

1989

January 1, 1989.

The New Year has come. M.S.¹ speech was rather boring. The most important thing is that he did not make any sweet promises; but he could have given a more interesting analysis of the year.

There was an open letter to Gorbachev from Ulyanov, Baklanov, Gelman, Klimov, Sagdeev, and Granin in the *Moskovskie Novosti* [Moscow News]. It is a new genre. We already know about the letters to Stalin, Dear Nikita Sergeyevich and Leonid Ilyich. But this letter has a position and voices demands. By the way, they remind him that back in the day, anybody at any leadership position who conducted the Party line sloppily, against personal convictions, and strained to make the bare minimum effort would be removed, if not shot. During the *perestroika*, however, we allow the vast majority to operate like this.

January 15, 1989.

Today the list of candidates for the CPSU People's Deputies was published in newspapers. My last name is on the list. It was a great surprise to me to see my name among the "suggestions" that were handed out at registration to the CC Plenum participants. I am the only one of the General Secretary's assistants who is among that hundred of guaranteed candidates. People noticed this. Moreover, I am the only one from the CC apparatus.

This is a present from M.S., an encouragement, a recognition... or whatever it is. In essence, how can I fulfill this position? I have neither an electorate, nor a constituency to whom I would be responsible, nor a platform for my voters. In practice, a deputy's responsibilities coincide with the responsibilities of a passive CC member or even of a regular communist.

But M.S. imparts it with significance. He congratulated me twice. While I was in his office he was telling Raisa Maksimovna² on the phone that "we made Anatoly Sergeyevich a candidate today... Here he is standing in front of me."

It did not even occur to me to thank him and I sincerely do not understand why I need this. I do not feel anything about this except for a vague discomfort, which is amplified by the sense that "100" Plenum-appointed deputies is a vestige of the past, and my appointment even more so.

I was called back from my vacation and for several days I applied all my strength and energy to the treatise for M.S.' meeting with the trilateral commission (Kissinger, Giscard, Nakasone, Rockefeller), 40 pages plus references. I like it. I wonder how he will use this...

¹ Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev

Recently I had an almost two-hour one-on-one discussion with M.S. He clearly wanted to just chat. He asks me:

“Have you read Solzhenitsyn’s *Lenin in Zurich*?”

“No!”

“I just read it. It’s very powerful. Spiteful, but talented.”

What he did afterwards is impossible to convey on paper. He walked around his office, stopped, gesticulated, sat in a chair, stooped and hunched over, portraying Solzhenitsyn’s Lenin. “Forty-seven years old... and still nothing is accomplished! He was nervous, bilious... He split with everyone. Did not allow anyone close to him. Inessa... Listen, his true love is depicted... from the year 1908 until 1920. Not a joke! Remember Ulyanov in Shatrov’s *And Farther, Farther?* as he clings to her bosom? Then it seemed like blasphemy. But now I read it... What to make of it? It’s human... It’s possible to show any hero or great man as a regular person... But this is not a caricature. You recognize Lenin...”

“Even though,” (here I interrupted) “you can show the same thing in a positive or a negative light.”

“Yes, yes,” M.S. agreed. “It turns out that something we understood to be textbook truth could be shown from another angle. And it would not be lying. It is a powerful work! But Lenin is portrayed as a destroyer... And alone against all.”

M.S. “portrayed” him for a long time, he was emotional and artistic. It was clear that it has touched him deeply.

I later tried to analyze this. Here is what I think. Even before, he did not iconize Lenin while he admired him, appealed to him and kept him handy. He saw Lenin’s main attribute in the fact that he was ready to disregard every dogma for the sake of the mission, for the sake of the real, concrete revolution.

Now he saw another one of Lenin’s qualities: his disregard for Russia. It was merely the same kind of testing ground for “the mission” as Germany, the USA (where, out of desperation, Lenin was considering to move) and Switzerland, where in 1916 he was trying to stir up a revolution among his Swiss assistants, not taking into account the absurdity of the very idea of a revolution on Switzerland.

It was not an accident that M.S. brought up the speculations about Lenin’s Jewish ancestors that started spreading at one point (and Shaginyan³ “in her innocence” took up this matter).

² Raisa Maksimovna Gorbacheva

³ Marietta Shaginyan, prominent Soviet writer.

Solzhenitsyn writes that Lenin was only a quarter Russian! “When I found out about this,” M.S. said, “I requested all this ‘data’ and hid it away under a secure lock. It has a very strong impact on people...”

Several times he repeated the fact that “he was only a quarter Russian” and started to think about Lenin’s Jewish-Swedish and Kalmyk bloodlines. It looks like herein lies his lenience toward Belov, Astaf’ev, Alekseev, Rasputin, Proskurin, and Bondarev, these rigid Black Hundredists.⁴ They “root for” the Russian *muzhik* and are appalled at the ruin of the Russian people and Russia. (And they know Solzhenitsyn by heart!) From here stems the blame they are laying on Stalin’s dispossession of the kulaks, the mass terror of the civil war, the massacre of the Antonovtsy⁵ and the Kronstadt⁶. They cite Trotsky, Sverdlov and other “Jews”... and they have raised a tail at Lenin! M.S. is constantly oscillating between the class nature of the October Revolution and “Russia.” A recent episode: in the list of candidates for the People’s Deputies that was sent around the PB [Politburo] there were over 300 names. The PB chose 100. Among the three hundred were both Baklanov and Bondarev. M.S. is benevolent towards Baklanov and wanted to keep him in the 100. (Yakovlev told me this as I was on vacation. And, it seems, the matter was decided in the “chestnut room.”) But he was warned: during the secret ballot at the CC Plenum Baklanov would not make it. At that point M.S. removed Baklanov and Bondarev.

Yesterday I stopped by Yakovlev’s. M.S. ordered us to make a schedule of his visits to foreign countries for the year 1989 (this is a separate issue).

A[lexander].N[ikolayevich Yakovlev].: Yesterday I stayed on after you and Ivan (Frolov) left after meeting with M.S. He said to me: “Oh, those gossipers... They have it coming. I’m going to deal with them during elections.”

I: Whom did he have in mind?

A.N.: Who do you think? Everybody knows, his “closest” colleagues!

At the same time he left “the 100” up to a secret ballot. After all, not only Zaikov or Yakovlev could have been hit, but M.S. himself. Sixty to seventy percent of the Plenum consists of people against *perestroika* and those who have a bone to pick.

On Friday evening Yakovlev, Frolov, and I had a discussion with M.S. about his schedule. He started by reading us a ciphered telegram from the KGB in Prague: they hate with a passion your

⁴ The Black Hundreds was a conservative pro-monarchy and ultra-nationalist movement in Russia active in the first decade of the 20th century.

⁵ Participants of a 1919-1921 peasant rebellion, also known as the Tambov rebellion, against the confiscation of grain by the Bolshevik authorities.

⁶ Participants of the 1921 Kronstadt rebellion against the Bolsheviks.

perestroika and the whole group who took power in 1968 and was treated nicely by Brezhnev & Co. They forecast total chaos and failure for us. And Jakes is a milksop (First Secretary of the CzCP CC).

Recently he visited Castro, who railed against our *perestroika*, calling it the betrayal of Marxism-Leninism, of revolution, socialism, “friends;” opportunism and revisionism of the worst kind... He said that Marxism-Leninism has its last sanctuary in Cuba, and that they will follow this path to the end. (I wonder how, if we cut off the 5 billion [rubles] per year in support?)

M.S. raised the question of whether he should go to Cuba (the visit scheduled for immediately after the UN did not take place because of the earthquake in Armenia). I gave a “speech” along the lines of: “The Beard” [Fidel Castro] wasted the revolution and now he is ruining the country, which is spiraling towards a total mess. It’s true that he will not stop in his demagoguery about orthodox Marxism-Leninism and going “to the end;” since this is the last thing he can use to preserve his “revolutionary halo.” But this halo is already a myth... Nobody reckons with Cuba in South America, it is no longer setting any kind of example. The Cuban factor has waned. A break in relations? But we are not the ones who are causing it. It Castro breaks it, then it will not be like the Chinese scenario. Quite the opposite--he is only going to harm himself. We will only win, and save 5 billion doing it. Are people going to grumble about this? Yes, some will: the dogmatists and dissenters from the “revolutionary camp” and the Communist Parties that are becoming extinct, whose time has passed.

Your visit could delay the break. But it will not change anything, because we cannot give them 10, 20 billion, which is what they want from us. Since we cannot provide, it means that we are revisionists and traitors, in a conspiracy with imperialism.

... In general, in politics it is best not to put something off in hopes that it will figure itself out, when it is clear that this is objectively impossible. This is what happened with Afghanistan: a year and a half ago it was clear that the outcome will be exactly what it is right now. But we waited, wasting billions of rubles, thousands of Afghan lives and hundreds of the lives of our boys. Why?! At this point M.S. really became angry...

Frolov started to echo him, referring to Metropolitan Pitirim (an acquaintance of his) who “teaches us to be patient.” Quite a joke!

M.S.: “You are wrong, Anatoly. I should go to Cuba. We cannot afford to open another front against us, you see what is happening in Czechoslovakia! And what about Romania, Kim Il-sung, and Honecker!”

I continued to grumble, but he counted the dates and set February 29 for his visit to Cuba.

January 20, 1989.

M.S. brilliantly conducted the “Trilateral Commission” meeting, he practically did not use my notes.

On the evening before, on the 17th, he asked me to stay after a meeting with the advisers and again (as he alternated between gesticulating and moving around the office and sitting in front of me on the back of a reclining chair) expounded his idea for the new book about the year 1988--the turning point year. At the meeting he stated his intention to have a “personal” election campaign (Ukraine, Moscow State University, Zvyozdnyi Gorodok⁷--about the Scientific-Technical Revolution) and divided up assignments to prepare his speeches.

To return to the “Trilateral Commission.” He interpreted the idea of coexistence as the adaptation of capitalism and socialism to each other, not only as a realistic approach to international politics at the state level. This is something new!

During these days the following episode took place. Yakovlev called me and asked whether I had seen the special folder with Shevardnadze’s proposal after his trip to Afghanistan.

