH - TO BAGAEV (DEPUTY PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE OF RAILWAYS.

Hello, Kaganovich is speaking. Are you alone? I've summoned you to tell you personally that the situation on the Penza Railway is stagnant. It's clear that the railway's management has decided to sit back and take no action. Just look at the train schedule to see how poorly you, as Deputy People's Commissar, are managing train traffic. Apparently, you've gotten bogged down in petty matters, have started living the railway's own life, and if you haven't reconciled your ideas, then it turns out that you're doing nothing serious to improve the work and prepare the railway... The situation is extremely tense today. Our only remaining route to the Caucasus is through Tikhoretskaya. The Stalingrad Railway is clogged. Continuing this situation would be the greatest crime... You're obligated not only to understand, but also to make some serious proposals! If you find it difficult to propose anything serious to me right now, you can think it through, but the main thing is for the Penza Railway to truly work hard and not sit back. What can you say about this? Keep in mind: war experience shows that all old calculations, the station's experience, etc., are being overturned. Consult with the locals... Think seriously about the people, too. The Penza railway is now our main, full-blooded road. It must bear the brunt of the greatest difficulties. Therefore, think seriously about the deployment of forces... Perhaps someone will take care of the food. In short, get up and stay healthy. Keep in mind that your road is not a rear-line one. Goodbye.

January 4, 1942
KAGANOVICH - KRIVONOS (NORTH DONETSK RAILWAY)

Hello. Kaganovich is on the line. First, regarding shipments, you will receive a coded message today obligating you to accept the shipment. Second, the direction is in the coded message.

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It is specified. Third. In terms of empty freight, we believe you should primarily provide for yourself through the turnover of turntables. To start, we will give you 600 covered ones. Fourth. Regarding coal, you will receive an order today. I believe you have not yet personally addressed the coal—loading is going poorly. You are not using even the small amount of empty freight... We cannot accept references to the People's Commissariat of Coal. You must be the initiator and organizer of coal loading there, especially for the railways, power plants, and Moscow. You need to thoroughly investigate what is hindering coal loading both through the People's Commissariat of Coal and the People's Commissariat of Railways, and inform me... We will take measures and provide empty freight as soon as you begin to use it intensively and better move loaded ones. Your entire apparatus must reorganize itself to organic freight and traffic work in order to ensure the unconditional speed and efficiency of loading and movement of military echelons, and to fulfill the coal loading and transportation plan. That's all. Do you have any questions or comments?.. Please, no details about the upcoming shipment...
This isn't the first time, Comrade Krivonos, you've tried to cover up your lack of preparation and management by blaming outsiders, while showing no inclination to expose the road's culpability. This isn't out of self-flagellation, but rather to develop practical measures to rectify the situation. Your existing snowplows, if properly used, could handle the task of clearing the Kondrashevsky section... If necessary, you should pursue this without formalities and sending a paper telegram. And you should do it in a timely manner, not when the snow has covered the tracks... I'll take action today by providing you with snowplows...
Your claims of excavations and oversized cargo haven't been verified. I think your track workers are lying to justify themselves. And you, without checking, willingly accept these lies because it benefits you, too, to cover up your weaknesses. It's clear you're simply at a loss in the face of snowdrifts. You need to contact the Regional Committee, the command. Raise the issue seriously. Otherwise, if you stand idle, you won't complete the coal shipment. References to objective circumstances won't help you, nor will Krivonosov's nobility, you'll be prosecuted...
For my part, I'll contact the Regional Committee and the command today. And don't waste time, don't point to your deputies and the new construction. It's yours, and keep the road running.
That's all. Report more frequently, reduce the dispatch data included in your telegrams, and briefly...
I just called the deputy head of the Track Administration and learned that six snowplows from the South-Eastern Railway will be delivered today. Put your best people on these snowplows. That's all. Goodbye...

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If you're not confused, so much the better, the easier it will be for you to carry out my task. We'll judge by your actions. Keep in mind that you can't rely on the main South-Eastern line through Likhaya. It will be busy. We are very fortunate to have the Kondrashevskaya line, and you need to lovingly and carefully organize its operation and smooth functioning, fixing any shortcomings along the way.

January 1942
KAGANOVICH - KRIVONOS (NORTH DONETSK ROAD)

Hello, Kaganovich and Kovalev are at the office.
We've just instructed Voroshilovskaya to accept seven coal trains from you via Zverevo. However, we believe your position that only nine trains, nine pairs of trains, can run along Kondrashevskaya is incorrect, and you don't even have any pairs, with priority traffic heading toward Valuyki. Under these conditions, you can and must allow 13 trains, and perhaps even more, to run toward Valuyki.

To achieve this, we must: First, put an end to the "limitless" attitude toward developing the new line. Second, don't rely on chance, but organize the traffic—put escorts on trains, direct people to this line, and organize things in a combat-ready manner, in the old Krivonosov style. Then you'll definitely get out of this mess. Your workers, at least some of them, have already gotten used to the small workload and are now struggling to adjust. Get them to work and get them moving faster. The coal situation on the Moscow railway is extremely dire, and your loading is going poorly... You shouldn't be blaming it on other loading situations. You need to make a concerted effort and do both. Improve the operation of the branch and the station...
I beg you to do everything possible to ensure the loading of coal. Let's reminisce about old times. Goodbye.

January 24, 1942
KAGANOVICH - TO KUCHERENKO AND VOROBYEV (DEPUTY PEOPLE'S COMMISSARY OF RAILWAYS). KUIBYSHEV

Hello. The situation on your road is intolerable. I demand an explanation of the current situation and a report on the measures you are taking... I consider your explanation, Comrade Vorobyov,

and other Kuibyshev Railway managers are unsatisfactory. Firstly, the explanation is too general and ignores the most pressing and criminal fact of today—the virtual halt in train service. Under these circumstances, you can't get away with general explanations about the snow that has fallen. I believe your claims of unpreparedness for winter work are incorrect. The issue isn't so much the lack of preparation as the fact that even what was prepared deteriorated with the onset of severe frost. And this deterioration occurred because Comrades Vorobyov, Konovalov, and others approached the railway's management too generally and with excessive caution. And Comrades Ogarkov, apparently, adopted a tacit, expectant attitude that should have been exposed, not kept silent, as Comrade Vorobyov has been doing. Moreover, comrades Vorobyov and Konovalov, as former newcomers to the railway, have been stuck in this position for too long, forgetting that a Bolshevik is given no more than 10 days to assume full responsibility for the railway's operation without ultimately citing the fault of the previous leadership. Riding this horse for too long is dangerous and criminal. As for the real question: why aren't you accepting and handing over trains now, today? You haven't given me an answer... But first and foremost, I demand that you take decisive measures to eliminate the current stagnation in train traffic... Regarding locomotives: it is necessary to force the engine drivers (I mean the senior ones) to board the locomotive with the engineer and drive it, even in harsh winter conditions... And anyone who refuses to work will be court-martialed, not left to stir up trouble and corrupt those around them. I consider it shameful that you are constantly chattering and bargaining, as if in a shop, about clearing the tracks. Moreover, you allow the disgrace of flooding the tracks, causing locomotives to freeze to the tracks... Women's activism! Why not involve them in track clearing? Your claims about weak industrial discipline are too generalized given the railway management's conciliatory attitude toward slackers and the lax discipline within the railway's management apparatus itself. Of course, disciplinary violations can spread across the entire line. But this shouldn't be taken to mean that industrial discipline is weak across the entire railway. Expose the slackers, punish the scoundrels, organize the leaders—and discipline will improve. The railway manager needs more firmness and determination, and less embarrassment in the actions of troublemakers, whisperers, and gossips, who, of course, prevent the new management from showing firmness. We can no longer tolerate such disgrace. The most dangerous thing I see is that the road management does not realize the seriousness of the situation and its own guilt in this, but, on the contrary, is completely exceptional,

The unprecedented disruption of train traffic on the Kuibyshev Railway is being attributed to frivolous reasons. Much as I respect Comrade Vorobyov, I believe he either showed confusion in this matter or a frivolous attitude toward such a major crime. We will not be afraid of accusations of frequent management changes. If forced, we will change. That's all I can say. Goodbye.

CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING PENSION ASSIGNMENT LETTER L.M. KAGANOVICH TO THE CHIEF OF OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF THE USSR P.N. DEMICHEVA. 1958

Dear comrade Demichev!
I find it difficult to understand why the Council of Ministers' Administration refused to send me a simple certificate of my employment, even dating back to 1930, to fill out a work record book, which wasn't filled out by the Council of Ministers. You passed this on to the Sverdlovsk Economic Council, which has no documents. This means I can't obtain confirmation that I served as Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers for over ten years, Minister of Railways for ten years, Secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) for twelve years, and so on. I'm simply embarrassed to say this, because it's all in encyclopedias, but I need documents, and they're in the Council of People's Commissars and the Central Committee's Accounting Department, and they won't give them to me.
I ask you, as a citizen of the Soviet Union, to respect my legal rights and send me a certificate.
Sincerely yours, L.M. Kaganovich. Asbest, 1958.

CERTIFICATE OF WORK OF T. KAGANOVICH L.M. IN CENTRAL STATE INSTITUTIONS

— Appointed People's Commissar of Railways — Resolution of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR dated 23/II-35.
— Appointed People's Commissar of Heavy Industry with release from duties of People's Commissar of Railways — Resolution of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR dated 22/VIII-37.
— Appointed concurrently as People's Commissar of Railways — Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated 5/IV-38.

— Approved by the Deputy Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR — Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of 17/VI-38.
— Appointed People's Commissar of the Fuel Industry of the USSR — Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated 24/I-39.
— Appointed People's Commissar of the Oil Industry — Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated 12/X-39.
— Relieved of his duties as People's Commissar of the Oil Industry — Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated 3/VII - 40.
— Relieved of his duties as People's Commissar of Railways and appointed to the post of Deputy Chairman of the Transport Committee — Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated 25/VIII-42.
— Appointed People's Commissar of Railways — Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated 26/II - 43.

— Relieved of his duties as Deputy Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR
— Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated 15/V-44.
— Appointed Deputy Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and relieved of his duties as People's Commissar of Railways — Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated 20/XII-44.
— Appointed Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and Minister of the Construction Materials Industry — Resolution of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated March 19, 1946.
— Relieved of his duties as Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and Minister of the Construction Materials Industry — Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated 6/III-47.
— Appointed Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR — Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated December 18, 1947.
— Approved by the Chairman of the USSR State Supply Committee — Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated 9/I-48. Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR dated 9/I-48.
— Relieved of his duties as Chairman of the USSR State Supply Committee — Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated 18/10/52.
— Appointed First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR — Resolution of the joint meeting of the Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU, the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of March 7, 1953.
— Appointed Chairman of the State Committee of the Council

Ministers of the USSR for Labor and Wages - Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated 24/V-55.
— Relieved of his duties as Chairman of the State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR on Labor and Wages — Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated 6/VI - 56.
— Appointed Minister of the Construction Materials Industry of the USSR — Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated 3/VIII - 56.
— Relieved of the post of First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR — Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of 29/VI-57.
Head of the Personnel Sector of the Administration of the Council of Ministers of the USSR A. Kudryavtsev. 11/II – 1959.
The copy is true:
Head of the Human Resources Department of the Soyuzasbest Trust /Sokolov/ 12/III - 59

ADDITIONS TO THE REFERENCE MADE BY L.M. KAGANOVICH

Member of the State Defense Committee
Member of the Military Council of the North Caucasian and Transcaucasian Fronts
Hero of Socialist Labor
Secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) – 1924-1928, 1928-1938.
Secretary of the Moscow Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) – 1930-1935.
Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine – 1925-1928, 1947.

Upon receiving a formal certificate, which did not include the fact that I had been the Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU for 12 years, the Secretary of the Moscow City Committee for 5 years, and that before working at the Center I was the Chairman of the Provincial Executive Committee and the Provincial Party Committee, etc., etc., I did not even receive the usual pension of 120 rubles from the Regional Social Security Office, but 115 rubles 20 kopecks. L.K.

LETTER L.M.KAGANOVICH N.S. KHRUSHCHEV

December 7, 1960

The Central Committee of the CPSU: To the First Secretary of the Central Committee, Comrade KHRUSHCHEV

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Dear Nikita Sergeevich!
After a serious illness and appropriate treatment, my health has improved. I hope to be able to work and, under the leadership of the Central Committee, once again actively participate in the practical implementation of Party policy and the successful fulfillment of the magnificent Seven-Year Plan. I hereby request the Central Committee to provide me with appropriate work. Regarding the nature of this work, I believe that the Central Committee and you personally, Nikita Sergeyevich, knowing my experience from previous activities, will have no difficulty in determining my place within the political and industrial organization of Moscow.
Personally, I find it difficult to express my wishes now; it would be best, of course, to talk in person, as is usually done in such cases.
I ask you, Nikita Sergeevich, to receive me. If for some reason you find it difficult, then I ask you to instruct one of the secretaries of the Central Committee to receive me.
With communist greetings, L.M. Kaganovich My address: Moscow, Frunzenskaya embankment, No. 50, apt. 384. Telephone G-7-10-68.

NOTES FOR A SPEECH AT A MEETING OF THE PARTY CONTROL COMMITTEE OF THE CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE

1962
1. You, comrades, know the full history of this matter, so I will be brief. After the decision to expel me, along with Comrades Molotov, Malenkov, and Shepilov, from the Central Committee for "factional infighting," I, like these comrades, remained a Party member and, as befits a communist, worked honestly for the good of communism, strictly and precisely fulfilling all decisions of the Party and its Central Committee.
2. After five years of honest communist work as an ordinary party member, who worked impeccably in the economic work assigned to me and actively fulfilled my duties in party and public work, I, like Molotov, Malenkov and Shepilov, was expelled from the party in 1962.
3. Since we could not be charged with any new charges for our work and party conduct beyond those recorded in the 1957 Plenum decision, we were charged with actions related to the violation of the law under Stalin’s leadership.