I: “No.”

A.N.: “You should request to see it... I don’t know what to do. Do I again have to go against E.[duard] A[mvrosiyevich Shevardnadze] and M.S.? I’ve already had my ears boxed a couple of times... But my conscience is heavy.”

I: “Why?”

A.N.: “You see, Najibullah proposed a plan for us to send a brigade (3000-5000) from Turkestan to break the Kandahar blockade and secure the passage of caravans with weapons...”

I: “Is E.A. crazy, or does he not understand that Najibullah is setting a trap so we can’t leave, in order to cause us to clash with the Americans and with the rest of the world? Or is he so weak-willed that he cannot stand up against his requests?”

A.N.: “I don’t even know what to do...”

I: “Sasha, we need to tell M.S. We have to prevent one more crime! This would take even more of our boys’ lives... for a lost cause. For whom and for what? We came to the same point we knew we would come to a year ago, even a year and a half! Najibullah (and in essence we are saving his skin, since the regime cannot be saved) is not worth even ten of our boys, and it looks like this operation would take the lives of a hundred, if not more.”

⁷ A closed military training facility in the Moscow Oblast, where Soviet cosmonauts were trained since the 1960s.

As soon as we finished the conversation I received some papers from the top--the Special Folder. I immediately wrote a note to M.S. along the lines of “What are we doing?! In terms of casualties as well as the hopelessness of the situation? We are withdrawing and Najibullah is not worth violating the Geneva agreements.” And I added, “It looks like E.A. either succumbed to emotions, or he was personally tied up with Najibullah and decided to deal with dozens more of our boys’ lives.”

I sent the note right away.

A couple minutes later M.S. called me, I don’t even remember regarding what particular question. I did not know the answer, so he connected Yakovlev to the conversation. The issue was quickly resolved and Sashka⁸ said: “Mikhail Sergeyevich, I can’t bring myself to initial the document regarding the 56th storm brigade.”

M.S.: “What brigade?”

I interrupt: “Mikhail Sergeyevich, I just wrote you a note about this. It is inconceivable to agree with this action.”

M.S.: “Hold on, hold on. What brigade are you speaking about?”

Yakovlev and I vied with each other in explaining that E.A. send a Special Folder around the PB, in which he agrees with Najibullah’s plan...

M.S.: “He was telling me something, asking for permission to send it around, but there was no word of a brigade...”

He connected Shevardnadze to the intercom and right away a Yakovlev-Shevardnadze-Chernyaev argument broke out. M.S. listened to us and made comments, which were more and more in my and Yakovlev’s favor. From Shevardnadze’s side we heard childish prattling, and he increasingly blamed the military men. I interrupted him rather rudely, saying that the military provided technical implementation for a political plan that you agreed with. And this plan goes against all our policies and general common sense, not to speak of the sacrifice you are condemning our boys to once again.

E.A. got angry: “You were not there! Do you know what we’ve done there in 10 years?!”

I: “Why would we want to aggravate our crimes? What’s the logic? We will not save Najibullah in any case...”

E.A.: “He says that if he lasts one year after our withdrawal, he will last for a long time...”

I: “And you believe that? Based on that you are ready to throw our men into battle and break

⁸ The familiar version of the name Alexander

the word we gave in Geneva?!”

M.S. Started to break up the argument and reasoned with me, saying that we should not create the impression of running away, “the third world” is watching us closely, etc.

M.S.: “Alright. I am disconnecting you for now. I will speak with Kabul (Kryuchkov is there).” [He called Moiseyev, the Head of the General Staff, but he was not in his office. When Moiseyev got back he called me. I explained to him why the General Secretary was looking for him. We exchanged opinions and I understood that the new head of the General Staff is against this venture.]

The next day M.S. said nothing to me and Yakovlev. E.A. left for Vienna. M.S. led the “Trilateral Commission” and then had a Defense Council meeting until late at night. Today I read a ciphered telegram from Kabul: Kryuchkov, Zaikov, and Vorontsov report directly to M.S. that “a method to help Kandahar without a storm brigade was found.”

So that’s that. It’s likely that E.A. will see this as a slap in his face. And it serves him right! If he is such a humanist in Vienna and the UN he should think twice when “asked” to sacrifice human lives. Oh, it is so deeply ingrained in our consciousness that politicians have the “right” to decide such questions without a second thought!

M.S. already said that I will be going with him to Georgia (to Pitsunda) on February 25, for two weeks. He said we’ll think about the new book in our spare time.

January 21, 1989.

I notified M.S. (in written form, as he is at the Moscow conference) that the editorial board of “Pravda” condemned their editor-in-chief Afanasiev for his personal action of printing the authors Alekseev, Belov, Proskurin & Co. in defense of Bondarev. Astafiev stated that his signature was affixed without his knowledge! A denunciation that is handy for *perestroika*!

Sakharov, Bonner & Co. presented a thorough report of their visit to Armenia. I asked them to forward it to M.S.

January 22, 1989.

I read *Lenin in Zurich* for myself. What can one say, the author is fairly objective, if you consider his hatred for Lenin’s mission. Lenin’s personality is recognizable. It is another matter that many of the “Bolshevist values” are now devalued. Subsequent experience has turned them into their opposites, according to universal human values.

February 19, 1989.

Yesterday I wrote a note for M.S. on the state of ideology (impressed by his meeting with the working class on February 14, and *Pravda*'s editorial on the meeting's outcome). I criticized the Department of Ideology, Medvedev as well as Frolov. But later I removed the part about Frolov because it will look like a denunciation, even though his behavior of late is unbearable.

Then M.S. dictated three or four times the main ideas for the agrarian plenum. He is pretty determined, especially in light of the latest tricks from Ligachev (in Kharkov) about consolidating *kolkhozes* and *sovkhozes*⁹--to spite the General Secretary. Later, he was happy about a little thing: I took a trip to Moscow for a few hours (on the 6th) to pick up my notebooks with the PB session records and started preparing material for the book "*Perestroika: The Test of Life*." He came up with that title. Initially he wanted to title his second book "1988: The Turning-point Year." I took up the idea and sent it to Serebryanyi Bor ahead of Veber, Ermonsky & Co. Tomorrow I will join them and by the end of the month we should have the foundation of the book.

At Pitsunda M.S. got worked up because of Sakharov (as the result of an interview in *Figaro*). I tried to tell him that he should not make a persistent problem out of Sakharov... but he lashed out at me, and angrily... He dictated to *Izvestiya* how to put Sakharov in his place. But in the end, he was on the losing end, even though nobody knows that he started this.

He is impressionable, impulsive. It is not permissible in his position.

A similar episode took place with one American senior official, who chased his secretary around the desk, after which the Senate did not want to appoint him. This guy had also said something like "we need to pressure Gorbachev." M.S. made me incorporate a rebuke to him into the Kiev speech. I objected, but he insisted. Only in Moscow I persuaded him to remove this passage: it is not appropriate at his level to enter into arguments with various anti-soviets. If Bush had changed his policies, it would be a different matter.

I read a great deal during my evenings at Pitsunda. There is such a wealth of thought and talent in Russia when there is freedom! This in itself is a great victory which will enter the annals of history, even if *perestroika* itself does not work out.

M.S. thinks about this. He does not rule out the possibility of failure, even though he is very passionate about his work. His speech at the meeting with the workers was at the level of our Great Revolution. His oratory skill is equal to Lenin's. But who stands next to him! Everybody can see this [inadequacy]. At the meeting, one Moscow milling-machine operator openly said: "What is

⁹ *Kolkhoz* is a collective farm; a *sovkhos* is a state farm.

happening, Mikhail Sergeyevich! You are carrying the entire burden, the successes and the failures of *perestroika*. What about the others? Are they going to lie low until we read in the newspapers that due to old age and ailing health [you can no longer hold office]...” The presidium of the meeting was quite embarrassed. M.S. blushed, but found a way out of the situation. In print, this episode was only alluded to with the words: “the workers asked some really tough questions.”

Yesterday I spent the whole day at work. I edited M.S.’ dictation for the book’s introduction, made a few more entries. I heard that Najibullah called him and asked to restore the air-bridge to Kabul and send weapons, and to conduct bombing air raids from Soviet territory. I don’t know what M.S. promised him. Later I heard from the MFA that he assigned Varennikov to “delve into the question.” The MFA (Ivanov, E.A.’s adviser) asked me how to write the paper. I told them that it is their business. But I, as the General Secretary’s adviser, will resolutely protest this matter.

March 8, 1989.

I spent most of this week at Serebryanyi Bor. Yesterday we almost finished “*Perestroika: The Test of Life*.” Gorbachev’s second book is composed 95 percent of his own words, phrases, and thoughts expressed at the PB, one on one with me, in narrow circles and at closed meetings. Here he “bares himself” almost completely. And if he does not remove the most charged and colorful parts, this book will make an even bigger impression in the world than the first one.

My team was composed of Veber, Ermonsky, Antyasov, Ivanchenko, and, for a few days, Ambartsumov. Also three women. The operational procedure was as follows: I dictate from my notebooks (I had already dictated a great deal at Pitsunda), together we divide the material into themes, each person edits his section for consistency and literariness (I watched carefully that they do not slip into using their own words or stylize too much). Then I finalize the order, come up with marginalia and subheadings, edit the entire piece, mostly reproducing his manner in places where they guys hesitated to do it.

It is already 400 pages. Yesterday I spent some time on the conclusion. I think we will finish tomorrow.

A colleague from the Department of Party Organizational Work called. He asked me if I was planning to make any speeches, since they are summing up the results of the CPSU candidates’ participation in election campaigns, and according to their records I have not made any appearances. I said that I was not planning on it. He replied that in this case, it might have to be mentioned at the Plenum. I am probably the only one. I did not even assign authorized representatives for myself. I do not want to succumb to these formalities. I see my candidacy as a “reward” from Gorbachev

personally and I don't want to play Deputy, because it would be absurd in my position.

On March 2 there was a PB in preparation for the Plenum on agrarian issues. The invited members of the CC Agrarian Commission (about 40 people) made M.S. furious (led by Nikonov and Ligachev). He gave a fight to the "kolkhozniki."