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4. But, comrades, the 20th Congress, in adopting its resolution on violations of the law, elected me, along with Molotov, Malenkov, and Shepilov, to the Central Committee, and after that, the Central

Committee Plenum elected us to the Presidium of the Central Committee, although even then it was known that Stalin was not alone in being guilty of violations, but also his other supporters at work —members of the Presidium and members of the Central Committee, including Molotov, Kaganovich, Malenkov, as well as Khrushchev, Mikoyan, Shvernik, and others.
After the 20th Congress, the June 1957 Plenum of the Central Committee, adopting its resolution "On the Anti-Party Group," expelled us from the Central Committee, but left us in the party, although even then there was talk about our defense of Stalin.
5. Therefore, the repetition of old accusations and the current emphasis on illegal actions related to the so-called personality cult, which led to my expulsion and that of others from the party, is artificial, even contrary to the 20th Party Congress, which elected us to the Central Committee. It also contradicts the decision of the 1957 Central Committee Plenum, which retained us in the party. Nothing new has happened that would provide legitimate party grounds for the expulsion of me, Molotov, and Malenkov from the party. Everything that is now being specifically brought against me—Kaganovich, for example—was known when I was not expelled from the party, but retained within its ranks. Working, for example, in railway transport, under the difficult conditions of numerous derailments and accidents, a significant portion of which were caused by saboteurs and spies, including Trotskyists, as was proven in court, I, like others in other industries and fields, had to resolutely fight the enemy, expose and bring to justice the perpetrators, and punish their accomplices. In this fight against the actual criminals and their accomplices, unfortunately, some innocent people also suffered.
Believe me, I take this very hard, and I don't absolve myself of my share of blame for it. But it's necessary to recall and understand the political situation of that time, when fascism was preparing a war against our Motherland, and its "fifth column" was fiercely fighting us, especially in such a crucial area as the railways. Therefore, we were forced to fight decisively and mercilessly. The relevant authorities presented us with convincing, well-founded evidence against the guilty, and we consented to their arrests. There were also denunciations of innocent people, but some of this material also created a conviction of their guilt, especially since they themselves provided the basis for this, especially with their subsequent confessions of guilt.

6. The tense political situation of that period, especially the increased espionage and sabotage of imperialist states, primarily, of course, Nazi Germany and Japanese imperialism (which, for example, sent a large number of Japanese and other spies along with the liberated, honest workers of the CER), required special vigilance, agility, and a rapid response to sabotage that was disrupting the recovery and normal operation of the railways and, thereby, the fulfillment of the five-year plans... and the preparation of the country to repel the aggressive forces preparing for war against the USSR.
I must tell you that, despite all this, the leadership of the People's Commissariat of Railways and I, as People's Commissar, exercised the necessary vigilance and disagreed with many of the charges brought against many transport workers, based on slanders from arrested enemies. I challenged the authorities' submissions and demands for arrests for many, many transport workers, and in many cases, the Central Committee and Stalin personally agreed with us. I could name a large number of workers, both then and later in leadership positions within the People's Commissariat of Railways and on the roads, who, at our insistence, remained unmolested, despite the materials presented by the relevant authorities.
I am not saying this to show off my "merits," but to say that, along with the correct punishments of the guilty, along with the innocent victims, there were many prevented punishments or, as they themselves later said in conversations with me, "saved" from death.
All this shows that the situation was complex and difficult, at least not as simple and easy as many people imagine today, when Hitler's fascism and its "fifth column" in the USSR have been defeated and destroyed. Therefore, expressing today my feelings of bitterness, anxiety and sympathy for the

families of the innocent victims, I say: we must not give in to feelings of personal experiences, but rather approach the issue as politically mature people. While establishing the admission of serious mistakes and violations of the law, criticizing and exposing them, taking measures to prevent them from happening again, we must not at the same time allow ourselves and others to be demagnetized, and always remember that even today we have against us imperialists who have not reconciled themselves with our victories of socialism, sharpening a knife - an even sharper one - a nuclear one against the Soviet socialist country and other socialist countries. The place of the leading force of aggressive imperialism - Hitler's

The reactionary imperialism of the United States and its allies is seeking to occupy the position of fascism. They do not renounce the struggle, including espionage, sabotage, and wrecking. Therefore, while we expose our mistakes and shortcomings and acknowledge them, regret them, and acknowledge our share of the blame for their occurrence, we must under no circumstances allow complacency, a non-class, non-political approach, or abandon vigilance. We must prepare for a merciless struggle against the enemies of socialism, against the enemies of our homeland, wherever they may come from. We must always remember that we still face a greater, more intense struggle against our enemies for the complete and final victory of socialism and communism!
7. Comrades, please do not misinterpret these recent general thoughts of mine as an attempt to replace specific, individual errors with them. I would add here that Khrushchev, for example, also made similar mistakes. After all, most of the leading figures, members of the Bureau of the Moscow Party Committee, the districts, and the Moscow Soviet, who worked and thrived under Kaganovich's leadership, when he was Secretary of the Moscow Committee, were arrested under N. Khrushchev's leadership of the Moscow Committee. Or, for example, Comrades Mikoyan and Shvernik. After all, they too sent letters to the MGB agreeing to the arrest of not just leading figures, but also members of the Collegium and their deputies, and sometimes not just agreeing but also requesting arrest, given the MGB materials incriminating them.
Don't think that in speaking of this, I'm demanding the expulsion of Khrushchev, Mikoyan, Shvernik, and the like from the Party, or even that I now be given equal rights as a member of the Central Committee and its Presidium. I'm talking about my reinstatement in the Party to which I dedicated more than 50 years of my life, for whose victory I fought tirelessly, steadfastly, and selflessly. I won't recount my biography here; you all know, including that I was Chairman of the CPC. I'll just say that through persistent work, selfless devotion, and selfless loyalty to the teachings of Marx and Lenin and our beloved Party, I rose from a worker to a leading figure in the Party. I have fought and continue to fight against all its enemies for Lenin's general line, for the victory of Socialism and Communism, for the victory of peace among peoples, socialism, and revolution in all countries of the world!
I am still viable and able to work, I want to act and fight for the cause of Communism as a member of my native and beloved Leninist Party, and I ask you, comrades, members of the CPC, to reinstate me in the ranks of the members of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union!

LETTERS FROM L.M. KAGANOVICH TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE, TO THE GENERAL SECRETARIES OF THE CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND TO THE PARTY CONGRESSES (1964-1986)

December 27, 1964
To the Presidium of the Central Committee

Communist Party of the Soviet Union!
On June 1, 1962, I appealed to the Central Committee of the Party with a request to reconsider the decision of the Moscow City Committee of the CPSU to expel me from the Party.
I hereby once again ask the Presidium of the Central Committee to reinstate me in the ranks of the party, in which I have been a member for fifty years, including thirty years as a member of the Politburo and the Presidium of the Central Committee.
I hope that the Presidium of the Central Committee will give me the opportunity to fight in the ranks of the party, under the leadership of its Central Committee, for the fulfillment of the majestic program of the comprehensive construction of communism in our Soviet country.
With communist greetings, L.M. Kaganovich

December 24, 1967
TO THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE CPSU, COMRADE L.I. BREZHNEV

More than five years have passed since I was expelled from the party. During this time, I appealed to the Central Committee to be reinstated:
1/VI - 1962, 27/XII - 1964 and to the Presidium of the XXIII Party Congress on March 29, 1966.
At the present time, I once again appeal to the Central Committee of the Party with an ardent request to reinstate me in the ranks of the Party, for whose cause I fought in its ranks from 1911 to 1962.
The days of great celebration are approaching—the fiftieth anniversary of the October Socialist Revolution and the Soviet State. I was an active fighter for the victory of the October Revolution, the Soviet system, and socialism.
I know that along with the positive things in my many years of activity there were also mistakes, but I will say that in all areas where I worked and fought on the tasks of the party - both in the pre-revolutionary underground and in 1917, during the period of preparation and implementation

During the October Revolution, on the front lines of the Civil and Patriotic Wars, in labor and the struggle to build socialism, in party and government work, and as a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee for 30 years—everywhere I devoted myself, my life and blood, all my revolutionary energy to ensuring the victory of Lenin's cause—the cause of my beloved Party.
Today, as a Communist, together with you, with all the people and the working class from whose ranks I emerged, I rejoice and am proud of the great victories of socialism—communism—achieved over 50 years under the leadership of the Party and its Central Committee.
I appeal to you and hope that you will give me the opportunity to celebrate the joyful holiday of the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution as a Member of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.
With Communist greetings, L.M. Kaganovich

March 25, 1971
TO THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE CPSU, COMRADE L.I. BREZHNEV

I am hereby sending my appeal to the Presidium of the 24th Congress of the CPSU and request that you forward it to the Congress Presidium. As you know, I sent a similar letter to the Presidium of the 22nd Congress (if it was received), but received no response.

I beg you, Leonid Ilyich, to help me so that this time I receive a positive answer to my request to reinstate my rights as a party member.
With Communist greetings
Kaganovich Lazar Moiseevich

February 19, 1976
Dear Leonid Ilyich!
I am once again forced to bother you with a matter that is a grave one for me—the question of reinstating my rights as a party member. I have written an appeal to the Presidium of the 25th Congress of the CPSU and am sending it to you in the hope that you will not simply convey it but will actually contribute to its positive resolution. You, Leonid Ilyich, have known me for many years as a leading figure in the Party and the state, who has done much to strengthen them and to secure the victory of socialism.
You know me well as, so to speak, a “comrade-in-arms” on the North Caucasian and Transcaucasian fronts, where we fought together and where I shed my blood for the Motherland, for the Party, being wounded near the city of Tuapse, heroically holding out against the enemy.

I recall with satisfaction our work organizing the landing on Malaya Zemlya and your letter to me from Malaya Zemlya. I confess that I recall this now not simply for the sake of reminiscing, but because it gives you the opportunity to recall and remind you of another positive aspect of my work, thereby making it easier for you to satisfy my request.
It is hard for me to live in my declining years outside the party to which I gave my life, and I ask for your help.
I am convinced that reinstatement in the party will benefit the party and its Central Committee.
With friendly greetings L.M. Kaganovich

February 19, 1976
TO THE PRESIDIUM OF THE XXV CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION.

I hereby appeal to you with a sincere request to reinstate my rights as a member of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, of which I have been a member for 50 years, 35 of which were as a member of the Central Committee and 30 years as a member of the Politburo – the Presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU.
From my youth, I devoted all my energy, my entire life, to my beloved Leninist Party. In my many years of work, I have made mistakes, both small and large, but I ask that in my overall assessment and decision, you also consider the significant positive work I have accomplished for the good of the Party, the working class, and the Soviet people. These many years of fruitful Party and government work have received official recognition and high praise from the highest Party and government bodies; two examples are sufficient to demonstrate this.
In November 1943, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR presented me with the following document:
"Hero of Socialist Labor
Comrade Lazar Moiseevich Kaganovich
For your exceptional services to the state in providing transportation for the front and the national economy and outstanding achievements in restoring the railway system under the difficult conditions of wartime, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, by its decree of November 5, 1943, awarded you the title of Hero of Socialist Labor.
Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR M. Kalinin.

Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR A. Gorkin.
Moscow. Kremlin. November 20, 1943."

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Of course, this decree was approved by the Politburo of the Central Committee. One could say that this happened under Stalin, but here's a second fact, dating back to November 1953, when N.S. Khrushchev was already First Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, and when, in addition to the old Politburo members—Voroshilov, Molotov, Mikoyan, Kaganovich, Malenkov, Bulganin, Saburov, and Pervukhin—Comrades Brezhnev, Suslov, Kosygin, Shvernik, and others were already in the Central Committee leadership.
On November 22, 1953, the following greeting was published in Pravda: “To Comrade Lazar Moiseevich Kaganovich.
The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Council of Ministers of the USSR warmly greet you, a faithful disciple of Lenin and comrade-in-arms of Stalin, on the day of your sixtieth birthday. |
The Soviet people highly value your merits as one of the outstanding organizers and builders of the Communist Party and the Soviet state.
In all your Party and government posts, you, with your characteristic energy, devote all your strength and knowledge to the cause of building communism in the USSR. From the bottom of our hearts, we wish you, our friend and comrade, our dear Lazar Moiseevich, many years of good health and continued fruitful work for the benefit of the peoples of our Socialist Motherland, for the benefit of communism.
Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.
Council of Ministers of the USSR".

On the same day, a decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, signed by Comrade Voroshilov, was published awarding the Order of Lenin to First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR Comrade L.M. Kaganovich "for outstanding services to the Communist Party and the Soviet people."
I have not cited these facts to cover up my mistakes, but to emphasize my request to you to take into account my fruitful work, which has received official recognition from the leading bodies of the party and government.
I hope that when you take this into account, you will come to a decision to satisfy my urgent request.
With all my soul I am a communist, a Marxist-Leninist, but in order to realize this ideological and political conviction, I must, as Lenin demanded, be a member of the party organization.
I beg you to give me this opportunity. Don't leave me

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me in my declining years outside my native, beloved Leninist party, to which I devoted my entire life and am ready to devote it until the end of my days. With communist greetings
L.M. Kaganovich

February 11, 1981
TO THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE COMRADE L.I. BREZHNEV

Dear Leonid Ilyich!