Ryzhkov got personal against Ligachev and Nikonov. The situation was on the brink of scandal or a split. M.S. twice asked the "rhetorical question:" maybe we should cancel the Plenum completely, maybe we are not ready for new agrarian policies?

March 11, 1989.

Today I finished working on the greeting that will be videotaped for the XVIII Congress of the Italian Communist Party. It turned out beautifully... in my opinion.

All these days M.S. has been at Novo-Ogarevo with Yakovlev, Medvedev, and Boldin, preparing the report for the agrarian Plenum (after that PB). I read it today. It is powerful. But the historical part--saying goodbye to the past and to collectivization--is stronger than the part on the new agrarian policy. The substance is not lacking, it is revolutionary. But the expression is weak: wordiness, lack of intensity. The kind of intensity that is present in the historical part, which he practically dictated to us himself, and started back in Pitsunda. In the second part you feel the gibberish of ready-made apparatus phrases.

Tomorrow he is holding a PB to hear comments on his text. I tried to dissuade him, why does he need this? He has observed the formalities, the PB on March 2nd already discussed the Plenum draft and framework of the report. All he has to do is prepare the report "taking the discussion into consideration." Why should he sit through more groaning... and agreement through clenched teeth?

"No!" he said, "later they will say that I operated single-handedly..."

Well, he does as he sees fit. He called me this morning. He personally compares the significance of this Plenum to the discussions of 1927-28, when "the choice was being made"... I think he is right.

Also, Najibullah is crying out for help. He's saying that Jalalabad is under siege and will fall any minute, opening the road to Kabul. He is demanding that we conduct bombing air-raids from the Soviet territory. (Bombing air-raids!) Otherwise, he says, any day now everything will collapse.

The humanist and liberal Shevardnadze is supporting Najibullah very strongly and with Georgian-style passion, and he is pulling Kryuchkov and Yazov after him. Although Yazov is holding a general's position, along the lines of: there is no sense in these bombing air-raids from a

military point of view, we will not be able to conceal them from the world, but if there is a political decision--I'm a military man!

In response to two panicky telegrams from Kabul, last night M.S. held a PB in Novo-Ogarevo at 6 o'clock. I was not invited, it was a narrow circle. I am recording it from Yakovlev's "colorful" description.

First M.S. asked Yazov to speak. The latter stated the above mentioned position without enthusiasm. Then E.A. started to furiously argue that "we cannot act otherwise, it would be a betrayal, we promised, we are forsaking our friends... what will the third word say, Mengistu... if Najibullah can last two more months he might be able to stay for good," etc. Kryuchkov supported him (in about 75 percent).

"Who else wants to speak?" M.S. asked.

Silence... Chebrikov got up, started talking, mostly in the right direction, and buying time, trying to guess what the General Secretary is thinking (A.N.'s evaluation).

Afterwards there again was silence. M.S. asked Yakovlev if he wanted to speak.

According to A.N., he did not mince his words.

"From a military point of view it is a waste of time. Moreover, where is that army of 200,000 plus the [national] guard and the rest that Najibullah, as well as Shevardnadze and Kryuchkov, told us about?"

I've forgotten the war (A.N. is a veteran) but I remember that a ratio of one to three is enough for defense. So what do we have? The Mujahedeen have 15,000 and where is the regime's army? They don't want to fight... So why should we again put our boys forward for this lost cause? The Pakistanis can shoot down our planes from F-16s without leaving their airspace."

E.A. threw out a comment that Pakistan is brazenly violating the Geneva agreements.

A.N.: "But we are not Pakistan. It took us so much work to win international confidence and we are beginning to reach something as a result of New Thinking. Are we going to flush it down the drain by this single action? And for what?! Our people are just beginning to slowly recover from Afghanistan. We greeted [General] Gromov at the border together with the last soldiers who fought on Afghan soil... and what are we doing?! To top it off, this is the middle of an election campaign. Or do we not give a damn about our public opinion, about our people?!"

M.S.: "Anybody else?"

Slyunkov: "I completely support what Alexander Nikolayevich has said."

Nikonov spoke in more general terms, but also against the air-raids.

Medvedev spoke calmly, but repeated Yakovlev's arguments.

Maslyukov--the same. He provided some technical arguments why the air-raids would be pointless from a military aspect.

Ryzhkov was not there, he is in Siberia. Ligachev is in Prague.

Finally, M.S. spoke. He was all red and angry: "I am totally against all these bombing air-raids or anything like them. And while I am General Secretary I will not allow anyone to trample on the word we gave before the whole world. Did we not know what we were doing when we decided to withdraw troops? Were we certain that Najibullah would be able to stay? Or did we count on it, even for ourselves, as a condition for what we signed in Geneva?" Etc.

Yakovlev said that he cannot coherently convey all the arguments M.S. gave because it was an emotional explosion, from which followed that there can be no other answer to Najibullah except a total rejection of the air-raids.

This was immediately sent to Kabul. Today I was already reading Najibullah's lamentations to Vorontsov.

Besides saying that he will not leave Kabul and will die there, etc., he said in a lower timbre that if the regime crashes it would be a hit to Gorbachev's prestige, once again--what will the third world say. But most importantly: if you (Russians) had not come in then, in 1979, the matter would have been resolved quickly. One of the sides would have won, and there might have been a hundred casualties. But you did come in, and the Afghan problem became international. We are not the only ones responsible, you share the burden. And now you are washing your hands of us.

He is right. But why should our nation and the entire new management of our country pay for something that was done 10 years ago by Gromyko, Ustinov, and Andropov?

Boldin called right now, he is reminding me that I am the only CPSU Deputy candidate who has not made any speeches and that a question might be raised at the Plenum. I don't care.

The book "*Perestroika: The Test of Life*" is completed. 400 pages. I sent it to M.S. on March 9th. He has not said anything. Of course, he does not have time to devote to the book right now; but we should publish it before the Congress of Soviets. Plus, the year it is devoted to is receding... New events are coming up and taking over. The dacha in Serebryanyi Bor is closed.

April 3, 1989.

The plane to London did not leave on schedule because of a severe thunderstorm. I returned home. In issue No. 5 of *The Communist* I read an article by a certain Panarin, titled "Dialectics of Humanism." This is the rejection of Marxism-Leninism as an ideology! The seeds of M.S.' New Thinking have grown deep and are already bearing their own fruit. I should make M.S. read this

article carefully.

I have not been recording some very important things because of fatigue. This last week I've been feeling particularly unwell.

Yakovlev on his conversation with M.S. regarding Zaikov's and Yeltsin's "provocations"... I also had a conversation with M.S. about this when I was working through materials for England.

M.S.: "He is a good person, honest, concerned, not looking out for his personal interests... but it is not his thing!"

I: "He is not a politician."

M.S.: "Not only that. One can become a politician. But there has to be a foundation... a vessel. The contents will come with experience, but the vessel comes from God. Take me, for example. Have I changed much since childhood? Not really. In essence I am the same as I always was..."

Shakhnazarov spoke with him, saying that it is time to get a new team. "Look at us," he said, "me, Chernyaev, others. We've spent our entire lives writing; we might have been able to get something done if we had been given access to the decision-making process in due time. Mikhail Sergeyevich, don't let the moment pass. Get fresh forces, there are plenty of them. Anatoly and I are getting old, we have only a little bit of time left, it is too late to make 'politicians' out of us."

He has a conversation with Grosz (Hungarian General Secretary) left; which in its own right, in essence, is the end of the Brezhnev doctrine. Grosz said: "I will disband the PB and let the people choose a new one, the kind that the country needs." Shakhnazarov jokingly suggested that we should follow his example... M.S. objected, saying that we cannot do that with the present CC. This Central Committee will not produce the necessary Politburo.

The Western and our press are all saying in unison: Gorbachev consciously "set up" the party bureaucracy to take a hit from the voters. By the way, Solovyov was overtly saying this at the PB on election outcomes. He said that the Leningrad party members are complaining that the CC left them to their own devices. Ligachev also supported this "idea" in his speech, during which he incidentally let it be understood that he considers Gorbachev's agrarian policy "a statement," rather than a workable proposal.

It is unlikely that M.S. was consciously trying to show "who's who." But he gave a strong rebuke to Lukyanov at the PB when the latter tried to rally people in support of those who lost the elections.

"They," M.S. spoke bluntly, "are going to sit in their chairs and treat people like scum--we are still getting letters that show us how they deal with people who come to the regional committees

and executive committees... They do nothing to sort out the problem of food supply... Meanwhile the CC is supposed to support and defend them! This will not happen! Let them draw conclusions from the elections. And let them work better..."

M.S. hinted to me and Yakovlev that he is also planning to "draw conclusions" from the elections... especially regarding Moscow and Leningrad.

Yesterday when we were seeing Gorbachev off at the airport there was a serious clash between some PB members--at some distance from the foreign ambassadors, who were watching the scene in surprise. The main issue was between Gorbachev and Zaikov. You could see that it was a very heated conversation. When the airplane was taxiing to take off, I found myself in a group with Ryzhkov, Slyunkov, Zaikov, Birukova, and Lukyanov. The Premier was practically shouting at Zaikov for the state he has allowed Moscow to fall into; from his corner, Slyunkov was also adding steam. Zaikov was losing his temper... Overall it looked quite curious! The country's high-level executives quarrelling over the fact that in one dairy shop you can find only milk, in the other only cream, in the third only kefir. Cabbage rots at open-air markets while you can't find any of it in stores.

I could not follow the conversation very closely. It was clearly a continuation of what had started while M.S. was here. But Nikolai Ivanovich [Ryzhkov] kept repeating like a refrain: you and Ligachev can offer whatever you want. I am going to oppose it, because it is a dead end, a disaster.

April 16, 1989.

From April 3rd through the 7th I was in London, my favorite city. For some reason not a single other foreign trip has left such an impression on me as London. It is my fifth time, and I still feel the same.