I am sending my letter to the Presidium of the 26th Congress of the CPSU, in which I once again request to be reinstated as a member of my beloved party. I am still awaiting your assistance in this matter.
With communist greetings, L.M. Kaganovich

June 20, 1984
Dear Konstantin Ustinovich! I am sending a letter to the Central Committee requesting my reinstatement in the Party. I sincerely ask you to assist in reaching a positive resolution to this crucial issue. Sincerely, L. Kaganovich

TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION

I am appealing to you with a request to reinstate me in the ranks of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, of which I have been a member since 1911.
Carrying out the tasks of the party in the Bolshevik underground, and after the victory of the revolution in leading party and Soviet work, I gave all my vital forces and energy to the selfless revolutionary struggle for the victory of the proletariat, from whose ranks I came, for the victory of the party, Soviet power and Socialism-Communism.
I acknowledge and admit that there have been serious mistakes and shortcomings in my many years of work. However, these mistakes cannot and should not obscure the main positive aspects that have prevailed in my work, including during my 30-year tenure on the Politburo of the Central Committee. I hope that the Central Committee

and his Politburo will take this into account when considering my request, they will also take into account that I was, am and will be a faithful Marxist-Leninist, who fought and is fighting against all forms of opportunism, revisionism, dogmatism and nationalism - for Marxism-Leninism, for the victory of socialism-communism, for proletarian Internationalism. By reinstating me in the Party, the Central Committee will give me the opportunity to be not simply and not only an ideological communist, but an active party member, a member of a certain party organization, honestly and disciplined in fulfilling the duties of a party member, as provided for by the Leninist Party Charter, actively fighting for the unity of the Party, for the implementation of the program, the decisions of the Party and its Central Committee on all issues of Marxist-Leninist theory, the struggle against bourgeois and petty-bourgeois, opportunist ideology, on issues of domestic and foreign policy arising from the general task carried out by the Party, the improvement of developed socialism and preparation for the gradual transition to the higher phase of communism.
Once again I ask the Central Committee to give me the opportunity to complete my life’s revolutionary path in the ranks of my native communist party.
With communist greetings, L.M. Kaganovich

P.S. The Politburo of the Central Committee recently published its Resolution "On the 40th Anniversary of the Soviet People's Victory in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945." As a member of the State Defense Committee from 1941 to 1945, as a direct participant in the war at the front, and, moreover, wounded in the Tuapse sector of the Transcaucasian Front, I naturally want to celebrate this victory over Hitler's fascism as a full-fledged member of the party that organized and ensured this great historical victory of the Soviet people and their glorious heroic army.

September 28, 1986

TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION.
TO THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE CPSU
COMRADE M.S. GORBACHEV

Dear comrades! In August 1985, I sent a letter to the Central Committee asking for my reinstatement in the ranks of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

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in which I was a member since 1911, including as a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU for 30 years.
While I was having a hard time being outside the ranks of my Leninist party, I completely retained the party scientific optimism characteristic of a true communist and, most importantly, loyalty to my Marxist-Leninist party.
Having found myself outside the Party's ranks, I lived the Party's life internally, ideologically and politically, rejoicing at its successes and grieving at its failures and shortcomings. Recently, along with the entire Party, I experienced with deep Party satisfaction the preparation and conduct of the 27th Party Congress, which was held at a high ideological and theoretical level, resulting in the adoption of historic, important programmatic and political decisions at the Congress.
Of great importance for the implementation of these congress decisions are the decisions adopted by the Central Committee and the Council of Ministers. Their practical, innovative, and self-critical nature, coupled with the Party's proletarian rigor, mobilize millions of working people to implement the decisions of the 27th Congress of our party. Like the entire party, I am confident that this will lead to an accelerated growth of our country's power and to new great victories for socialism and communism.
Dear comrades! Grant me the opportunity to live the rest of my life as a member of my beloved Leninist party and to participate as fully as I can in the life of the party.
With communist greetings, L.M. Kaganovich

ROUGH NOTES ON N.S. KHRUSHCHEV'S CONVERSATIONS WITH FOREIGN DIPLOMATS (LATE 1950s - EARLY 1960s)

In Khrushchev’s conversations with representatives of foreign powers, in particular the United States of America, in which Khrushchev discussed the intra-party events of June 1957, he said:
— The anti-party group came out against me and other comrades
- She spoke out against the line of the Central Committee of our party.
- This group consisted of arrogant people.
— They were confident that their names could not be rejected.
— Voroshilov, Molotov, Kaganovich and Malenkov considered themselves omnipotent

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— True, Malenkov is no longer the same figure as the first three, who had a lot of good things behind them
“But they were behind the times, they misunderstood the situation, and they misjudged the prospects.
If we examine these assertions of Khrushchev's, it becomes clear how inaccurate and untrue they are. Firstly, the protest was directed against Khrushchev, not against other comrades, and it was not a group's protest, but that of the Presidium of the Central Committee—its majority. Secondly, Khrushchev's assertion that this protest was against the line of our Party's Central Committee is untrue. On the contrary, it was precisely to implement the line of the Leninist Party and its Central

Committee that the Presidium of the Central Committee, in its majority, opposed Khrushchev's distortion of this line.
To cover up his perversions, Khrushchev identifies himself with the Central Committee, with the party, and identifies the majority of the Presidium of the Central Committee, which spoke out against Khrushchev, with the group, which is a direct replacement of the Presidium of the Central Committee with the group.
Khrushchev needed this fabrication to justify the measures he had taken against the majority of the Central Committee Presidium members, whom he had labeled a group, even an anti-Party one. It is well known that in the Tenth Party Congress resolution "On Party Unity," Lenin stated that the main characteristics of anti-Party factionalism were a distinct platform with its own views directed against the Party, and the existence of an organized factional grouping, separate from the Party organs, with its own discipline, organized meetings, and propaganda against the Central Committee, etc.
Needless to say, Molotov, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Malenkov, Saburov, Bulganin, Pervukhin, and Shepilov, who constituted the majority of the Presidium of the Central Committee, had nothing resembling this. There was and is not only no platform, but also no views opposing those of the party and its Central Committee. The meeting saw normal debate, as provided for by the Charter. Lenin always demanded documents and facts to support any verbal assertions. But there was and is no hint of documents or facts to support Khrushchev's claims about the anti-Party line of any of the comrades mentioned. On the contrary, all speeches, reports, memos, and all practical work on all issues and matters entrusted to them by the Party were full of Leninist content and aimed at implementing the decisions of the Party and its Central Committee, together with the working class, peasantry, and intelligentsia with whom they were connected. It is no coincidence that Khrushchev never cited a single excerpt or document to support his assertions.

He spoke of the anti-Party line of the artificially "constructed" group of Molotov, Kaganovich, and Malenkov, only rarely, apparently for tactical reasons, mentioning Voroshilov, who also opposed Khrushchev. The entire Party and Soviet people read the reports and speeches of these comrades and know from their practical work about their enormous work under the leadership of the Central Committee to implement the decisions of Party Congresses, including the 20th Congress, and the Central Committee: to improve Party and government work, to raise the material and cultural standards of living of workers, collective farmers, and all working people, to eliminate violations of revolutionary legality, to implement Leninist norms of Party and Soviet life, to ease international tensions and fight for peace, and to strengthen the defense capability of our country.
This entire line and work were the unified line and work of the Party, its Central Committee, and its Presidium, of which the aforementioned comrades served for many years. Therefore, Khrushchev's fabrications, separating them from and contrasting them with the Presidium of the Central Committee, seem monstrous. It goes without saying that these comrades made mistakes, but it's not for nothing that even Khrushchev was forced, in those same conversations with foreigners, to admit that these comrades had a good deal to offer.
Khrushchev's assertion that the "group" consisted of arrogant individuals is a simple-minded ruse, a desire to shift the blame, attributing to the critic the very thing he himself is accused of (after all, it was he, Khrushchev, who was accused of arrogance at the Central Committee Presidium). The same applies to his assertion that Molotov, Kaganovich, Voroshilov, and Malenkov considered themselves all-powerful and were certain their names could not be rejected. But it was he, Khrushchev, who imagined himself all-powerful and began to bully members of the Central Committee Presidium, including Voroshilov, Molotov, Kaganovich, Malenkov, Bulganin, and others, ultimately bringing his offensive to a "victorious" conclusion. It was precisely to justify this aggressiveness that he spoke of the omnipotence of the anti-Party group.

While asserting without any basis the existence of the group, Khrushchev shamelessly keeps silent about the fact that after criticism directed at him by comrades Malenkov, Kaganovich and Molotov, he, Khrushchev, at a meeting of the Presidium (before the Plenum of the Central Committee) thanked the members of the Presidium, including the aforementioned comrades, for their criticism and promised, accordingly, to correct his mistakes and shortcomings.
It is absolutely clear that the legend about the “anti-party group” was invented by Khrushchev to justify his non-Leninist methods.

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leadership, the formation of his own factional group and fluctuations towards opportunism.
Khrushchev attempts to give his comrades' accusations of creating an "anti-Party group" a general, principled, political character by constructing a "platform" for them. After declaring that Voroshilov, Molotov, and Kaganovich had much to offer, he immediately launched into a generalizing tirade that contradicts historical evidence to the contrary. Khrushchev delivers his "verdict" while ignoring the facts.
It is known from history that these comrades were distinguished above all by the fact that they were faithful to Marxism-Leninism, never perceived revolutionary dialectics as weathercocking, did not, as the people say, keep their nose to the wind, did not swing from Leninism to Trotskyism, as was the case, for example, with Khrushchev in the first half of the 1920s.
I don't mean to say that Khrushchev always and in everything opposed Lenin's line, but as an eccentric (though not a complete one and probably not even knowing the precise meaning of the word) and as an unseasoned communist, he strove to be recognized as an "innovator," even though this innovation was often a fly in the ointment. While perceiving the ointment as a whole, he would introduce his own Khrushchevian fly in the ointment, often more than a fly, spoiling the entire ointment he recognized. He always sought to "bubble up" something to distinguish himself from the others.
Stalin didn’t know that by bringing “Mikita” with his “gurgling” closer to him, he would “gurgle” about Stalin after his death in such a way that it would surpass even Opanas with his axes and ice hole.
In Ukraine, they tell the story of a "very clever" man named Opanas, who was always inventing new ideas. One night, he wakes his wife and says, "Tanya, wake up, I've come up with something new: if you take axes from the entire village, cut a hole in the river, and throw all the axes in, there will be a gurgle that will be heard throughout the entire village." Incidentally, Khrushchev himself told Stalin this, and Stalin, when Khrushchev came to town, often greeted him with the words, "Well, tell me, Nikita, what's going to gurgle today?" Khrushchev treated the Central Committee to his "bubbling new things" too often, sometimes even successfully, but largely unsuccessfully and tiresomely. One could cite numerous instances where members of the Presidium, including Molotov, Kaganovich, Voroshilov, Malenkov, Bulganin, and others, entered into debates with dubious proposals—"innovations." But, unfortunately, some of them passed. For example, Khrushchev's innovations in crop rotation, with the abolition of

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Williams's famous theory of crop rotation has cost our agriculture dearly.
Even the good causes that Khrushchev rightly championed often led to negative results due to Khrushchev's overreach (for example, corn). He certainly wasn't an innovator in this area. Khrushchev's merit was that he correctly emphasized this important issue. But he took it to the point of absurdity with his demands to plant corn everywhere, thereby hindering its expansion where it was profitable and possible. Unfortunately, even now corn is either neglected or not held in the esteem it deserves, and that's a shame.

Further, in the same conversations with foreigners, Khrushchev talks about Stalin and the related accusations against the “anti-party” group he had constructed.
"We," Khrushchev said, "say: the way things were under Stalin cannot and should not continue. They (i.e., the group) responded: that's how it was, and that's how it will be. We said: that's how it was, but that's not how it will be. Then they declared: we will remove you. But our party, our people, went and removed them."
Thus, while claiming Prasolian wit, in reality Khrushchev portrays the matter in an ignorant, simplistic, and libelous manner, presenting it in a vulgar, tabloid, bourgeois feuilleton style and spirit. The main thing, of course, is that it's not true.
The Presidium of the Central Committee, primarily Molotov, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Malenkov, and Bulganin, said: it is necessary to eliminate everything negative in the methods and system of governance, above all, to eliminate lawlessness and the repressions that punish innocent people. But this does not mean canceling everything positive and good that occurred under Stalin. After all, under Stalin's leadership, great, revolutionary, creative achievements took place: the struggle against and victory over the internal and external enemies of the revolution and Soviet power; the Great Five-Year Plans, which the people called "Stalin's Five-Year Plans," of socialist industrialization and collectivization, the enormous development of culture and science, and the rise in the material well-being of the people. Fulfilling the precepts of the Great Leader, Lenin, through the heroic labor of millions under the leadership of the Party, relying on all these conquests and achievements of the socialist system, the greatest victory in history, the Patriotic War over Hitler's fascist imperialism, was secured and achieved under the direct leadership of Stalin. After the war, the Soviet people, under Stalin's leadership, accomplished a second feat, after the war—the restoration of the incredibly devastated economy, cities, and villages; post-war

The five-year plans laid the foundations for a new, gigantic development of the economy of our country based on new technology.
After all, the atomic bomb, which was and is the answer to the nuclear threats of American imperialism, was created by our workers, scientists, and engineers under Stalin's leadership. Despite all this great positive development, there were also illegal and negative mistakes, shortcomings, and lawlessness, which the Party condemned. But not everything that happened under Stalin—even the great positive ones—should be rejected. This approach benefits the enemies of socialism; it facilitates the bourgeoisie's new offensive against our Party, the Soviet Union, and socialism.
By discarding everything that existed under Stalin, Khrushchev unwittingly aids the enemy's offensive against everything that was dear to the people and that was achieved through the efforts of the people under Stalin's leadership.
Yes, the people, the workers, the Party, and the leadership see and boldly criticize mistakes, shortcomings, and illegalities. But they refuse to allow the substitution or undermining of all the greatness created under Lenin, and after him, under Stalin. We must not forget that the people, the Party, and the veterans of war and labor are not Ivans who forget their ancestors; they remember well how our heroic soldiers went to their deaths in attacks on the Nazis with the heroic, selfless cry: "For the Motherland! For Stalin!" Likewise, the workers, collective farmers, and intelligentsia selflessly and heroically worked in the rear under the leadership of the Party, with Stalin's name on their lips.
Stalin had serious mistakes and shortcomings, and for this the Party and the masses criticize him and other members of Stalin's leadership, but in criticizing, they will not allow anyone to disgrace Stalin and the Stalinist leadership and abandon everything that is so dear to the Soviet people - the achievements of socialism associated with the name of Stalin, who devoted his entire life to the struggle for the interests of the working class and peasantry, for the victory of Marxism-Leninism.
Many excesses, repressions, and lawlessness were caused by the bitter struggle waged by internal and external enemies of the Soviet people. In the fight against them, grave mistakes were made, and

innocent people suffered as well. But Stalin is not alone in this. One cannot frivolously and bravuraly expose Stalin today, even boasting about it, and receive approval directed at Khrushchev and Mikoyan, who smugly accept this approval as their own, while ignoring their share of the blame. After all, the same Khrushchev, who today poses as a benefactor, said at the 17th Congress: "The class struggle continues,

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and we must... mobilize the forces of the party, the forces of the working class, the organs of the dictatorship of the proletariat for the final destruction of class enemies, all remnants of the right and the “left” and all other opportunists who want to slow down our further successful movement forward.”