About Gorbachev's visit itself. The result can be seen in the brochure for Politizdat (on the visit to Great Britain) which I finished editing yesterday, filling in the spaces between the texts of M.S.' and Thatcher's speeches. The journalists who were supposed to deliver the reports did a shoddy job... And all their banalities and simply fabricated material, lies, were printed in our newspapers.

On the most important: the Madam was magnificent. For three hours I sat across from her in the room where the negotiations with M.S. were conducted. She was aiming to carry him away in conversation. He sensed that and was "playing" the role of a man "who creates an impression."

Publicly Thatcher was liberal with the highest praises and excellent appraisals. She did this confidently, defiant of her own establishment and of other Western leaders, and Bush. She was

playing to public policy, to history, to herself. If M.S. succeeds in his plans, then she will be remembered for this.

Her “cunning” runs in the channel of New Thinking, which he proposed himself: Russia has no other option left. It has to become like everybody else. If this happens, then the October and Stalin syndromes will disappear from world politics. The world will truly be completely different.

I am convinced that she sincerely wishes the best for us. Her pride and ambition coincide with her feminine and human impulse. M.S. is playing careful. Mostly, he is afraid of our people. In the airplane on the way back he said: she does it that way, and we this way (i.e. with reserve)... He looked at me and said: Anatoly disagrees (present were Shevardnadze, Yakovlev, Kamentsev, Frolov and Raisa Maksimovna).

I said that of course I disagree. Firstly, it is unfair not to react to kindness. She is doing us good: she raised the plank of *perestroika* and your prestige so high that Kohl, Mitterrand, and even Bush urgently need to learn how to high-jump. She practically cancelled the wave of negativism that started to roll over our *perestroika*. You mentioned this wave yourself, maybe even too much.

Secondly, she is influencing public policy from our position, i.e. she is doing what you yourself would like to do through your New Thinking. Her position on Namibia is eloquent testimony to that. Nobody helps you to change the international situation so forthrightly. Why should you pretend that you do not appreciate it? Besides, she is a woman... and it is wrong to think of her as a man in a skirt. Her character, even her political manner is feminine. And she is an Englishwoman... If she opens herself so sincerely and is not reciprocated, the pride factor will kick in... and we will lose a great deal.

There was an episode at the embassy while we were finishing up work on M.S.’ Guildhall speech. Everybody who came to the residence after the official lunch at Downing street was present (Shevardnadze, Yakovlev, Kamentsev, Falin, Kovalyov, Akhromeev). I first snapped at Kamentsev, who was dabbling in something he does not understand, then at Kovalyev, and finally at Yakovlev, which caused a mini-shock. M.S. diffused the situation, saying: pluralism is in action here, too. It was fine in the end, and, as it turned out, A.N. was right to demand that we take out three polemic pages that would have been inappropriate for the enthusiastic (there is no other word for it) audience of the British establishment in Guildhall. On the airplane I admitted my mistake and asked A.N. to forgive me. He took it in a friendly way.

M.S.’ meeting with Vogel is one more step toward liquidating the ICM.¹⁰

¹⁰ International Communist Movement

Recently M.S. read a synopsis of a book by the French author Lilly Marcou titled “Gorbachev’s Challenge.” For 20 minutes on the phone he was in rapture about how she understood him better than his own country has, better than some people in his circle. She has revealed intentions he has had all along. He said he hasn’t seen anything deeper or more insightful (from the dozen or so books on this subject). Let’s write her back. And immediately he started dictating the text; albeit removing the part about “intentions” that she revealed.

This is regarding the intentions. When he got back from London two “presents” were waiting for him: the sinking of one of our newest submarines, and the bloody events in Georgia.

Well, the submarine is “in the natural order of things” considering our disorderliness and, sadly (!) M.S.’ own inconsistency. If he said “A” (at the UN) he should say “B,” not play around like this.

Georgia--this is fate; more precisely a sign from fate. If this Christian nation, beloved by Russians, with whom we have lived on the best of terms for 200 years, with whom we fought together and truly respected each other, if they want to leave the USSR, then what does this mean? This is not the Baltics, where everything is clear. That means there are two choices: occupation, which would mean an “empire” again, or a confederation type of federation. The end-of-June Plenum should decide that.

For now M.S. is not ready for such a step, and I don’t know whether he is personally not ready or if he thinks that “they will not let him.” But he decided to empty the CC of 83 elderly (and such) members on April 25. About 5 people know about this right now... This move will have an enormous moral impact (it is not a question of this dead weight being able to stall any initiative or even “abolish” M.S.--they are not capable of that anymore). The point is that he will show who is in charge of the situation. In a month he will become “President.” Then it will be time to start following those intentions: to make Russia a normal country, even if not quite so centralized.

My personal affairs. I feel that I am getting worn out. The workload is not lightening. But I think I am still managing it. I feel like there is a certain element of uncertainty in the relationship with M.S. Maybe it is because he is used to me that there is no sign of “recognition of services.” I have never been vain, which I remember I wrote in my war diary in 1943. But nothing else is left by way of motivation. I earn less than a miner or a bus driver.

He is still confidential with me. Sometimes he says unexpected things, for example about the Georgian leadership, “which wet its pants and set the troops against the people.” They cannot imagine another kind of leadership, he said. However, after expressing his sympathies about the women who died in the clash, he immediately said: “Every cloud has a silver lining!” It is a mystery

to me what he meant.

He has more self-confidence, but at the same time he does not lose his healthy sober-ironic approach to things. For example, about ciphered telegrams. "I know their worth," he said, "they see what they are supposed to do (in the sense that the KGB writes about policing problems, the diplomats about their own ambitions, the army men about their concerns) and they do not analyze the whole picture, it is as though they want to intimidate us. Well, to each his own. It serves its own purpose--so we here in Moscow keep our eyes open and don't sleep."

By the way, Ligachev was not at the PB and there was a totally different atmosphere. Yakovlev and I were talking about it: it is not that people are afraid of him; it is just unpleasant to say what you think openly and sincerely when you see in front of you a person who considers you a traitor and an enemy.

The dismantling of Leninism, or at least Marxism-Leninism, has unfurled at full speed since Tsipko's famous articles (he is an adviser at the CC International Department, by the way). Only Lenin's period from 1921-23 is steadily withstanding [scrutiny].

Under Diligensky's leadership, the journal "World Economics and International Relations" is systematically and openly demolishing the theory of imperialism and the orthodox revolutionary process. Now Primakov and Martynov's book is also adding to the process, it has gotten high reviews in *Pravda* the other day. M.S. does not have the time to seriously follow this process, but when he finally looks around, he will see that the playing field is completely clear for the "new theory" or for a complete rejection of theory in the ideological sense.

April 23, 1989.

A week has passed, marked by a PB session, which discussed Shevardnadze's report on his "business trip" to Georgia and the April 9th events in Tbilisi. In general, wherever you look... the country is in torment. The country is unwell. And *glasnost* is like a sick person's feverish delirium. As of yet, there are no signs of improvement...

What Georgia reminded us about, the address of the people's Deputies from the Baltic states formulated in words: Russia must cease being an empire. Then what, and how, should it become? Who can lead it into another state (in this sense)?

Nedelya published material by Voronsky (a famous literary critic and the editor of an influential journal in the 1920s, a Trotskyite, was repressed). *Ogonyok* printed Radek' and Trotsky's articles on Lenin, and earlier it had an article by Bukharin about Lenin. You read all of this, written during Lenin's lifetime, and in every line you recognize Gorbachev... except he is a notch lower

(the level of education is not the same), but his mentality, his spirit, the methodology of political action, the principle is the same as theirs--everything stems from life. If theory does not correspond to life, then so much the worse for the theory. They are similar in ethical habits, in the way they treat people. It is amazing! After all, Gorbachev is not trying act like Lenin, this is his own nature!

April 30, 1989.

The CC Plenum was truly unprecedented. CC member Gellert, a German woman from Kazakhstan who is a tractor operator, described what her colleagues were talking about before the Plenum: “they are planning to overthrow Gorbachev. What should we do?” At the Plenum itself people’s tongues were loose. The local bosses sensed (after the elections) that it’s time to mobilize. Their speeches were impudent, unduly familiar, even contained some offensive allusions to M.S. He immediately found his bearings and ordered that every single word of the proceedings be published, so people can see who stands for what! But he did not really put up a fight, even though he did not back down on any issue, including the mass media, regarding which he wavers.

No one of his real supporters entered into polemics straight off. Why? I think for these reasons:

- a) They have no experience...
- b) They were oppressed by the negative “facts” which the other side wielded...
- c) They could not be sure that they would get unequivocal support from M.S.

Yesterday he said that the speeches sounded somehow “coordinated,” as if they spoke from notes and repeated the same thing...

Immediately after the Plenum he called me. He was curious how I saw it. I told him that “Nina Andreyeva” ran the show and that even if these people support *perestroika*, their level of awareness is not above Nina’s, and naturally there will be no *perestroika* with such cadres heading the *oblast’* committees [obkoms].

He railed against a number of people (Bobovik, Melnikov from Komi) but he was not trying to show off. He even said: well, should we follow the example of Egorychev¹¹ in 1967--he was gone the next day!

I think it would do some good. People would understand--if we are waging a revolution then democratic measures are not always appropriate.

¹¹ M.S. is referring to a CC Plenum episode during the Brezhnev era. First Secretary of the Moscow City Committee, Egorychev, under an impression from the Arab-Israeli war, ventured to give a careful criticism of the state of Moscow’s anti-aircraft defense. He was immediately removed from his position. [Footnote in the original]

Afterwards I wrote him a “treatise” on the Plenum. He used some of it on Thursday for the PB on the Plenum’s outcomes. My specific proposals are: to reduce the CC to 100 members; to do away with the “representative” principle; to raise the intellectual level of the CC, moving it closer to Lenin’s model from 1918-22. And I suggested that something has to be done with the Leningrad organization, with Solovyov.

The PB was indecisive because people are afraid to appear to be ignoring criticism from below, especially from the CC. Which means that they were under the pressure of the same negative outcomes as the Plenum members had been, these *perestroika* men. Shevardnadze came close to exposing the “[Nina] Andreyeva” nature of the Plenum. Yakovlev and Medvedev were very careful. Others (even Ryzhkov) generally took the “spontaneous” course of self-criticism, saying that we need to draw serious conclusions... and they came down hard on the mass media and neo-dissidents. So the only positive result of the Plenum was the removal of the “old men,” the retirees. This is positive not because they were a hindrance to *perestroika*--they are already beyond politics and (despite unjustified fears) matters could not have come to a vote of no confidence for removing the PB. The positive is in the signal it sends: M.S. has the power to do the same against active opponents if they go against his policies.

Last night (on Saturday) he called Ryzhkov, Yakovlev, Medvedev, Maslyukov, Boldin, Lukyanov and the advisers to meet in order to make decisions about preparations for the Congress of People’s Deputies. The neo-dissidents on Trubnaya Square have already stated their time-frame and program, the gist of which is presented in G. Popov’s article in *Ogonyok*. It is clearly juxtaposed to the “apparatus” time-frame and Lukyanov’s projects, which, admittedly, have some gaps. The most important objective of the meeting was to decide what should be said in the leader of the country’s address. The discussion lasted for 6 hours. One entire hour was consumed by Frolov’s smug idle talk. Nevertheless, M.S. referred to him the most, even attributed some of my ideas to him. Here at work is the magic of the title of Academician (provincialism), plus the fact that he is Raisa Maksimovna’s favorite. M.S.’ attitude towards Shakhnazarov, who has already done a great deal to prepare the report, was user-ironic. I think two factors are playing into this: M.S. doesn’t like the fact that Shakh[nazarov] keeps offering options similar to what is in *Ogonyok* and in *Moskovskie novosti* [Moscow news]; but most importantly, Shakh has not been too polite in responding to “requests” and “suggestions” from R.M. Alas!

I think this is the reason M.S. made Shakhnazarov partner up with Ostroumov, who will be working on socialist countries.

Thus, a very difficult month is ahead of us, especially since on the 5th there is a meeting with

[Sosuke] Uno from Japan and then Baker.

May 2, 1989.

I am finishing reading Marienhof's *Cynics*. Magnificent prose. We lost so much after Socialist Realism did away with such writers, dozens like him. My main impression is that back then, talented and perceptive people could see, they knew that nothing would come of socialism in Russia. It was not without reason that Lenin exiled all the Berdyaevs and Shestovs abroad... Although by doing that he also ended Marxism, because around 1920-23 he realized that the kind of Marxism that started the Revolution could not exist in Russia, and something new was needed, like the true Leninism of 1923. However, the party did not understand and accept this and tried to quickly cover it up with glorification and a cult image.

Overall I am anxious and troubled. I feel a sense of crisis of the Gorbachev period. He is ready to go far, but what does that mean? His favorite word is unpredictability.

What is most likely is a breakdown of the country and something akin to chaos. He cannot go far because he feels like he has lost the levers of power... completely. He is holding on to the familiar methods, but in velvet gloves. There is no conception of what we are moving toward. The invocations of "socialist values" and "the ideals of October"... as soon as he starts reciting them they sound ironic in knowing ears--there is no substance behind them. Now the "socialist security." What do we have now, when 22 million people earn less than 60 rubles?! And so forth. He is fighting off demagogues who are destroying our "values" unaware (or aware) of the fact that this will bring us back to what we walked away from in 1917, i.e. capitalism. In reality, we did not walk away, or rather--we walked into nowhere and now we don't know what kind of society we live in.

At that meeting with M.S. (April 29) we discussed Yemelyanov. We gave M.S. a record of what Yemelyanov, who is a professor at Moscow State University, was telling his students when he was already a Deputy. Specifically, he said that *perestroika* is already four years old, it is clearly a failure and its leaders have run out of steam.

M.S.: "So what should we do with him?"

Medvedev, Lukyanov, Yakovlev: Work with him...

When I was coming back from dacha yesterday (May 1) in the car on radio *Mayak* I heard an interview with Yemelyanov (on the occasion of May 1). Here is almost literally what he said: "*Perestroika* is truly a revolution. But it is a textbook truth of Marxism-Leninism that a revolution raises the question of power. The same now: there will be talk about power at the Congress of People's Deputies. We know that the ruling elite never voluntarily gives up its power, which means

that we have to take it. This is what the Congress is for.”

So people like Yemelyanov, G. Popov and such will be taking the power from Gorbachev. But since it is true that he will not give it up voluntarily, they will create an obstruction--he will have to use force...and here we go again: another dissolution of the Constituent Assembly?¹²

May 9, 1989.

On May 7th I was preparing materials for M.S.’ meeting with Baker. Naturally, I did not use the instructions and drafts from the MFA, which are so outdated they could have been used a year ago for Shultz-Reagan. The absence of an imagination and the bureaucratic inertia is simply staggering. They have no comprehension or philosophy of the current situation.

M.S. had appeared to get ready to meet with journalists to “talk” about his personal life. When he finished the meeting with Uno from Japan he asked me and Shevardnadze to stay for a consultation. He mentioned that rumors are multiplying, R.M. is upset, he has nothing to hide and is ready to speak openly about everything.

I suggested that he should do this after the Congress, when he becomes President. It would look more natural. If he does it right now, it will look like ingratiating with the philistine public opinion. Neither he nor E.A. agreed with me. He was preparing to go ahead, but then... he did not invite the journalists. I don’t know, maybe he remembered my advice and changed his mind.

On the 3rd there was a meeting in Mossovet¹³ with the Deputies. [Gorbachev] once again charmed... the Gdlyan issue. Scum. There is already a poster on Arbat: “Yeltsin, Georgia, Gdlyan... who’s next?”

On the 8th I wrote the international section for M.S. for the Congress. It was difficult, everything seems to have been said already. I decided to use a polemic against the CC Plenum (Bobovikov & Co.).

May 13, 1989.

Baker was here the day before yesterday. The American idea is that we, the USSR, have nowhere to go, the situation is moving toward collapse, therefore the Secretary of State came empty handed...

M.S. outshone him on all counts. He dealt a blow to NATO’s sore point... Let them figure it out. After all, New Thinking is already working in the sense that it is clear that nobody is going to

¹² A reference to the events of 1918, in which the Bolsheviks took power in the government.

attack us and we can conduct our work with *perestroika* and reduce the army as much as we want, reduce the military-industrial complex, withdraw from Eastern Europe...

Gorbachev has unraveled everywhere the irreversible processes of “collapse” which had been held in place or covered up by:

- the arms race;
- fear of war;
- myths about the ICM, about the “socialist commonwealth,” the “worldwide revolutionary process,” and “proletarian internationalism.”

... Socialism is disappearing in Eastern Europe.

... Communist parties are falling apart in Western Europe, where they did not manage to get a foothold as even the smallest national power...

Everything that has been long-ripe in reality has now spilled over onto the surface and taken its natural form... And it turned out that nothing was like what was imagined and portrayed.

But the most important is the dissolution of myths and unnatural life-forms of our society:

- the economy is falling apart;
- the image of socialism is disintegrating; there is no ideology proper;
- the federation, the empire, is collapsing.
- the Party is crumbling, having lost its position of the ruling and, overall, repressive, punishing force;
- the leadership is shaky to a critical point...

And no alternative leadership has formed yet... The first sprouts of chaos have come up, since no one is capable of enforcing the grave laws intended to maintain discipline; and our people can be accustomed to order only through force.

The main focus before the Congress is the nationalities question. The day before yesterday the PB was examining the situation in the Baltic states. Six members of the PB presented a note after all the committees and dispatches. The note is program-like, panicky: everything is collapsing, the people's fronts are taking power. In this atmosphere the three First Secretaries Vaino, Brazauskas, and Vargis were criticized. But they did not allow themselves to be torn apart. They held a dignified manner and shot back with irrefutable arguments.

I sat and worried about what M.S. would do. Once again he came up several grades above his colleagues (I later “complimented” him and admired his closing speech).

¹³ Moscow City Soviet

The main ideas were:

- We have to trust the First Secretaries. It could not be otherwise.
- We cannot identify the popular fronts, which have the support of 90 percent of the population in the republics, with extremists. We need to communicate with them.
- If we announce referendums then no one, not even Lithuania, will leave.
- We must involve the popular front leaders into national and government leadership, give them positions where they can show how good they are connecting words and deeds.
- Overall we need to think as hard as we can on how to practically transform the federation.

Otherwise, it really will fall apart.

- The use of force is out of the question. If we eliminated it in foreign policy then so much the more we have to eliminate it with our own people.
- We need to elevate the level of analysis of the processes. In this regard, we need to improve the Document of “the six.” We have to be more careful with all kinds of “qualifications” and “labels.” This is the nationalities question.

- State planning should not assume a mentoring position. Do the utmost to meet them halfway.

- Etc.

And the second thing... the Leningrad reelections are tomorrow. For several days 34 candidates from one district where the March 26 elections fell through, shone on the Leningrad TVs with flaming demagoguery. It was like a competition in who will surpass in abusing the local and Moscow leadership. One worker had the following to say. (Oh! This myth about the working class!)

- Gorbachev is lying to us.
- Let us do away with the 750 Deputies from the CPSU and social organizations for the Congress. Let us give these places to the workers.
- The working class has never been so exploited as during *perestroika*.
- How much longer are we going to see empty store shelves?! It's a mockery!
- The working class has not seen any democracy. The bureaucrats rule everything, and they have kept their privileges.
- The working class is ready to take to the streets with weapons.
- Do away with the Moscow mafia!

And more of the same.

Nobody objected. Nobody stopped this man or corrected him, including the TV-show host. There are suspicions that this has been purposefully organized against Gorbachev in revenge for

March 26 (since he betrayed the apparatus he can have a taste of his own *glasnost* medicine).

M.S. says to Jaruzelski that one should not be afraid or get mad at the people (this is in regard to the April Plenum). But who is--the people? Who is speaking in the name of the people? For now it is the mob, and the Leningrad worker was a representative.

Today somebody on TV recalled the words of the anarchist prince Kropotkin: freedom is not democratic, it is aristocratic. How deep this is!

May 21, 1989.