Khrushchev, like all of us, supported the repressive measures against the "Trotskyite-Bukharinist enemies of the people." Under the new circumstances, new actions may be permitted, but first, moderation must be observed, not rejecting or replacing with negativity all the great and positive things Stalin did for the Party and for our Motherland. Second, one must not speculate on mistakes and boast of one's "courage," taking credit for everything and exonerating oneself from Stalin's entourage, which, of course, bears its share of responsibility.

We must take a Marxist-Leninist, scientific-historical approach to the struggle waged by the Party and the Soviet people against the internal and external enemies of our Socialist Motherland, and learn from the lessons learned, revealing the mistakes and lawlessness that occurred when, along with the true enemies, innocent people also suffered.

That's exactly what happened. The Presidium of the Central Committee, on whose initiative a commission was created to study and investigate the cases of all those repressed, to implement an amnesty, and to draw general conclusions, reporting them to the Presidium and a specially convened Plenum of the Central Committee. The Presidium of the Central Committee recognized the need to thoroughly and fundamentally uncover not only the facts but also to explain to the Party and the people all the negative things that had happened in the past and that could not be allowed to happen again. This was accomplished after the 20th Congress with the adoption of a comprehensive Marxist-Leninist resolution of the Central Committee on June 26, 1956—"On Overcoming the Cult of Personality and Its Consequences." This resolution was adopted unanimously, including by Molotov, Kaganovich, Voroshilov, Khrushchev, Malenkov, Bulganin, Mikoyan, Pervukhin, Saburov, and others. This resolution raised the entire issue to an ideological and political level, bringing a lively, healthy spirit into the work of the party in explaining the mistakes of the past, preventing them from happening again, preserving and strengthening the power of the Soviet State and the unity of the party.

Stalin continued the work of Marx and Lenin with talent and dedication. It was precisely through his loyalty to their brilliant teachings and their strategy that Stalin became the great leader of the Soviet peoples. Our class enemies and their lackeys lie and slander our Party, our great Soviet people, as if they were afraid of many.

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Millions of people praised and sang Stalin's praises. The working class, the collective farm peasantry, the Soviet intelligentsia, including Soviet scientists, devoted with all their hearts to the Motherland and its new socialist system, sensed with their consciousness and were confident that the Party, the Central Committee, and Stalin, through their Leninist line and their leadership, would ensure the preservation, protection from imperialism, the consolidation of the gains of the Soviet system and the Great October Socialist Revolution, and the further advancement of socialism toward the victory of communism.

Even those who do not read multi-volume histories knew and know well, remembered and remember the main milestones of our difficult, bloody struggle under the leadership of Lenin for a new life and Stalin's role in this struggle.
Stalin was Lenin's faithful disciple and comrade-in-arms throughout the party's history: during the years of the difficult tsarist underground, the struggle of workers against capitalists, peasants against landlords, the selfless revolutionary struggle against the tsarist authorities, the struggle against the Mensheviks, Socialist Revolutionaries, nationalists, anarchists and all kinds of opportunists who undermined the strength of the struggling revolutionary proletariat.
After the overthrow of the tsarist government in the struggle against the bourgeois government that had driven Lenin underground, Stalin, replacing Lenin, delivered a report at the Sixth Party Congress and, together with Sverdlov and others, led the preparations for the Great October Socialist Revolution, accomplished by workers and soldiers under the brilliant leadership of Lenin.
During the difficult years of the Civil War, Stalin was constantly dispatched by the Central Committee to all major fronts as the head of the front military councils. The Party and the people know his crucial role in the victory over Denikin, Yudenich, and Kolchak.
After the victorious end of the civil war under the leadership of our brilliant Lenin, Stalin helps Lenin as a member of the Council of Labor and Defense, as the People's Commissar of State Control, as the People's Commissar for National Affairs, and as a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee: in the development and implementation of the new economic policy, in solving the new difficult tasks of restoring the national economy destroyed by the wars, in leading the party, in its struggle against Trotskyism and other opposition groups and factions that had raised their heads, acting as an organized force with their platforms against the Central Committee, against Lenin, threatening a split in the party, and its collapse, which was prevented by Lenin with the help of Stalin.

At the most difficult moment for the party, the death of its leader and founder, Lenin, Stalin emerged as the Politburo member around whom the majority of the party, the Central Committee, and the Central Control Commission rallied to continue Lenin's policies and fulfill his legacy. Can the people and the party forget the Great Oath they swore through Stalin at the coffin of their beloved deceased teacher, the father of the party—Lenin? This oath became for many years a sacred commitment for tens of millions in their heroic labor and struggle to build socialism, to strengthen the Soviet multinational state created by Lenin—the Great Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.
After Lenin's death, the party faced a new and grave danger: the Trotskyists and other oppositionists, the Zinovievites and Kamenevites who joined them, and then the right-wing deviationists—the Rykovites and Bukharinites—who pushed the party to abandon the construction of socialism. Under various right-wing and left-wing explanations for the nature of the NEP, they essentially advocated expanding the scope of the NEP—the development of bourgeois relations, extending this to the treatment of the foreign bourgeoisie. This meant the destruction of all the gains of the October Socialist Revolution.
The loss of Lenin, whose great authority would have made it easier to deal with all these deviationists, who were effectively hostile to socialism, exacerbated the dangers for the party, for socialism, and for the very existence of Soviet power. And at this moment, it was a great stroke of good fortune for the party that Stalin emerged from the Politburo. Despite his shortcomings, his positive qualities outweighed his shortcomings. His theoretical, ideological, and principled steadfastness, his loyalty to Marxism-Leninism, his profound knowledge and understanding of Lenin's strategy and tactics, his organizational talent, and his ability to unite people on both ideological and practical grounds—all of which were recognized by the party, the people, and the Central Committee—made him the very person who, together with the party's Leninist core, would lead Lenin's cause and implement his legacy of building socialism in the USSR.

However, the implementation of Lenin's policies without Lenin encountered far greater resistance from Trotskyists and other oppositionists than had been the case under Lenin. Opponents of Lenin's policies waged a fierce struggle against them, attacking primarily the Central Committee, Stalin, and the Leninist core that had rallied around him—the Old Bolsheviks. The party's history reveals the factionalism

The treachery of the struggle waged by the Trotskyists and their ilk. But they were opposed by the strength of the Leninist leadership of the Central Committee, headed by Stalin, a worthy successor to Lenin's work. And the Party won!

Enemies and slanderers portray the ongoing struggle as a simple, vulgar struggle for personal power. This is a brazen lie. In reality, it was a struggle for socialism, for internationalism, against the embourgeoisification of the state and even the party itself, for the leading role of the proletariat and the old Leninist guard, for strengthening the party and its social composition to ensure the success of the struggle against NEPism and bourgeois and kulak elements, for the advance of socialism on all fronts, for strengthening the international position of our Soviet state of the proletarian dictatorship, and for strengthening the international position of our Leninist party in the world workers' and communist movement. The struggle was complex and intense. Stalin patiently and steadfastly counterattacked the advancing Trotskyism. The slanderers are lying when they claim that Stalin dealt with Trotskyists and other oppositionists "in an expedited manner" only through administrative measures. On the contrary, Stalin and the entire Central Committee and Central Control Commission waged a protracted, ideological and principled struggle against them, hoping for the defection of at least some, if not the majority. It's a fact that for 15 years, the Party and its Central Committee patiently fought the opposition until state measures, repressions, including trials and executions, were applied. This was already when the oppositionists had embarked on the path of sabotage, subversion, terror, and even espionage. Before their complete exposure, they even spoke at meetings and conferences (I recall the speeches of Sokolnikov and others at the Moscow Party Conference in 1934). It's a fact that Trotsky and Zinoviev, while waging the opposition struggle, remained members of the Politburo for several years, until they openly organized their anti-government demonstration in 1927 on the 10th anniversary of the October Revolution. I remember when we, younger Central Committee members like Kaganovich, Kirov, and Mikoyan, asked Stalin why he tolerated them in the Politburo, he replied, "There's no rush with such a thing. First, maybe they'll calm down and won't force us to expel them as a last resort; second, the Party needs to understand the necessity of expulsion."

The party, the working class, the revolutionary masses of the people, experiencing the pain of the loss of Lenin, overcoming the difficulties of life in the conditions of the liquidation of economic ruin, saw how the leadership

The party, led by Stalin, worthily and consistently continues the work of Lenin, leads them in selfless heroic work to restore the destroyed economy and implements the Great Leninist plans for the electrification of the country, its industrialization, collectivization for the successful construction of socialism in our Soviet country, surrounded by capitalists.

The working class, the revolutionary peasantry, and the Soviet intelligentsia saw that these great tasks of socialist construction were being carried out in a difficult struggle against external imperialist hostile forces, against the internal forces of the bourgeoisie, which was reviving under the conditions of the NEP and still hoping for the restoration of the power of capital in Russia, and which was taking desperate steps in the USSR to revive banditry, plant espionage, organize sabotage, terror, and similar anti-Soviet counterrevolutionary actions.

In this struggle against the Soviet state and party, they were also assisted by the counter-revolutionary forces of part of the petty bourgeoisie, who resisted the construction of socialism. True Marxist-Leninists saw and, in a Marxist way, understood that all of this found its political expression not only in counterrevolutionary Menshevism and Socialist Revolutionaryism, but also within our own party, in the form of Menshevik-Trotskyism, with which the Zinovievites, Kamenevites, and other opposition groups, operating under loud but false banners and names such as "Workers' Opposition," "Democratic Centralism," and later, without any camouflage designation at all (as in the case of the right-deviating, kulak Bukharin-Rykov faction), joined forces. The struggle against all these groups and factions was more difficult than against outright Menshevism and Socialist Revolutionaryism, because, firstly, they were within the party itself, and secondly, among them were honest people who had simply deviated from Leninism. But the struggle was a historical necessity—both against the willing, active enemies of Leninism and against their unwitting accomplices. The workers and revolutionary people understood this and therefore supported the Party, its Central Committee, and Stalin in this struggle.

It was a struggle against the "fifth column" of Hitler's fascism, which had come to power in Germany and was preparing for war against the Soviet Union. Today, more than ever, it can be said that this political struggle and the destruction of its "fifth column" in the USSR played a crucial historical role in the victory in the Great Patriotic War over the enemy of humanity—German fascism.

The Party and the Soviet peoples felt this with their class revolutionary instinct and the consciousness of patriots of the Motherland and revolutionary internationalists, and therefore supported the Central Committee and the government headed by Stalin in this difficult struggle. Class enemies, especially the corrupt agents of imperialism, slanderously portray all these gangs of bandits, spies, and saboteurs hostile to socialism as supposedly invented by Stalin to exterminate his personal enemies. This is an ideological act of sabotage by the imperialists.

Unfortunately, they are aided, albeit unwittingly, by those "exposers" of the "cult of Stalin's personality" who, instead of honest Party criticism of the mistakes that took place, are speculatively, sensationally, and in petty-bourgeois style whipping up a demagogic campaign within our Party and among the masses. They ignore the historical conditions of the time—the acuteness of the struggle against the enemies of the Soviet Union. They attribute all the causes of distortions and errors in this struggle to Stalin, to his personal negative qualities. They ignore the most important thing—the objective historical necessity of this struggle, which, unfortunately, was augmented by subjective factors. This applies not only to Stalin but also to other members of Stalin's leadership of the Central Committee and government, including Molotov, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Malenkov, and those who today act as "innocent" hero-exposers—Khrushchev, Mikoyan, Shvernik, and others.

It's not true that Molotov, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Malenkov, and others deny Stalin's mistakes. But they, unlike Khrushchev and his comrades who supported him—Mikoyan and Shvernik—believe that Stalin's Greatness, his positive qualities, predominated throughout his historic revolutionary party activities. They believe that the experience and lessons of Stalin's great, genuine, and not artificially inflated historical work in leading the party and the Soviet people of all nationalities for 30 years after the genius Lenin—constitute the party's Great Capital, not just historical but also operative, like the entire experience of Marxism-Leninism. This Great Capital—Stalin's experience—cannot be treated with cavalier, petty-bourgeois inclinations.

The Old Bolsheviks in the Presidium of the Central Committee said: We must criticize, abolish, and prevent from resuming all the negative practices of Stalin and the Stalinist leadership, for both objective and subjective reasons. This is detrimental to our progress on the path to communism. But we must not

To discard the great experience of Stalin and all of us, the experience and lessons of the struggle against the internal and external enemies of socialism that may yet emerge, to repeat the experience of Hitler's fascism and his "fifth column," which was defeated but may be reborn. Stalin and his great experience belong to the Party, the Soviet state, the Soviet peoples, and their advanced vanguard—the working class, which, in the current conditions of our Soviet state, retains and must retain its leading role as HEGEMON.
No one will be able to take Stalin away from us, whom they deeply honored, respected, greeted, expressing their devotion and love to him in letters (including from Ukraine - to "Dear Father Stalin", in the composition of which Khrushchev participated and which he rewrote).
No one will succeed in excluding from the history of the Great Struggle of the Peoples of the USSR and the Party the Great Stalin as a talented comrade of Lenin, a recognized Great Leader of the Party and the Soviet peoples, a commander of the Soviet Army—a revolutionary theorist and practitioner of the global workers' and communist movement. By criticizing Stalin's mistakes and preventing their repetition, we preserve for our homeland and Party the wealth of his experience and the lessons of the struggle for the victory of communism.