The Plenum is tomorrow. I found out from Ivan (Frolov) about M.S.' comment: "we need to go farther, farther"... (he must have remembered Shatrov). Judging by the gravity with which it was said, Ivan decided that he was referring to "firing" someone else from the PB.

The Congress is in a few days.

I am uneasy. Baglai wrote rightly in *Izvestiya* that we are behaving as if we have 100 years of stable democracy behind us, which can easily process any extremism, etc.

What are we doing? On TV there was a broadcast of an anti-Semitic meeting headed by Yevseev and an "interview" with five drunk anti-Semites from *Pamyat'*, who declared that Jews have come to power with the PB's help: Shatrov, Baklanov, Pozner, Zakharov, Borovik, Korotich.

And the "response" was an ironic reaction from the young TV journalists who conducted the interview, who, by the way, offered to have a discussion between the six named Jews and their interviewees.

Pryakhin, who called himself a worker Deputy candidate, at a meeting with constituents declared on TV for the entire Soviet Union to hear that Gorbachev is lying to the people with his programs, which carry no trace of real bread or meat.

There was a decision to put Gdlyan and Ivanov in their place. TV is broadcasting the "universal indignation of the people." But at the same time a meeting is scheduled in Moscow, organized by a "strike committee" in defense of Gdlyan. They not only accused Ligachev, Solomentsev, and Romanov of corruption (in front of the entire Soviet Union), but also hinted at Gorbachev.

Today in Luzhniki 100,000 people are gathering at a meeting organized by *Memorial* and the People's front of Moscow. Formally it is in support of *perestroika*. But what form might it take? Yesterday Karyakin visited me (he is currently the chairman of *Memorial*). He said that he does not exclude the possibility that the meeting might demand the resolution (from the Deputies, there are going to be around 40 present) to nominate Yeltsin for presidency.

I asked him about the chances of this happening.

He said: “Why not... they might accept and put forward a proposal at the Congress... you never know.”

I: “But this would be the ruin of all our work...”

Karyakin: “We will fight... Yeltsin and Sakharov went to Tbilisi. Now they are spreading rumors that not only Chebrikov, Yazov, and Ligachev are to blame for the ‘bloody Sunday’ but also Gorbachev...”

I: “Stop sticking these allegations on him, he was not even in Moscow.” I explained to Karyakin what really happened.

He said: “I believe you, but...” and he made a gesture in reference to the rest of the people. So, matters are pretty gloomy.

Yesterday and the day before M.S. called me a couple times. He has come to himself after the trip to China. He sounds cheerful and confident... he made jokes. I asked him if he planned to expound his report at the Congress.

M.S.: “Definitely not! They will start up the nonsense again, like at the April Plenum... This time at the Plenum we will only have the procedural’ Congress issues.”

Nobody except the PB members know whom he is moving into the key posts in the Supreme Soviet (the speakers, the committee leaders, etc). At this point, there is no certainty that these nominations will go through... In fact, there is no guarantee that the Congress order designed by Lukyanov will be adopted. And it is very doubtful that Ryzhkov will be Premier.

It is difficult for me to say whether it would be good or bad if people like Gavrila Popov or Shmelev would take key positions. But if I were M.S. I would not try to resist: let them demonstrate whether their word can turn into action. We are not getting much from the familiar and controllable officials in Lukyanov’s and Chebrikov-Pavlov’s Departments. This was demonstrated by last months’ notorious laws, which were blamed for everything.

One can see the PB’s incompetence. Sometimes I get ashamed sitting and listening to the discussion. M.S. rises high above everyone else, but he cannot go deeply into everything... He cannot organize the preparation of all drafts in every detail, considering all aspects. Lukyanov is a good official, he is competent, but he is covering his totalitarian ideology with faithfulness to the law. And for now he is the one writing the laws; the drafts, at least.

M.S.’ speech in Peking before scholars and public officials is another step in New Thinking. Unlike the UN speech, the world has not yet taken notice of this one, of its essence. (He wrote it with Shakhnazarov).

Medvedev (the team-leader in preparing M.S.' speech for the Congress) is keeping me in suspense about my international section. I took his main suggestions into consideration (to distance New Thinking from the principals of foreign policy, so as not to force the Parliament to confirm philosophy). What after that? Darkness... Yakovlev did not get involved. He said it appeared to be suitable. However, if it they take out the polemic implications against the April Plenum--these morons who applauded Bebel--the international section "will not resound."

I finally finished reading Marienhof's book. The wisdom of high prose: a fusion content (the epoch) and form, free of any tinsel and external emotions, and consequently starkly impressive.

Towards evening I walked to the Kremlin to register my Deputy status. I ran into Vaino Valjas in the stairwell. I commended him on his courage and his speech at the PB. He asked me to tell M.S. that he will support the Union to the end, to the "last second."

The procedure [of registering] is simple. They gave me 400 rubles. I saw yesterday on TV that an American congressman has 18 employees and a budget of 670,000 dollars per year. But even if I had that much, what would I do, what could I do? I cannot imagine myself in the role of a Deputy. Maybe I am just tired; plus, I was never made for active public work. I always avoided it... Because I did not know how. I am a private person. My place in politics is "behind the scenes."

I wrote for M.S. a scorching response-commentary to the nationalities question theses that were prepared in Chebrikov's team as a platform for discussion before the end-of-July Plenum on nationalities issues. This is based on the principle: change without changing. I don't know how he will react. By the way, we need to finally speak openly about Russia's and the Russian people's special role in the Union; we need to frankly explain why a Russian basis predominates in the life and political processes of the country.

And whoever does not want to stay with the Russians can "get lost"... At the same time, the Russians need to bear their burden adequately, on the level of internationalist respect.

... How much chauvinist narrow-mindedness is still left in us! Not pride, as here:

We understand all--the sharp Gallic wit,
As well's the gloomy Germanic genius.¹⁴

We need a people of high culture to carry the burden of the Russian person in the Union, the federation. Not ideology, but culture.

There are portraits of Nikolai II on Arbat. For the second time, *Ogonyok* is publishing large articles on the execution in Yekaterinburg. On TV there are photos (and very interesting ones) of the

¹⁴ Aleksandr Blok, "The Scythians."

coronation in 1896. That is all to say: the October is an episode in Russian history and that is exactly how we should treat it...

Now we go to France. M.S.' speech at the Sorbonne. Zagladin composed an analogy between 1789-1917. No! This is outdated! Even his refined and educated mind does not sense the era and Gorbachev's intentions. I found the same in the Bessmertnykh's (Shevardnadze's first deputy) corrections in the text of the international section for the Congress--it is the MFA's understanding of New Thinking (only as a concept, not a new philosophy that rejects ideology).

When I was putting away yet another diary notebook I decided to leaf through some of my old diaries, from 40 years ago... immediately after the war: my God! I managed to read so much serious, completely un-Marxist, very philosophical literature! I wrote down a ton of excerpts. This was at the peak of the cult of personality, and it seems I totally did not care about it deep inside. I lived separately from the external ideological environment. Neither before, nor during, nor after the war did the cult of Stalinism make an imprint on my spiritual development. Curiously enough, I developed the dullness of mind and consciousness after the XX Congress, during Khrushchev's retreat from the Congress and my work for the CC Department of Sciences--work that was stultifying and degrading to my spirit. But then there was the journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism* [PPS],¹⁵ which saved me. And while I am not inclined to share in the enthusiasm about A.M. Rumyantsev (I always thought he was a bit dull and ignorant) he did play a role in my life. He remembered about me after his appointment as editor-in-chief of PPS and invited me to come to Prague from the CC, and Kirillin (head of the Department of Sciences) was glad to let me go.

When M.S. says that we are all children of our time (in the sense that we all need to scrape the past off ourselves)... and he enlists me in that company, I do not join. After all, I lived primarily by the rules of Russian intelligentsia. I never hated the Whites; I never considered anyone, including Trotsky, "an enemy of the people;" I never admired Stalin and always noted his spiritual poverty; I never professed the official, i.e. Stalin's, version of Marxism-Leninism. I remember my behavior at the lectures on historical materialism and dialectical materialism at Moscow State University, when I put Koval'zon and Kelle into awkward situations by asking them questions to which they knew the answers, but could not utter them. I could see that they agreed, but they tried to train me.

If God had given me a more capable mind and a more disciplined personality I might have been able to leave something behind...

Then again--what could I leave? Zagladin, for example, has written a combined total of

¹⁵ *World Marxist Review* in its English-language version.

probably over a thousand printed pages. But who needs them? Will anyone ever read them? I am glad I stopped publishing my pieces in the 1970s. Not only because I am lazy, but also because I could not write in a way that would not make me ashamed later in life.

Remembering what I wrote in the 1960s, I would agree with professor Yerusalimsky that my article in the journal *New and Contemporary History*, written immediately upon returning from Prague, was the most outstanding and honest. Professor Yerusalimsky said that it quadrupled the circulation of that issue. I recall my report at the academic conference at the International Department. It was published in a collection with a tiny printing run (for those days) of 3000 copies in 1968. Burlatsky called me then and said: you are lucky, Tolya, to be sitting behind the thick walls of the CC CPSU. We, mere mortals, would get our Party ticket revoked for this kind of article.

So, Mikhail Sergeyevich, we are not all children of our times. Some of us are children of the XIX century. And if I go to the very root of it, I owe this to my mother, one of the former generation.

M.S. ended up not calling me to Volynskoe-2, where he, Yakovlev, and Medvedev were finishing up the Congress report today. I am particularly worried about my international section, although M.S. should not yield anything substantial from his New Thinking.

May 28, 1989.

What did the three days of Congress show? First and foremost that the PB is isolated from the affairs of state, which arise through the work of the Congress. At the Congress itself, Ligachev & Co. sat in a corner where the apparatchiks would normally sit. They looked like observers and were the target for angry, malicious mockery.

Gorbachev is isolated from the Party leadership and in a sense he is separated from it. The “grey masses” (as defined by Yu. Afanas’ev) is an aggressively-submissive majority that strongly confines the “intellectuals,” but at the same time managed to push back Yeltsin. Suleimenov (a Kazakh poet) used the following true image in his speech: the more you row with the left oar, the more the boat will drift to the right. He carefully noted a serious danger. The PB could ask M.S.-- where did you bring us?! Isn’t it time for you to clear off? And without you, we will restrain this public (the intellectuals) in no time.