Regarding the publication “Beware: Zionism!”

LETTER L.M. KAGANOVICH TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE STATE PRESS COMMITTEE UNDER THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF THE USSR N.A. MIKHAILOV

March 24, 1969
I am writing this letter to you in connection with the fact that in the book by Yuri Ivanov, “Caution: Zionism!” published in 1969 by Politizdat, in Section III on page 76 it is printed:
“On June 16, 1914, a list of the World Zionist Organization’s income for 1913 in German marks was sent to L. Kaganovich, residing at No. 11 Generalskaya Street, in the city of Gomel.”
Since this has absolutely nothing to do with me, Lazar Moiseevich Kaganovich, I could not bother myself, and especially not you.
But, unfortunately, some readers, especially young ones who don’t know my biography, are confused by this coincidence of surnames and the first letter of the name.

If they were familiar with my biography, they would know that Lazar Moiseevich Kaganovich did not live in Gomel in 1914, but from his youth until 1915, he lived in the city of Kiev, where he worked and conducted underground party work in the Kiev Bolshevik Party organization, and in 1916 he worked in the city of Yekaterinoslav under the name Stomakhin and in Donbass under the name Kosherovich and, of course, actively fought against Zionism, as with all enemies of communism.
L.M. Kaganovich arrived in the city of Gomel for the first time in August 1917 as a member of the All-Russian Bureau of Military Organizations under the Central Committee of the RSDLP (Bolsheviks), and was then elected Chairman of the Polesie Committee of the Bolshevik Party.
These facts, of course, cannot be obscured by a coincidental coincidence of surnames and the first letter of a name. However, to avoid confusing some readers with this coincidence of surnames, and most importantly, to prevent our Zionist enemies from speculating on the surname of a man who served for 30 years on the Politburo and Presidium of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party and as a member of the Soviet government, it is necessary to provide a certain clarification.
I ask you, Nikolai Alexandrovich, to find a form of such an explanation from the publisher in one of the magazines and when releasing the second edition of the book.
With communist greetings, Hero of Socialist Labor Lazar Moiseevich Kaganovich

RECORDING BY L.M. KAGANOVICH OF HIS TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH D.N. SOLOVYOV

1969

On June 2, 1969, comrade Dmitry Nikolaevich Solovyov called me on behalf of the Chairman of the State Committee for Press Affairs under the Council of Ministers of the USSR, Comrade Mikhailov.

Comrade Solovyov said: "Lazar Moiseyevich! In response to your letter to Comrade Mikhailov, we have reviewed the matter with Politizdat and concluded that no clarification is necessary. No one has approached us with this question about this coincidence of names, and any clarification would only draw attention to it."

I answered him: “It is possible; that is so, and I am grateful to you and comrade Mikhailov for the answer to my letter, but your call

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"is not satisfactory. Although this is truly a simple coincidence of names and the person mentioned has no connection to me, a simple verbal explanation is not enough because, firstly, young readers may have doubts, and, secondly, there may be a second edition." Soloviev said that a second edition was not in sight. Then I said that this second edition could come later, even after I am no longer around (I am older than you, after all).

"But what kind of explanation," said Solovyov, "can we provide?" I replied, "You, the publishing experts, know better. Political Publishing House and the author must explain to Comrade Mikhailov their, to put it mildly, carelessness in citing the fact. The surname itself is a memorable one. Why, for example, didn't they provide this man's patronymic? Surely, the institution from whose archives this excerpt was taken had a patronymic." When Solovyov remarked that this couldn't be the case, I replied that on the same page before this excerpt, the patronymic of another such "figure" was given, and even his profession was indicated.

Solovyov said, "I don't know how they wrote the book, and I can't tell you." In conclusion, I thanked him and Comrade Mikhailov for the phone call, but I asked for a written explanation from Politizdat.

LETTER FROM L.M. KAGANOVICH TO THE USSR MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS A.A. GROMYKO

May 31, 1982

Dear Andrey Andreevich!

I am writing to you on a small matter, but one related to your department.

The fact is that a certain Mr. Kagan-Kaganovich from New York sent me a letter in which he wrote that he had applied to the USSR Embassy in Washington for a visa to travel to Moscow and that the Embassy "intends... to resolve this matter favorably." He justifies his trip to Moscow by claiming to be my nephew and by his desire to see me.

So that my comrades at the embassy do not fall into error, I inform you: I do not have any nephew of Kagan-Kaganovich in America.

Judging by the fact that this Kagan “supports” this invention of his with a crude lie, as if he, while in Moscow, allegedly visited me and even

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I was talking about him publishing a book about me - he is a personality,
at the very least, not worthy of any trust. So if
Even if he were given a visa to Moscow, I, of course, will not accept him, just as I have never accepted him before and have not seen him until now.
Our Bolshevik Party taught us to be vigilant.
With communist greetings and deep respect
L.M. Kaganovich

SELECTED NOTES ON KHRUSHCHEV'S PERSONALITY

Late 80s
I consider it necessary to answer the question that some comrades ask me, and some even criticize me for the fact that I was the main one who put Khrushchev forward for a number of years.
As Secretary of the Central Committee, I was in charge of personnel management and promoted many capable people, especially from the working class. With Khrushchev, it was like this. In 1925, as the newly elected General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine, I left Kharkov for the center of our industry—the Donbass, primarily Yuzovka, where I had worked in an underground organization before the revolution. After visiting a number of mines, factories, villages, and districts, I participated in a district party conference. During the conference, a delegate from the conference, Comrade Khrushchev, approached me. He said to me: "You don't know me, but I know you; you came to us... in early 1917 as Comrade Kosherovich. I am turning to you on a personal matter: it's difficult for me to work here. The fact is that in 1923 and 1924 I supported the Trotskyist uprisings, but at the end of 1924 I realized my mistake, admitted it, and was even elected secretary of the district party committee. But I'm constantly reminded of this, especially by Comrade Moiseenko from the District Committee. Our delegation nominated me for the conference presidium, but they passed me over. Apparently, they won't let me work here. So, as the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, I'm asking you to help me and transfer me elsewhere."
Khrushchev made a good impression on me. I appreciated his frank admission of his mistakes and his sober assessment of his situation. I promised him that upon my arrival in Kharkov I would consider where to transfer him. Soon my aide reported that Comrade Khrushchev, who had just arrived from Donbass, was calling from the train station and asking to see you. I told him to come. I saw him immediately. I remember how he thanked me for seeing him right away. "I thought," he said, "I'd have to wait a long time."

Noticing that he was pale, I asked, "You've probably just come from the train and are hungry." He smiled and said, "You seem to be a smart man; I really haven't eaten in a long time." "Then eat something, and then we'll talk."
They served him tea and sandwiches, which he ate with gusto. I asked him, "What if we take you on now as an instructor in the Central Committee's organizational department, and then we'll see if an opportunity for local work opens up?" "That," he said, "is too much for me—straight off to Kharkov and the Central Committee apparatus. But since you've expressed such an opinion, I'm, of course, very grateful for such trust, and I agree."
After some time, I saw that he was a capable worker, and upon learning that the Kiev District Committee needed fresh people, we sent him to Kiev as a Central Committee instructor, and there he was elected head of the District Committee's organizational department. He worked there until 1929.
At this time, I was already working again in the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in Moscow. And then, in 1929, I was again informed that

Comrade Khrushchev had arrived from Kiev and was requesting an appointment. I received him without delay. His request was for support in enrolling in the Stalin Industrial Academy. "I," he said, "studied at the workers' faculty, but didn't graduate; I was taken on for party work, and now I really want to finish my studies at the Industrial Academy. I might fail the exam, but I beg your help—give me a break, I'll catch up." The Industrial Academy was primarily composed of business executives, some of whom were also admitted with breaks in exams, and after consulting with Comrades Kuibyshev and Molotov, I called and asked for Comrade Khrushchev to be admitted to the Industrial Academy.

When I had already been elected Secretary of the Moscow Party Committee in 1930, concurrently with Secretary of the Central Committee, I had to deal with the Industrial Academy cells—things were not going well there. When I went to the cell to meet with the activists, I heard numerous speeches about the unsatisfactory work of the cell bureau and its secretary. Khrushchev also spoke. After consulting with the district committee, we nominated Comrade Khrushchev as secretary of the cell. At this time, the struggle against the right-wing deviation intensified, and Khrushchev proved himself adept in the fight against it. At the district conference of the Bauman district, the district committee was re-elected, and Comrade Khrushchev was elected secretary of the district committee. After some time, the need for a new secretary for a larger district—Krasnopresnensky—emerged, and we decided to nominate Comrade Khrushchev as secretary of the Krasnopresnensky district committee. After some time, when the need arose

The second secretary of the Moscow City Committee, I, as the first secretary, nominated Comrade Khrushchev, and then Khrushchev was nominated as the first secretary of the Moscow City Party Committee (the Moscow City Committee was then part of the region, so Khrushchev also remained the secretary of the Moscow City Committee).

I remember when I consulted with Comrade Stalin on this matter, I told him about Khrushchev, that he was a good worker, and about Khrushchev’s Trotskyist path in 1923-1924. Comrade Stalin asked: “And how has he overcome these mistakes?” I answered: “Not only overcome them, but actively fights them.” “Well then,” said Stalin, “promote him, especially since he is a good worker.” I remember when I later dined at his home, Stalin asked his wife (she was also studying at the Industrial Academy at the time): “Nadya, is this the Khrushchev from the Industrial Academy whom you told me about as a good worker?” “Yes,” she replied. “He is a good worker.” Then Comrade Khrushchev was summoned to a meeting of the Secretariat of the Central Committee, and Comrade Stalin said: "As for your past sin, you will speak about it at the elections conference, and Comrade Kaganovich will say that the Central Committee knows this and trusts Comrade Khrushchev." And so it was done.

In Moscow, Khrushchev worked well and justified the trust placed in him. After Moscow, Comrade Khrushchev was sent by the Central Committee to Ukraine, where he served as First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine and Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars. He contributed significantly to the development of Ukraine, including industrialization, collectivization, and the fight against enemies, including Trotskyists, right-wingers, and nationalists. Like others, he certainly had his mistakes and shortcomings. Khrushchev distinguished himself during the Great Patriotic War as a member of the front military councils.

In 1947, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) recognized the need to separate the functions of First Secretary of the Central Committee and Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR in view of the deteriorating situation in Ukraine. The Central Committee sent Comrade L.M. Kaganovich, Secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and Politburo member, to Ukraine as First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine. I remember how Khrushchev, disappointed and perhaps even offended by the decision of the Central Committee of the All-Union

Communist Party (Bolsheviks), joyfully greeted me personally, saying, "I am very glad that you were sent as First Secretary." I, of course, promised him that my task was to assist him and the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine. And so it was, and we worked harmoniously.
When I was returned from Ukraine to Moscow, I reported to Comrade Stalin about the situation in Ukraine, which had improved but remained difficult, and asked for additional assistance to be provided to Ukraine, to which Comrade Stalin responded with great attention, providing

This assistance. After this, Comrade Stalin asked me about Khrushchev. I gave him an objective, positive assessment, pointing out that, of course, like everyone else, he had his shortcomings. In particular, I pointed out his apparent self-confidence and know-it-all attitude, but he had grown into a major manager with the potential for further growth.
It must be said that Stalin was intensely searching for and identifying capable people at this time. For example, he observed and valued Pervukhin, Kosygin, and Malenkov. He had already noticed Malenkov when we took him from the Moscow Committee, where he had been working as a head of organization, and appointed him deputy, and then head of the Central Committee's organizational and instructional department. Stalin similarly took notice of Khrushchev.
Soon the Central Committee transferred Khrushchev from Ukraine to Moscow as secretary of the Moscow Committee, and then as secretary of the Central Committee.
Moreover, it was in the early 1950s that Stalin began to cultivate Khrushchev's close ties. In 1951-52, right up until Stalin's death, Khrushchev, along with Malenkov and Beria, became frequent guests at Stalin's Blizhnyaya Dacha.
I'm also asked now whether I regret bringing in Khrushchev. I answer: no, I don't. I watched him grow up before my eyes from 1925 onward and develop into a major leader on a regional and provincial level. He brought benefits to our state and the Party, despite the mistakes and shortcomings from which no one is free. However, the "highest position"—First Secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)—proved too high for him. (I wasn't the initiator of his nomination, although I voted for it.) There are people who get dizzy at great heights. Khrushchev turned out to be such a person. Having found himself at the highest level, his head spun, and he began to act out, which proved dangerous for him, and especially for the Party and the state, especially since he clearly lacked fortitude and cultural and theoretical grounding. The modesty and self-education that had once characterized him were cast aside—subjectivity, know-it-allism, and "eureka" attitudes took over his behavior, and this leads to trouble. This, and much more, led to Khrushchev's fall from his lofty position.
The above lines about Khrushchev were written by me before I read Khrushchev's published "memoirs." When the memoirs, published in America, appeared in Moscow, I did not read them, as I could not obtain them in Moscow.
When I asked Comrade Molotov if he had read these memoirs, he told me that he had. When I asked him how he assessed them, he replied, "It's an anti-Party document." Then I asked, "Did Khrushchev really sink so low?" Molotov replied, "Yes, yes, in his bitterness,

"In connection with the end... of his career as a state leader, he reached a point of decline, a political and party decline into the abyss." When I said with regret and indignation, "Yes, this is very sad," Molotov said to me, "... especially to you, after all, you nominated him." "Yes," I said, "I did, admittedly, up to a point. I didn't nominate him for the post of First Secretary of the Central Committee, foreseeing... that he wouldn't be able to handle the job, that he would fail. All of you, including you, Vyacheslav, accepted this proposal from Malenkov and Bulganin."

Having read Khrushchev's so-called memoirs published in Ogonyok, I am convinced that Molotov's assessment is correct. One can't even respond to him, lest one stoop to the level of a market woman who shouts, "You're a scoundrel yourself." I personally harbored tender, friendly feelings for him, but apparently I was mistaken. It turns out that Khrushchev was not a simple chameleon, but a "recidivist" of Trotskyism.

ON THE RESOLUTION OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE CPSU ON THE CULT OF PERSONALITY AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Late 80s

It has been established that the decisions of the 20th Congress met with the enthusiastic support of the Party, the Soviet people, and fraternal communist and workers' parties. The Central Committee first and foremost dealt an ideological blow to the Party's enemies, emphasizing in its resolution that the enemies of communism and socialism are concentrating their fire on the shortcomings highlighted by the Central Committee of our Party at the 20th Congress of the CPSU. Seeking to weaken the great patriotic force of the decisions of the 20th Congress of the CPSU, capitalist ideologists are resorting to all manner of ploys and subterfuge to distract the attention of workers from the progressive and inspiring ideas advanced to humanity by the Socialist world.

Recently, the Central Committee states, a widespread anti-Soviet slanderous campaign has been unleashed in the bourgeois press, for which reactionary circles are attempting to exploit certain facts related to the personality cult of I.V. Stalin, condemned by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. By unleashing this slanderous campaign, bourgeois ideologists are once again unsuccessfully attempting to cast a shadow on the great ideas of Marxism-Leninism, to undermine workers' confidence in the world's first socialist country, the USSR, and to sow confusion within the ranks of the international communist and labor movement. Pointing out that the historical

Experience teaches that the class enemies of the proletariat always try to use facts and moments that are advantageous to them to undermine international unity and to split the international labor movement. The Central Committee established that the fraternal communist and workers' parties recognized this maneuver of the enemies of socialism in time and are giving it a worthy rebuff.

At the same time, the Central Committee emphasizes, it would be wrong to ignore the fact that some of our friends abroad have not fully grasped the issue of the personality cult and its consequences and sometimes misinterpret certain provisions related to the personality cult. It must be said that such misinterpretations have been committed by a considerable number of our Party members, including some members of the Central Committee.

In its resolution, the Central Committee provides a detailed explanation of the issue of the personality cult, based on the principles of Marxism-Leninism on the role of the masses, the party and individuals in history, and on the inadmissibility of the personality cult of the political leadership, no matter how great its merits.

Our party demonstrated a strength and fortitude that no other ruling party in the capitalist countries possesses when the 20th Party Congress, on the initiative of the Central Committee, deemed it necessary to speak boldly and openly about the grave consequences of the personality cult, about the serious mistakes that were made in the last period of Stalin's life, and to call upon the entire party to make a joint effort to put an end to everything that the personality cult entailed.

Of great importance is the passage in the Central Committee resolution which states: “The Party... proceeded from the fact that, even if the action against Stalin’s personality cult does cause some temporary difficulties, in the long run, from the standpoint of the fundamental interests and ultimate goals of the working class, this will yield an enormously positive result. This creates firm guarantees that phenomena similar to the personality cult will never again arise in our Party and in

the country, that henceforth the leadership of the Party and the country will be exercised collectively, on the basis of Marxist-Leninist policies, in conditions of developed inner-Party democracy, with the active creative participation of millions of workers, and with the comprehensive development of Soviet democracy." In addition to what was said at the 20th Congress, the Central Committee resolution emphasized Stalin's services to the Party's struggle and to the successes achieved in socialist construction, and to the world-historic feat accomplished by the Soviet people. "During the first five-year plans, the economically backward country, as a result of intense,

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Through the heroic efforts of the people and the Party, the Soviet Union made a gigantic leap in its economic and cultural development. Building on the successes of socialist construction, the standard of living of workers was raised, and unemployment was permanently eliminated. A profound cultural revolution took place in the country. During his long tenure as General Secretary of the Party Central Committee, I.V. Stalin, along with other leading figures, actively fought to implement Lenin's precepts. Devoted to Marxism-Leninism, as a theoretician and leading organizer, he led the Party's struggle against Trotskyists, right-wing opportunists, bourgeois nationalists, and the machinations of capitalist encirclement. In this political and ideological struggle, Stalin gained great authority and popularity. However, it would be wrong to associate all of our great victories with Stalin's name. The successes achieved by the Communist Party and the Soviet Union, along with the praise heaped upon Stalin, went to his head. In this environment, a cult of Stalin's personality gradually began to take shape. Particularly important in the Central Committee's resolution of June 30 is its close connection to Stalin's activities, which underpinned the historical circumstances of the revolutionary struggle against enemies and the construction of socialism in the USSR. Everyone, especially our youth, should know and always remember this, especially the youth. The Soviet Union, the Central Committee stated in its resolution, was the only country paving the way for humanity to socialism. It was like a besieged fortress, surrounded by capitalism. After the failed intervention of 14 states in 1918-1920, the enemies of the Soviet Union in the West and in the East continued to prepare new "crusades" against the USSR. The enemies sent spies and saboteurs into the USSR in large numbers, trying by all means to undermine the world's first socialist state. The threat of renewed imperialist aggression against the USSR grew particularly acute after the rise of fascism in Germany in 1933, which proclaimed its goal to be the destruction of communism and the Soviet Union—the world's first workers' state. Everyone remembers the formation of the so-called "Anti-Comintern Pact" and the "Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis," which were actively supported by the forces of international reaction. With the threat of a new war looming, and the Western powers rejecting the Soviet Union's repeated proposals to curb fascism and organize collective security, the Soviet Union was forced to exert every effort to strengthen its defenses and combat the machinations of a hostile capitalist encirclement.

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The Party had to educate the entire people in the spirit of constant vigilance and mobilization readiness in the face of external enemies.
The machinations of international reaction were all the more dangerous because a fierce class struggle had long raged within the country, with the question of "who will win?" being decided. After Lenin's death, hostile currents—Trotskyists, right-wing opportunists, and bourgeois nationalists—rose to prominence. They rejected Lenin's theory of the possibility of socialism's victory in one country, which would in fact lead to the restoration of capitalism in the USSR. The Communist Party waged a merciless struggle against these enemies of Leninism. Fulfilling Lenin's precepts, the Communist Party set a course for socialist industrialization, collectivization of agriculture, and cultural revolution. The Central Committee emphasizes that in solving these

extremely difficult and enormous tasks of building a socialist society in one country, in a capitalist environment, our Soviet Motherland and its Communist Party had to overcome incredible, exceptional difficulties. Without outside assistance, we had to eliminate centuries-old backwardness in the shortest possible time—within ten years—and reconstruct the national economy on new, socialist foundations. This complex international and domestic situation demanded iron discipline, relentless vigilance, and the strictest centralization of leadership, which inevitably had a negative impact on the development of certain democratic forms. During the fierce struggle against the entire imperialist world, our country was forced to accept certain restrictions on democracy, justified by the logic of our people's struggle for socialism under capitalist encirclement. The Central Committee, in its resolution, explains that the Party and the people already viewed these restrictions as temporary, to be lifted as the Soviet state strengthened and the forces of democracy and socialism grew and developed throughout the world. "The people consciously accepted these temporary sacrifices, witnessing ever greater successes of the Soviet social system with each passing day." The Central Committee emphasizes that the Soviet people overcame all the difficulties that stood in the way of building socialism, under the leadership of their Communist Party, which steadfastly, consistently, and firmly pursued Lenin's general line. "The Soviet people," the Central Committee says, "knew Stalin as a man who always defended the USSR from the machinations of enemies and fought for the cause of socialism. He sometimes used

He used unworthy methods in the struggle, violating Leninist principles and the norms of party life. This was Stalin's tragedy. But all of this also complicated the fight against the lawlessness that was being committed, since the successes of building socialism and strengthening the USSR, in an atmosphere of personality cult, were attributed to Stalin."

When asked why the Leninist core of leaders gathered in the Central Committee did not openly oppose Stalin, the Central Committee responded: "Any action against him under these conditions would have been misunderstood by the people, and this was not at all a matter of a lack of personal courage. It is clear that anyone who had spoken out against Stalin in these circumstances would not have received popular support. Moreover, such an action would have been regarded under those conditions as an attack on the cause of socialism, an extremely dangerous undermining of the unity of the Party and the entire state in the context of capitalist encirclement. Moreover, the successes achieved by the workers of the Soviet Union under the leadership of their Communist Party instilled legitimate pride in the heart of every Soviet citizen and created an atmosphere in which individual mistakes and shortcomings seemed less significant against the backdrop of these enormous successes, and the negative consequences of these mistakes were quickly offset by the colossally growing vitality of the Party and Soviet society."

Mistakes and illegalities did indeed occur. But Stalin wasn't alone in their culpability. Each of us, members of the Politburo and the Presidium of the Central Committee, bears a certain share of the blame, including Khrushchev. Instead of admitting it, Khrushchev savored it, exaggerated it, "literarily" framed it, and elaborated on it, speculating on mistakes and arbitrary acts, thereby wittingly or unwittingly making it easier for his enemies to defame not only Stalin, who had rendered great service to the Soviet people and the international proletariat, but also our Party and the entire Soviet system of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

They may ask: "Why didn't you prevent this at the 20th Congress?" To what has been said above, one can add the most important thing: we, the main, Bolshevik, Leninist core of the Presidium of the Central Committee, are preoccupied with the main task of preserving the unity of the Party and the Central Committee. This determined our caution, I would say, excessive softness, and in our criticism of certain provisions in the Central Committee's report that did not find proper, more correct formulations, in particular in Section 6. This also determined our failure to speak at the Congress on the additional, surprise report "On the Cult of Personality and Its Consequences." Each of us feared that this could

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Lead to a breakdown in the unity of the Party and the Central Committee. One can, of course, criticize our behavior, but it was dictated by our primary concern—preserving the unity of the Party and the Central Committee. Another factor here was that for a number of years we had been Leninist fighters against opposition factionalism, and, aside from official communication as members of the leadership collective—the Politburo—we, for example, did not conduct separate, private discussions on Politburo matters, including Khrushchev's report. Back then, at the 20th Congress, as in subsequent years, we remained faithful to Lenin's resolution of the 10th Congress on Party unity and the prevention of factionalism. Khrushchev took advantage of this anti-factionalism on our part—he himself effectively created his own faction, which served as an organized center behind the official Presidium of the Central Committee. This, for example, was reflected in the fact that, without a collective discussion at the Central Committee Presidium or even notification of all Presidium members after the 20th Congress, all the "heroic" measures to "overthrow" the deceased Stalin and the destruction of all sculptures and monuments to Stalin (including works of high art) were carried out. The orders were given in secret from a number of Presidium members (including myself), with the possible exception of those who supported this destruction. The same applies to the removal of Stalin's books from libraries and the destruction of most of them, including such fundamental, classic works as "Foundations of Leninism" and others. And finally, the “night” transfer of Stalin’s coffin from the Mausoleum – also without discussion and even without the knowledge of the majority of members of the Presidium of the Central Committee.

Hostile and dissident elements may even praise Khrushchev for such “dexterity,” but this is not his dexterity, as opposed to our “clumsiness,” but simply a relapse into Trotskyism in Khrushchev, who was a Trotskyist in the 1920s.

If we previously did not needlessly recall Khrushchev's past Trotskyist sins, and Stalin forgave him for them, today we can confidently say that in his excesses and methods of struggle against the deceased Stalin, the remnants of his past Trotskyist sins and Trotskyist vindictiveness were revealed and expressed.

Overcoming the so-called personality cult, the mistakes that had taken place and their consequences, necessary in the interests of the party and the country, did not require the sensational, philistine, petty-bourgeois shriek that Khrushchev gave it in his "special" report, trying to emphasize his Herostratian role in it. This could have been done within the framework of Lenin's party spirit.

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Leninist norms of party life without philistine sensationalism, without causing harm to the party and the state.

Without exaggerating the perfection of the Central Committee's resolution on the personality cult, it can be said with certainty that it played a serious role in a deeper and more correct understanding by party members, the working class and workers of the essence of the question of the personality cult, of the harm it caused in the correct Marxist-Leninist, revolutionary-class interpretation.

Naturally, this had a positive impact on fraternal communist parties in other countries. This was especially important today because, as the Central Committee resolution rightly stated, "a broad anti-Soviet slanderous campaign has recently been unleashed in the bourgeois press, for which reactionary circles are attempting to exploit certain facts related to the personality cult of I.V. Stalin, condemned by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union."