Both the grey masses and the intellectuals reject M.S.’ internal policies, especially the economic aspect. The former because of the empty shelves in stores and the cooperative prices, the latter because of its incompetence.

Afanas’ev & Co. are typical Mensheviks, who wallow in their intellectual superiority over

the grey masses and the leadership, including Gorbachev. They impudently demonstrate this. And I think they will lose, just like their predecessors in 1917. They do not take into account that we (and they!) have the kind of people that we do... But who will play the role of the Bolsheviks? Who will say: there is such a Party! Who will want to take power? The provincials, who are showing energy and willingness to speak out, and most importantly--hatred of Moscow in general? Who will be the Kornilovtsy? Ligachev, Voroshilov & Co.?

Gorbachev is handling the matter at the limit of what is possible. But even he cannot overcome the consequences of his trust in the apparatus methods in preparing and conducting the Congress. He is leaning toward "the familiar," as Nikita (Khrushchev) had done once, though he has a larger coefficient of intelligence.

M.S. is making one mistake after another in tactics. His improvisations are not always successful. The decision to start a discussion on Afanas'ev was probably advantageous, but the discussion itself revealed, among other things, that he is beginning to lose the edge of intellectual superiority over the audience. The attempt to craftily slip Lukyanov into the position of First Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, and at the same time in an open vote--that was a discrediting failure.

He also underestimated the possible repercussions of Karabakh, Tbilisi and the Gdlyan affair. Once again he relied on old methods, decided that nobody would dare to blame him.

On the one hand, he underestimate the moral potential of people like Zaslavskiy and Starovoitova, who would burn at the stake for truth; on the other hand the dishonorableness of people like Afanas'ev, Popov & Co., whom he personally brought to the forefront, and who were the first to attack him.

I think Yeltsin is history. It looks like in this case he did most of the work himself--his imbecility became more evident at the meetings and at the Congress. Possibly the people who were creating a myth and using his imbecility realized that they won't get very far with him once real work and responsibility become necessary.

M.S.' "dacha Achilles" heel has revealed itself. I had expressed my bewilderment about it on these pages back in September.¹⁶ If he wants to have something befitting a president of a superpower, then he should behave like a president, i.e. with a growing accent on authoritarianism. Only then would the people shut up and recognize his right to live in palace. If he continues to play the democrat along the lines of "I am the same as everybody else," then the "dacha" will discredit

¹⁶ Referring to my surprise and dislike when I saw the palace in "Zarya" (Foros, Crimea). [Footnote in the original]

him and weaken his authority. (Under “dacha” I mean all of Raisa Maksimovna’s regalia and ambitions.)

The failure with Lukyanov, which could easily happen, could start a chain reaction that would lead to the collapse of the PB as such, as body that is effectively heard in the regions and departments.

Ryzhkov’s position is at risk. Is M.S. thinking of alternatives? If the Congress rejects Lukyanov and Ryzhkov, they will not allow Maslyukov as a Premier, nor even Shakhnazarov to replace Lukyanov. Then again, why not Shakh. Albakin should be made Premier.

In general, though, all of this is terribly strange--to watch such familiar sources of authority fall apart. Is M.S. himself ready for this? After all, on the eve of the Congress he again convened the *obkom* secretaries and instructed them, gave them to understand that they are the foundation. But this foundation was skinned at the Soviet of Nationalities polls, only three *obkom* secretaries made it in. If this is not a sign for the party apparatus! Their choices are either to leave, or to bristle up, their time is running out at the speed of a mountain torrent.

Today Gorbachev is at Volynskoe-2. Together with him are Maslyukov, Boldin, and Yakovlev. Once again they are discussing the economy, most likely influenced by what was said at the Congress. He probably has not even looked at my international section. The subject of international relations has been largely unmentioned at the Congress.

It is too bad that he keeps only Yakovlev and sometimes Medvedev close by. Shakhnazarov makes a fuss about this: why doesn’t he depend on us more... we are just as smart, and most importantly we can speak our minds. Why does he shut himself up with Yakovlev, cut off from his colleagues? Yakovlev himself is confused right now.

This Congress has brought one more innovation: at the CC Plenums, not to mention the XIX Party Conference last year, people stood up and even applauded when Gorbachev entered the room. Of course, not like they used to under Brezhnev or Chernenko, but still... Lenin’s custom of not having people stand was not reinstated. Now it happened for a different reason. At the Conference nobody even stirred when Gorbachev appeared at the same corner entrance from which the entire PB used to emerge headed by the General Secretary, and moved to the center of the Presidium table. This is a change in psychology, which is significant. During breaks, Gorbachev often walks around the auditorium or the hallways and a crowd of a couple dozen people gathers around him. The majority of the people, however, continue to walk around talking amongst each other or sitting in their places--they are not interested in the conversation the General Secretary and President is having with the people.

Will he have enough substantial authority to command respect after the external authority is gone (after all, this is Russia!). Our people are ungrateful and forgetful. Right now, in the era of collapse of every norm, foundation, and formality, there is danger in this new phenomenon.

I have one more observation regarding the spectrum from the Baltics to Central Asia, to Siberia. In the auditorium, the delegations are even “territorially” separated at different ends of the room (to my left are the rightists, and to my right are the leftists). But I am speaking about a different spectrum: from culture to barbarity. One side chatters in Latin phrases (about laws and norms), the other, when they don’t like something, drown out the speaker or someone jumps up and (without a microphone) starts yelling something very rude.

September 11, 1989.

Today we had Suharto. It was very untimely, but what can we do? We cannot shut down our foreign policy because the country is a mess... It would be worse, people would say that M.S. is completely giving up, even neglecting the protocol.

While he has not given up... despite the Baltics and Transcaucasia, the supply failures, the fact that everybody is cursing him--not only the apparatus (which hates him and dreams of life as it was 5-10 years ago), but also millions of regular people. His popularity is falling. He can see that. It is falling on all levels, including among the intelligentsia, which is faithful to *perestroika*.

From August 5th through September 6th I was with M.S. in the Crimea (in the abovementioned palace). Besides routine work, he wore me out with ideas for the Nationalities Plenum. He would say something on the phone or dictate something and give it to me to “play around with it.” I would be left to turn a telephone conversation into a literary text.

Later he became angry about Granin’s article in *Sovetskaya Kultura* [Soviet Culture], where the latter criticized M.S. for manipulating the Congress and the Supreme Soviet. M.S. immediately ordered me to start writing and to organize a whole group in Moscow who would expose those who give “erroneous cues” and confuse the people, the leftists and the rightists, etc. He got ready to make a TV appearance about it and started to dictate the text to us. He almost called the TV crews to Yalta. But then the events of August 23rd in the Baltics were upon us and he made me compose the CC statement. The departments came up with one version, while Shakhnazarov, who was on vacation in “Yuzhnyi,” and I had a different one. I had to combine the two. The final result was nothing to brag about. The Balts are irritated. The Moscow intelligentsia is grumbling. M.S. sees a positive aspect in the fact he made the leaders of the People’s front and *Sajudis* reveal their cards.

But what is it to the Balts? In their civilized manner they could be sailing away from the

USSR for years. So far they haven't smashed anybody's face or spilled a drop of blood. While in Transcaucasia blood is flowing daily. Baku is protesting for the 6th day in a row. The People's front of Azerbaijan is demanding to disband the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region [NKAR]. Already Azeri military detachments are preparing for war with the Armenians over Karabakh. Armenians are doing likewise.

This morning M.S. spoke with Vezirov (First Secretary of Azerbaijan's CP). I do not know how it will turn out. I cannot penetrate his secret intentions (if he has any)... When he was dictating material against the left and right he retorted against the fact that they demand stability: "What stability! We are in a revolution... If we create stability, it will be the end of *perestroika*. Stability is stagnation. A revolution must have instability.

Why then does he fill with indignation at the people who stir up trouble?! He is calm--no panic, no nerves. As if deep inside he is certain that we will not sink.

He has a dangerous tendency to play up to "Russians" (he met with Bondarev, gave Astaf'ev the Hero of the Soviet Union award, made Kunyaev editor of *Literaturnaya Rossiya* [Literary Russia]). He repeats over and over again that "if Russia rises up" then things will pick up...

But what will pick up? He is dead-set against creating a Communist Party of the RSFSR, against giving RSFSR the full status of a Union republic. At the PB last time he said: "That would be the end of the empire."

In a word, he is holding on to the old levers of power. As Nikita had done in his time... but now, the country has unprecedented free reign and it cannot be held in check or turned back.

The same in the economy--he is afraid of the market, free prices, cooperatives; he is afraid to disperse the *kolkhoz* structure and the departments, even though he can see that the lease system will not progress otherwise. At the last PB he said that the March Plenum is being botched (but his resolutions will not start to work without implementing changes in the nature of property and industrial relations!).

Who is botching it? He himself said that it is the *kolkhoz* chairmen, those Heroes of Socialist Labor... headed by Ligachev, who travels around the country and consolidates the *kolkhoz* system. The PB is afraid to do away with him.

M.S. did not agree with my proposal to convene a special CPSU Congress in November to discuss re-electing the CC. I wrote three pages of arguments for him, explaining why this is necessary. No! Even though he understands that the CC is against him and against *perestroika*, and that with the current composition it is ruining the Party's authority (or what is left of it). He was not bewildered even by Ryzhkov's "betrayal" at the *Obkom* Secretaries' Conference in June (practically

a CC Plenum), he does not want to use his new Presidential power to take drastic measures against his team.

When he got back from the south he led a PB on soap and other shortages. People are laughing. He found some scapegoats--threw Gusev, Lakhitn, and Efimov to the crowds, as if anything depended on them (although Efimov, Maslyukov's deputy, did show a phenomenal helplessness and ignorance at the PB).

September 16, 1989 (Saturday).