Even today—in the 1970s and 1980s—anti-Sovietists, anti-communists, and agents of imperialism continue to exploit the issue of the "personality cult of I.V. Stalin" to undermine the authority and power of socialist countries, in the service of imperialism and the warmongers. These enemies focus

their "fire" on criticizing the very foundations—the successful struggle for the victory of socialism, and the entire system of proletarian political power.
Apologists for the bourgeois dictatorship who criticize Stalin's personality cult portray themselves as "humanists," while at the same time supporting the brutal tyranny of bourgeois exploiters of workers and the bloody suppression of peoples. They use criticism of our mistakes as a pretext to undermine socialism and the proletariat's revolutionary struggle for socialism, to undermine the October Socialist Revolution itself, and to undermine Soviet power.
Proletarian revolutionaries must always remember that it was the imperialists and their agents, through intervention, conspiracies, and sabotage, who forced Soviet power and the Bolshevik Party to resort to the necessary extreme measures of struggle—a struggle in which both mistakes and distortions were committed. These mistakes cannot be correctly understood without knowledge, understanding, consideration, and acceptance of the historical facts of that desperate, incredibly difficult struggle waged under the leadership of the Party and its Central Committee by the millions of workers, peasants, and toilers of Russia against internal foreign imperialists, interventionists, White Guards, wreckers, conspirators, spies, and saboteurs, to whose aid not only

Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, but also degenerate, rabid Trotskyists and "rightists" from within our party. Trotskyists and right-wing deviators cannot be excused by citing their former party membership. After all, the Mensheviks, too, were previously members of the united RSDLP, but 10, 12, or 40 years later, they became counterrevolutionaries.
This was a struggle that saved the revolution, socialism, and the Soviet state. In this struggle against real enemies, excesses, mistakes, and abuses of power were committed, which the Party condemns and will take measures to prevent in the future.
In summing up the life and work of Stalin as a fighter against tsarism, against capitalism and its agents, for Marxism-Leninism, for socialism and communism, for the victory of the October Revolution, the Soviet state, for the construction of socialism in the USSR, for the defeat of the fascist invaders in the Patriotic War, it is necessary, first of all, not to repeat the imperialist slanderous fabrications, but, in a revolutionary, scientific, party, Leninist way, to observe proportions in assessing the positive and the negative, not to allow petty-bourgeois loudmouthedness, sensationalism, exaggeration and substitution of errors and shortcomings for all that historically great work that Stalin did for the party, the people and the country.

On the History of the Demolition of the Sukharev Tower. An Unsent Letter from L.M. Kaganovich to the Editors of the Journal "Izvestia of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union"

February 1990.

Dear comrades!
I read with interest the correspondence published in issue No. 9 of your magazine for 1989 between I.V. Stalin, K.E. Voroshilov, L.M. Kaganovich, a group of architects and members of the public about the demolition of the Sukharev Tower.
I believe it would be appropriate to expand on this issue. I have attached the following and request that my additions be published.
With communist greetings
L.M. Kaganovich

On the issue of the history of the demolition of the Sukharev Tower.

The fate of the Sukharev Tower dragged on for a long time, was difficult to discuss, and the decision to demolish it was difficult. Therefore, those who portray this matter as a quick and easy administrative decision now seem ridiculous.

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This was discussed in the Moscow City Council, which had originally proposed the demolition, and the main reason for the decision was the increasing traffic in the city, the huge number of cars, and the daily deaths near the Sukharev Tower. When I mentioned the figure of five people a day at a meeting of architects, the renowned architect Comrade Shchusev corrected me. He said it was not five, but ten people a day. One can imagine what would happen if the Sukharev Tower were still standing today, with hundreds of thousands of cars driving along the Garden Ring.
This issue was discussed not only in the Moscow City Council, chaired by N.A. Bulganin, and not only in the Moscow City Party Committee, whose first secretary was N.S. Khrushchev, but also in the regional party committee, which I headed, and in the government, and even at the Politburo. The architects recognized that something had to be done, as the Sukharev Tower had fallen into extreme disrepair, one might say, into disrepair. It was riddled with cracks: at the bottom, in the foundation, and above. A major overhaul would require colossal expense, enormous effort, and a long time, not to mention the fact that one of Moscow's central thoroughfares, such as Lubyanka (now Dzerzhinsky Street), Sretenka, and Bolshaya Meshchanskaya Street (now called Prospekt Mira), would be closed for an extended period.
A solution was sought. A number of proposals were put forward, which were seriously and thoroughly discussed. The first was mine: to explore with the metro builders the possibility of tunneling under the Sukharev Tower and running metro trains underneath it. A meeting of the metro builders, architects, and construction workers was held, and most of them declared that this would be a very good and perfect solution, but it was nearly impossible to implement. The tunnel entrance would have to begin almost a kilometer from the Sukharev Tower, and the exit would also be almost a kilometer away. Tunneling using a shallow shaft was impossible because it would block the main line, and most importantly, the Sukharev Tower could not withstand it. Given its dilapidated condition, it would simply collapse, and then massive casualties would be inevitable. Tunneling a deep shaft at a deep level was either impossible or extremely difficult, as we had not yet studied the geology of this area, and we did not yet have sufficient experience for it. We had gained that experience during the metro construction. Moreover, this would distract Metrostroy from its main task – construction

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Metro. Therefore, despite the progressiveness of this proposal, it was practically impossible to implement. This option was rejected. There was a second option, proposed by a group of architects: to demolish a row of buildings around the Sukharev Tower and create a roundabout around it. This proposal was also seriously discussed. But it should be remembered: this was the early 1930s, the housing crisis was severe, and although residential construction was underway, providing hundreds of residents with new apartments was no easy task. Moreover, this still wouldn't address the dilapidated condition of the Sukharev Tower.
Other considerations included the idea that demolishing these buildings and creating a traffic circle would bring traffic right next to Sklifosovsky Hospital. Doctors opposed this. Even the architects themselves expressed doubts: this solution could lead to the deformation of the hospital building itself, which is also of great architectural and historical value. I recall the Moscow City Committee and the Moscow City Council were particularly opposed to this. Metro builders also opposed the first proposal. This option was also abandoned. There was no other option but to demolish the Sukharev Tower.

There were also opinions like, "Well, what's so special about it? Although the architecture is certainly old, this tower was built by Peter the Great in honor of Colonel Sukharev, who suppressed the Streltsy rebellion." But that wasn't the main argument. There were also suggestions like, "Since this tower is of architectural value, its image could be preserved in a large model."
The main argument in the decision to demolish the Sukharev Tower was that Moscow was expanding, traffic was increasing, and its prospects were enormous. Preserving the tower didn't take into account that with hundreds of thousands of cars in Moscow, traffic accidents would result in casualties not just 5-10 people a day, but 50 or more. Furthermore, the Sukharev Tower itself was in a state of extreme disrepair, making restoration extremely difficult. This led the government to conclude that, with all due respect to the opinions of those architects who objected to demolition (although most of them agreed with the idea of dismantling it), and despite the high appreciation of the structure's architectural value, there was no other option but to demolish the Sukharev Tower.
I repeat: in the discussion of this decision, this conclusion was not reached immediately and it was not made by individuals, as is being portrayed today in the desire to find the main culprits of the destruction.

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Sukharev Tower, and after deep, serious, and repeated discussions of the issue. The correspondence published in Izvestia of the Central Committee of the CPSU between I.V. Stalin and K.E. Voroshilov, on the one hand, and L.M. Kaganovich, on the other, along with letters from architects and members of the public, demonstrate how seriously the leaders approached this issue.
This is how things were then, and not at all how some people now, more than 50 years later, portray them, instead of objectively and impartially examining the situation of those years and the reasons for this or that decision, ignoring the main condition of any researcher - historicism.

LETTERS OF L.M. KAGANOVICH TO HIS DAUGHTER A LETTER FROM THE FRONT ABOUT ARCHITECTURE

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Dear and beloved Mayusya!
Thank you for your long letter and the detailed description of Zholtovsky's celebration. Despite his odd quirks, he certainly deserved the medal and the anniversary celebrations. I wanted to write to him, but I'm not in the mood, and I doubt it's necessary. When you see him, please convey my regards and best wishes for a long life, vigor, and creativity.
That Shchusev allowed some reservations is entirely natural, because, beyond the element of jealousy, there are fundamental differences here. Zholtovsky is a fanatical follower of the classics, while Shchusev is an eclectic, borrowing a little from everyone, but most of all, he is a Baroque artist. I must say, however, that the IMEL building designed by Shchusev in Tbilisi, for which he received the Stalin Prize, is remarkable both externally and internally; it is clear that Shusev is rebuilding. He gave the five floors powerful granite columns, and inside, the layout and decoration are remarkable—both rich (marble) and modest. But, strange as it may seem, the influence of Zholtovsky and his consistency is evident in this building by Shusev. Shusev, of course, did not do this consciously, but he is a businesslike and practical man. When he became convinced that Soviet architecture did not reject the best elements of the old heritage and that classical forms were being applied to life, he too applied his remarkable abilities (to put it more crudely, he “adapted,” not in an offensive sense, of course).
Thus, Zholtovsky won the ideological (in relation to

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architecture) victory over Shusev, but not over Soviet architecture.
Soviet architecture, following the principled path of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin, who always valued classical art, managed to overcome leftist excesses, simplification in its environment, and opportunism among some of the older architects, and embarked on the path of using the best elements of old classical architecture, including Zholtovsky.
Zholtovsky is not the leader of Soviet architecture, nor its ideological inspiration. He is largely steeped in antiquity, and doesn't see everything new, but he is a rich antique collector with valuables, strictly arranged in a sequential manner, unwilling to confuse his treasures with lesser ones. He is passionate about his values and defends them in public opinion.
This greatly benefited Soviet architecture by instilling a taste and interest in classical art, high-quality construction, and hard work, rejecting simplification and hackwork, and by instilling in young people a sense of principledness against opportunism and eclecticism. This, of course, is not so much his personal achievement: the entire environment for the development of art, construction, and industry, and the Party's sound leadership in the arts, led to this, including the use of the great old master of architecture, Academician Zholtovsky. But his personal contribution here is also significant; the government awarded him an order for this. Making him the leader of Soviet architecture is unacceptable; it would even be harmful. The leader and inspirer of Soviet architecture will come.
Once the war is victoriously ended, the great struggle of construction will begin—the restoration of cities and villages that were vilely, barbarously, and savagely destroyed. Years of gigantic, creative construction work will follow, building tens of thousands of houses, new factories, parks, and gardens. It would be foolish to rush into haphazard construction, and here the great historical role of Soviet architects will be in creating socialist cities and villages. We need to think about this now. In the process of this work, our architectural leaders will emerge.
All architects must prepare now. Today we think only of victory, seeking ways to destroy the enemy. But today gives birth to tomorrow, and tomorrow, after victory, is the gigantic Stalinist construction project. It is Stalin and the Party that will inspire architects to great endeavors.
I beg you, dear Mayusya, to definitely resume your studies at home, study, study and study again, if you miss the golden time, it’s hard

It will be. And it's really hard for smart people without knowledge. Your son has grown up already, he won't be much of a hindrance. I'm very glad that he's already recovered.
I kiss you tightly. Your Dad. Look after Mom, her health, show a little authority.

ABOUT THE ARCHITECTURAL MONUMENTS OF MOSCOW

Late 80s
Dear Maya!
I fully understand that inevitably your fellow professionals—architects—will ask you questions about architectural monuments that are touched upon in the press, associating these questions with my name, since I was the secretary of the Moscow Party Committee for 5 years (1930-1935). Therefore, you do not have to apologize to me for asking me to give some clarifications on them, which I will gladly do.
1. About the Cathedral of Christ the Savior.
As is known, the decision to build the Great Palace of Soviets in Moscow was made by the All-Union Congress of Soviets.
After the decision was made, the question of its location naturally arose. Various proposals were made: the Moscow Committee, including myself, proposed building the Palace on Lenin Hills. Everyone agreed that this location was good, but it was far from the Kremlin, and it needed to be

built close to it. Then the Moscow Committee proposed building it on what is now Manezhnaya Square, demolishing all the small houses, stores, and small structures located there. But here again, objections arose, claiming that this would affect the Manezh structure, a valuable architectural landmark. Then, it was proposed to demolish the building housing the Comintern and its surrounding structures and construct the Palace of Soviets there, but here again, objections arose, claiming that this would overwhelm the construction of the Rumyantsev Library.
So, moving further along this line, we came close to the Cathedral. This issue wasn't resolved immediately or easily: the Moscow Committee, and I personally, for example, had objections. I'll be honest, we thought it could politically offend the religious population. I remember the Moscow City Council, in particular. Its chairman, Comrade Ivanov, spoke out in favor of building the Palace of Soviets on the site of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior. At the meeting

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The government-created "Council for the Construction of the Palace," headed by the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, Comrade V.M. Molotov, discussed this issue repeatedly. Ultimately, in 1931, a resolution was adopted to build the Palace of Soviets near the Kremlin, on the banks of the Moskva River in the area of Volkhonka and Simonovsky Proezd, by demolishing several buildings, including the Cathedral of Christ the Savior.
Comrade Molotov reported this decision of the "Palace Council" to the government, and the Politburo, all of us, approved this decision, including Comrade Stalin.
I must say that architects, including such academicians of architecture as Zholtovsky, Fomin, Shchuko and others, believed that the Temple did not have any particular architectural value.
2. About the Sukharev Tower.
We spent a long time hesitating over the idea of demolishing it, but when traffic increased, especially from cars (up to 10 people were killed there daily), we began searching for a solution. There were proposals to demolish a row of buildings around it and create a roundabout, but firstly, this wouldn't improve traffic, and secondly, a more serious objection was raised: it would affect or at least complicate the situation of Sklifosovsky Hospital, which was unacceptable from both a medical and architectural standpoint. There were also thoughts, particularly from me personally, of building a tunnel under the tower, but the builders and architects declared that it would require a very long tunnel entrance and exit, and, most importantly, that the tower was riddled with cracks and would collapse during the tunnel's construction. I must say we paid so much attention to this that I personally, along with Comrade Bulganin and the architects, including Zholtovsky, Chernyshev, Shchusev, Fomin, and others, visited the tower twice, inspected it, and climbed to the top, concluding that its demolition was inevitable. Shchusev had his doubts, but eventually he, too, agreed.
3. You're also being asked about an article by the poet Voznesensky, in which he, citing Zholtovsky, claims that during the discussion of the Moscow reconstruction plan, "a determined hand in a railway tunic swept St. Basil's Cathedral off the model. Another hand in a protective tunic stubbornly returned it to its place." Although Voznesensky doesn't mention my name here, he must be referring to me. But this is a lie from beginning to end.
A poet can invent and imagine in his verses and poems, but it is not proper to lie, especially for a talented poet.

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Firstly, Zholtovsky, with whom I was friends and whom I deeply respected, could not say this, because it did not happen.
Secondly—and most importantly—the memorandum of the Moscow Regional Committee, the City Party Committee, and the Moscow Soviet, submitted to the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in the Council of People's Commissars—the General Plan for the

Reconstruction of Moscow, in the drafting of which I, of course, played an active role—states: "During the reconstruction of the city, the question of the attitude toward historical monuments practically arises. The planning scheme rejects blind admiration for the past and does not hesitate to demolish any monument that impedes the city's development. This, of course, does not preclude, but rather presupposes, the preservation of all that is most valuable historically or artistically (for example, the Kremlin, the former St. Basil's Cathedral, etc.)."
(See: "Master Plan for the Reconstruction of the City of Moscow." Moskovsky Rabochy, 1936, Section III. - Moscow Layout Scheme, p. 85.)
I recall another incident in my relationship with this unrivaled work of architectural art—St. Basil's Cathedral. In 1930, the question of moving the monument to Minin and Pozharsky from Red Square arose—a decision necessitated by the sharply increased traffic, demonstrations, and parades.
Various proposals were made for a new location for the monument, but none were in a prominent or worthy place for these great heroes of our country. So, Comrade Stalin summoned me, Kaganovich, Yenukidze, and Chkhanovsky, and instructed us to find a worthy location for the monument and organize its relocation without causing any damage. He also told us: consult with the architects about the possibility of using the site near St. Basil's Cathedral, ensuring that it is not damaged in any way.
We took on this project with great diligence, bringing in architects, sculptors, and civil engineers. After inspecting the entire site, everyone agreed that it might be worthy of Minin and Pozharsky. Technically, this was a complex task, but by 1930 the work was completed and the monument was moved from the center of Red Square to the site of St. Basil's Cathedral.
I.V. Stalin and the Politburo highly appreciated our work.
4. By the way, Voznesensky’s article was devoted primarily to the Tretyakov Gallery, so I should note that in the early 1930s it was in a state of disrepair.

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On this occasion, I received a letter from Alexei Maksimovich Gorky, and I personally went to the Tretyakov Gallery with a group of construction engineers, inspected the emergency points and organized urgent repairs, after which I received a letter from Tretyakov’s daughter with gratitude, not to mention the gratitude of Alexei Maksimovich, which was very valuable to me.
The same thing happened with the Kolomna Cathedral, where I also personally visited and helped with repairs and general improvements. I mention this not so much to defend myself from some Black Hundred attacks by people from the so-called "Memory" group, but to establish the true facts of history, of which there are many, besides those mentioned here.
This, of course, doesn't mean there weren't mistakes, but the leitmotif of the reconstruction was the beautification and architectural enrichment of Moscow. We were careful not to destroy monuments —historical and artistic. I believe we managed to preserve many buildings and houses in Moscow, which house many museums, including those dedicated to famous historical figures. Our Moscow architects deserve some credit for this.
Best regards,
your father L.M. Kaganovich

CONGRATULATIONS TO MY DAUGHTER ON HER 60TH BIRTHDAY

My beloved daughter and my friend Mayusya! From the bottom of my loving heart as a father and friend, I congratulate you on your birthday.
I highly appreciate your courageous feat, demonstrated in your tireless care for your parents - for my mother and for me - during a difficult period of our lives.

I am proud of you, my daughter, as a working and party person, who has spent 40 years working as an architect, 15 of which were dedicated to our heroic Soviet Army, in the design organization of the USSR Ministry of Defense, for which you were awarded medals.
You have been a member of our beloved Communist Party for over 40 years, fighting for the victory of socialism and communism. A model of hard work and creativity, you are distinguished by your modesty, respect for others, and affection for your friends. This has influenced your wonderful children: your son Iosif-Igor and your daughter Masha, and I hope it will influence your grandchildren—my great-grandchildren—as well.

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There's so much more I could say, but unfortunately, you're in the hospital, and I'm not in the best physical condition at home. I hope we'll see each other soon and celebrate this day more fully.
I hug you and kiss you tightly.
Your loving father and friend.
L.M. Kaganovich. May 12, 1988

LETTER-WILL OF L.M. KAGANOVICH

Important. Personally.
To Mae Lazarevna Kaganovich from Dad (open after...
Dear and beloved daughter Maya!
No matter how unpleasant it is to talk and write about a will, a person is not free to determine the hour of the inevitable upcoming separation... That is why I am writing you this testamentary letter in advance.
I'm not writing a formal will, firstly because I find it difficult to go through the associated procedures, and secondly, I don't have any substantial assets to write a formal will—I have no money, no dacha, no car, and so on. I leave behind some household items and books—all of which I leave to you, my dear daughter, to perhaps help you in your difficult situation once you lose my pension. I also ask that you identify and give my grandchildren some books they may need, particularly Iolik's, which he needs for his research.
I hope and am confident that my grandchildren and great-grandchildren will not hold it against me for leaving them nothing substantial. I hope they will be proud that their grandfather, after many years in high party and state positions, left without any "material savings," but in the manner befitting an honest communist. This, like a drop of water, reveals the proletarian nature of our Soviet, workers' and peasants' socialist system.
Under the leadership of my Leninist Party and its Central Committee, I fought for the victory of this system my entire life, and I firmly believe that the same socialist system will triumph throughout the world. I leave to my dear children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren my modest contribution as a proletarian revolutionary internationalist, a Bolshevik communist, to the cause of the victory of Socialism and Communism.
I hope that my grandchildren and great-grandchildren, not to mention you, my dear daughter and friend Maya, a party member since 1945, will follow the same path that will ensure, under the leadership of our Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the complete victory of Marxism-Leninism,

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victory of the international socialist revolution and Communism!
I hug and kiss you, my beloved daughter Maya, and all my beloved grandchildren and great-grandchildren, as well as close relatives and friends, and I wish you cheerfulness, optimism, joy of

life, revolutionary militancy, activity in public life and scientific confidence in the victory of Communism!
Loving and respecting - Old Bolshevik, Marxist-Leninist
L.M. Kaganovich

LETTER FROM L.M. KAGANOVICH TO THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF THE NEWSPAPER "ARGUMENTS AND FACTS"

July 1991

In your newspaper No. 25 /558/ for July 1991, a message was published stating that I receive assistance in the amount of 300 rubles monthly from the worsted cloth factory of the Kirghiz SSR. I hereby inform you that the Workers' Council of this plant has decided to provide me with financial assistance. I sent the team a telegram expressing my heartfelt thanks, but declined to accept this assistance.
I hereby declare that I have not received, do not receive, and will not accept a single kopeck.
I would like to once again express my gratitude to the staff of the Kirghiz SSR worsted woolen mill for their attention and care for me, and I advise you to use this money for your own needy pensioners.
Sincerely, L.M. Kaganovich

THOUGHTS ON PERESTROIKA

1991
At a time when our Soviet Socialist Motherland is in dire economic and political straits, it is extremely difficult to dwell on the deeds of bygone years. The soul of every true communist, like that of every working citizen, is filled with anxieties and even suffering associated with the developing economic and political crisis in the country and the deteriorating material and cultural well-being of the working people.

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I had intended to write a separate section about all this at the end of my “Memoirs” when I got to the years 1985-1991, but, fearing that nature, merciful to me, might ultimately refuse me mercy, I decided to break the chronology and, at least briefly, express here my thoughts on the current economic and political situation of our country.
More than six years have passed since the Communist Party and the Soviet government proclaimed Perestroika to improve the situation in the country. During this time, many important decisions and laws, both correct and incorrect, have been adopted. But it must be said frankly and honestly that the situation is getting worse year after year. Different individuals and different groups offer different explanations for this and, accordingly, propose different remedies.
Without taking on the task of analyzing these different diagnoses and doctors, especially since I have lost my sight and am writing blindly, I will dwell on the main statements.
The first group is made up of those who believe that the very idea, the very design of perestroika, is to blame. This is, of course, a mistaken view. Among these people are bureaucratic elements who are unwilling and afraid of losing their positions and comfortable jobs; there are simply conservative thinkers who are afraid of anything new; and there are people who haven't matured enough for the new and are unwilling to retrain, unlearn, learn, and improve their skills to meet the demands of perestroika.

They all need to be explained differently: some need to be exposed, others need to be encouraged to improve their skills, and, most importantly, their training needs need to be organized. An honest worker who simply can't adapt due to ignorance cannot be denigrated as a bureaucrat, a conservative, or the like.
It should be clear to everyone that Perestroika is not a fiction. The Party has always undergone restructuring at certain stages.
Life doesn't stand still; it moves forward, and those who fall behind are crushed. Therefore, study more, both theoretically and practically.
Everyone - workers, old and young, peasants, employees, managers, big and small, and even scientists - must learn practice and teaching, raising the qualifications of students, engineers, and agronomists to a higher level.
Personnel must be selected, promoted, and valued materially and spiritually based on their knowledge, their ability to apply it in practice, and the actual results of this practice. One could say that this

The most important and most crucial of all tasks. Therefore, we cannot delay this. Less talk about the importance of the human factor—more, more energetic action on the practical implementation of this crucial factor.
Another group of cause-finders and healers correctly points out that the problem is not in the idea of Perestroika itself, but in the mistakes, in the unsatisfactory implementation of Perestroika.
This is true, but there are many prophets in this group who define these errors differently.
Some attribute the mistakes to the fact that the previous management and economic mechanisms were undermined, while new ones weren't created, or were conceived but failed to work. This is true, but firstly, why undermine the previous mechanisms without preparing new ones? Secondly, the system and plan for creating the new mechanism weren't even thought out. Thirdly, the very fundamental line was plagued by major contradictions and vacillations, with some decisions being replaced by others to such an extent that it confused the minds of those implementing perestroika.
The second layer mistakenly believes that the government's actions were insufficient, slow, and indecisive. These are the disguised politicians of the third group, who identify the causes and origins of the crisis.
This group is familiar to us. But today it poses as innovators. In reality, they are the liquidators of the USSR's socialism, the restorers of capitalism and the old pre-revolutionary order, the exploitation and enslavement of workers, peasants, and other toilers. The danger of this group—these poisonous fly agarics that have proliferated after the deluge of pluralism—cannot be underestimated.
The Communist Party and government proclaimed the expansion of democracy, glasnost, pluralism, and even a multi-party system in order to galvanize the activity of honest Soviet citizens, to boost the country's economy and culture, and to improve the people's lot. But this group of people took advantage of this to fight the Soviet Socialist State and establish a new system, including a monarchy. Yet they cried out that we had no enemies of socialism, that these were the inventions of Stalin's leadership. And now we see how many of them were disguised—"the smoking room is alive"—even in doctoral and professorial gowns. Of course, we shouldn't lump together all the mushrooms of multi-party politics. There are those with whom we can find common ground for creative work to resolve the crisis in the country.
The Communist Party does not abandon this. But with those who vilely and insidiously exploit the grave situation in the country to undermine the Soviet state and socialism,

Those who aid the apologists of capitalism and imperialism must be combated, exposed more seriously and sharply, and these resurrected, reborn so-called "dead souls" of the White Guard must be ideologically and politically exposed. The danger is that they don't speak out openly, but rather disguise themselves, sympathizing with genuine suffering and thereby deceiving the gullible, inciting them against the Party and now not only against Stalin and his comrades, but also against Lenin and the October Revolution. It must be borne in mind that many people among the working people, especially among the inexperienced youth, are now effectively opposed to socialism, against our heroic Leninist Party, which did so much to transform old Russia and the other republics.

The mistake of the party and its Central Committee was that, having announced political reforms, they failed to take into account that, alongside the positive forces, forces negative and hostile to socialism would also arise. The party leadership did not mobilize communists to actively support the positive forces and combat the negative and hostile ones, but rather let matters slide, allowing communists to become demobilized and passive.

This isn't just a practical error, but a fundamental political one, linked to other fundamental errors in the Party line. True, the last Central Committee Plenum began to galvanize the Communists, but it's unclear how things will develop further, as there have already been instances of them taking one step forward and then one step back.

To more clearly understand what has happened over the past 6 years, it is necessary to approach them in a differentiated manner.

The past six years consist of three, or perhaps four, stages in content.

The first stage – 1985-1987 – April Plenum of the Central Committee and the XXVII Party Congress.

The second stage – 1987-1988 – XX Party Conference.

The third stage is the XXVIII Party Congress.

The fourth stage – 1990-1991

Each of these stages differs from the other in the content of fundamental political decisions, which in many ways contradict each other.

The analysis of these stages is of great importance for establishing the causes of the collapse, economic and political crisis.

This is a massive scientific undertaking, beyond the capabilities of one person (especially one without vision). Therefore, I will attempt to provide only a brief outline of the comparative analysis and evaluation...*

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* The recording ends here.

Lazar Moiseevich Kaganovich
Memorandums

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Lazar KAGANOVICH
MEMORIAL NOTES

The figure of Lazar Moiseevich Kaganovich (1893–1991) remains a mystery to researchers. A self-taught man from beyond the Pale of Settlement, he rose to the top during the Soviet era, serving for several decades as a member of Stalin's Politburo and heading the Soviet Union's industry and transportation sectors. He was called the "Iron People's Commissar" and "Stalin's finest student." he was entrusted with the most important tasks.
Having left big politics after Stalin's death, Kaganovich lived to see perestroika.
His name began to be mentioned in the press again,
this time as one of the main culprits of the repressions. An unprincipled bureaucrat and careerist.
Kaganovich remained silent. He avoided journalists,
lived very secluded, and only after his death
it became known that until the last day
he did not stop working on his memoirs,
in which he described his entire long life.
His memoir legacy amounted to over
10,000 handwritten pages. The most interesting fragments were included in the book.

VAGRIUS

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Original book https://archive.org/details/kaganovich-remembers.
The table of contents has been moved to the beginning, and a list of abbreviations has been added.
Photographs of L.M. Kaganovich and scans of some of his documents can be found at the above address, pages 672-691.