Today I was at work, preparing materials for Thatcher's visit, she is arriving on the 23rd, on her way from Tokyo. **I was fantasizing on the intimate.**

M.S. sent me the Plenum report, asked me to read it. I am mostly familiar with it based on work done in the Crimea and Shakhnazarov's version, which became its foundation.

The mountain brought forth a mouse. Half-admissions, half-condemnations, half a break with the past. Half-decisions. Wordiness. And the main cause for this is hesitation to part with the empire. Many of the arguments do not hold water; particularly on the nations' benefit of being a part of the USSR, especially in light of Stalinism and the current collapse.

In the meantime, Ukraine formed a People's front. Its founding Congress will be held in Kharkov on November 11-12th. The Rukh's¹⁷ final goal, following Latvia and Lithuania, is a "reunited" Ukrainian state! There are 1200 delegates, 500 guests from all over the Soviet Union. The Congress took place with cheers for independence and yellow-white flags.

A Congress of Worker's Committees took place in Chelyabinsk and Sverdlovsk (it will conclude in Leningrad on September 17-18). A United Labor Front will be created. The foundation for this came from the strike committees of the Kuznetsk and Donetsk Basins and Vorkuta miners, whose slogan is--things were better before *perestroika*, let's do away with Gorbachev.

Yeltsin's visit to the US: what disgraceful mediocrity! But Bush & Co. are looking at him as an alternative.

The Transcaucasia region (Baku and the NKAR area) is on the verge of civil war. The People's front of Azerbaijan [PFA] has practically taken power in Baku. Vezirov's name is publicly covered in mud. Whenever it wants to, the PFA declares universal strikes, convenes meetings of hundreds of thousands, and in general runs the show without regard for anyone. Hundreds of trains are stopped in their tracks to prevent them from reaching Armenia.

¹⁷ The People's Movement of Ukraine

Sakharov and Starovoitova were in Chelyabinsk at the re-interment of 300,000 victims of the 1930s Gulag. There, Sakharov said the following about Gorbachev: I do not idealize him, he is indecisive and ineffective. He has to finally make up his mind whether he is the leader of *perestroika* or the nomenclature.

The CIA forecasts that Gorbachev will last no more than 6 months.

Starovoitova preached to the Latvians that “It is impossible to leave an empire, such cases are unheard of. It is possible to leave a democratic state, which we first need to build.”

In a word, everyone is looking to the heart of the matter. We cannot build our country on Leninism.

September 17, 1989.

I started reading Shafarevich’s *Rusophobia*. What he lashes out against (which he does convincingly on an academic level) is his own conception of Russia and it is old, fabricated, a product of mind exercises. We have not found a way out yet and we do not have a real conception of Russia.

M.S. stated at the PB that he probably should publish in *Kommunist* [Communist] on the subject: what is socialism and its renewal. This is last year’s idea. We started it in the Crimea, now Van’ka¹⁸ (Frolov) and his aides Latsis and Kolesnikov are finishing up this theme. I am certain that nothing serious will come of it. Because Yu. Afanas’ev is right: we have to step away from the issue of capitalism-socialism. It is antiquated. We cannot look for our future on the dogmatic track of Marxism-Leninism, no matter how much we renovate it. We need a completely free idea and theory that would be based on modern reality. Marxism-Leninism is a product of the XIX century, and it yielded catastrophic results in the XX.

Yesterday, when I walked into the art gallery on Krymskaya street, in the lobby I saw sculptures that were placed there a long time ago: a Red Army soldier at his post in a fur coat with a bayonet, Zoya Kosmodem’yanskaya, a shepherd from Dagestan...

I was aghast. We are dismantling everything that comprised the ideological atmosphere of our youth. All the signifiers have been reversed. Everything around us was a lie.

...Probably, it was always so... I am glad that back then, in the 1930s, I was not into politics, and joined the *komsomol*¹⁹ only right before the war. I read Nietzsche and Schopenhauer, and dozens of books published by Gorky’s *Vsemirnaya Literatura* [World Literature]; Dostoevsky in the

¹⁸ Familiar version of the name Ivan.

pre-war, pre-1914 editions; Oscar Wilde and Aldington, Kellerman, Zweig, Roger Martin du Gard, Andre Gide, Romain Rolland, Anatole France, the Goncourt brothers, and Herzen. I read hundreds of books; and I picked the ones that others were not reading--I was being original. As the result, I did not lose something that our "progressive" press is lamenting right now--moral standards and a conscience. Consequently, I was never charmed by Stalin, never considered him great because in my eyes he was not "noble" or an "aristocrat," not an intellectual, i.e. a person of culture.

My mother's hopeless attempts to hold on to the impossible--to raise me in the traditions of Russian nobility, the canons of that pre-revolutionary era in which she grew up herself (with piano, French and German lessons with the governess Kseniya Petrovna), they did not pass in vain. Even though I cannot truly play the piano or speak these languages, I have always been internally free. The only period in my life when this freedom was called in question was when I worked in the CC CPSU Scientific Department, in the late 1950s. At that time I had to do some vile functions for work, even though I tried to resist and to somehow neutralize this department's blows to the "children of the XX Congress."

Looks like I've started daydreaming...

What is going to happen to us now? Gorbachev is losing the country's levers of power. Maybe Sakharov (who borrowed this idea from Afanas'ev) is right that it is time to decide whether he will be the leader of *perestroika* or the nomenclature. His attempts to take leave of the past and of some colleagues have been too timid. At the same time, he knows what his colleagues are worth and with me he speaks frankly about them.

The day before yesterday he sent Talyzin (from State Planning) and Shcherbitsky into retirement, and Nikonov is next in line. But Talyzin and Nikonov have long been dead souls in the PB, and Shcherbitsky's retirement will now be interpreted as the dictate of the opposition, i.e. once again as lagging behind and loss of initiative. And overall... what is the PB right now? Most likely it is a place where Mikhail Sergeyevich can speak at length and frankly.

September 23, 1989.

Thatcher was here yesterday. She was beautiful, extraordinary, feminine. It is not true that she is a woman with balls, or a man in a skirt. She is a woman through and through, and what a woman!

She praised Gorbachev. Yesterday our television gave her almost an hour to do that. M.S. is

¹⁹ Communist Youth League

favorably disposed toward her. Probably because she correctly understood his intentions, that he does not care about communist ideology, that he wants to make his country a normal, civilized state. If it wasn't for the catastrophic situation with national welfare, the country would have reached that goal already.

He had lunch with her at the Schechtel mansion on Alexei Tolstoy Street.

The day before yesterday Gorbachev hosted Georges Marchais and spent around five hours with his guests. M.S. was in good shape, cheerful, charming, made jokes, and amazed the Frenchmen with his lively intellect. Compared to M.S., they seemed like outdated provincials. Georges puffed up incredibly. But with all his effrontery and the French high horse, he could not hide his confusion and feeling of inferiority compared to Gorbachev.

M.S. added a measure of "brotherly" confidentiality to the conversation, but did not yield one iota, did not give the slightest reason for the Frenchman to conclude that he is playing a game while in essence keeping to the class positions.

M.S. won the Plenum... with his impromptu, brilliant concluding speech and one more shakeup of the PB and Secretariat.

October 1, 1989.

I am beginning to prepare materials for the visit to Finland, but before that we still have Asad (President of Syria), Brandt and the papal nuncio. With each, there are very delicate issues to discuss: how to stop Syria in Lebanon; how to discipline Brant, since he suddenly started talking about "reunification;" how to deal with the union issue with the Pope (with whom M.S. will soon be meeting at the Vatican): our Orthodox Church is hard set against it! They are quite the Stalinists! This was very evident from the speeches of two metropolitans at a meeting of the International Committee of the People's Deputies on September 27-29th.

The following episode took place at the airport when Gorbachev was departing for Kiev. The people seeing him off flocked together: Zaikov, Yazov, Lukyanov, Primakov, Medvedev, the advisers, Kruchina. Zaikov started telling how the Moscow city committee started to "work" with Yu. Afanas'ev. Shortly before, Afanas'ev spoke at a meeting of Inter-regional Group of People's Deputies in Leningrad and at the Committee on the year 1939, created within the Supreme Soviet. These speeches put Gorbachev out of temper.

Zaikov said he assigned two of his deputies to speak with Afanas'ev. They summoned him to the City Committee and he said to them: "What of my speeches? Yes, I stand for separating the party from the state, for separating the state from the economy. Yes, I would like to do away with

democratic centralism and create freedom for different platforms within the party and open discussion. Yes, I am seeking support for my views from the working class. Yes, we should say the entire truth about 1939. The Soviet Union should be renewed on the basis of a new, truly voluntary agreement. Nevertheless, I am going to fight for my party ticket (he pointed to a pocket on the left side of his chest).”

At this point Lukyanov commented that he is not going to fight, he does not need the party ticket. He wants to have his own party, with him at the head. Zaikov started to object, but somewhat confusedly. He said his deputies came to speak with him after that conversation and asked him what to do. But he does not know himself...

October 4, 1989.

The outcomes of the September Plenum were discussed at the PB today. M.S. said many brave things in the presence of CP Secretaries from all the republics and major *obkoms*. The outcomes of the post-earthquake rebuilding efforts in Armenia were discussed. The situation is dire. A year has passed but only 28 percent of the planned housing has been constructed, 23 percent of schools and hospitals; in Leninakan only one building has been settled, 150,000 people are homeless; in Kirovokan only three homes have been rented. Azerbaijan is blocking the railways. Over the past four days only one train has been allowed through out of 120 going to Armenia. Rail cars with cement are flooded with water and have to be thrown off tracks together with the solidified cement. Fuel tanks are emptied right on the tracks. This is one of the forms of the Armenian-Azerbaijan war.

The last person to speak on this subject was Arutyunyan (First Secretary of Armenia’s CP). During his speech, Sokolov (First Secretary of Byelorussia’s CP) suddenly jumped up and, red in the face, lashed out against the Armenian: “All the republics, the entire country is helping Armenia... and how does Armenia repay the country?”

Arutyunyan became confused, and mumbled, not understanding the question: “How can we help right now?”

Sokolov pressed on: “My question is how Armenia repaid the country--with Karabakh and all the mess surrounding it?”

Gorbachev understood that it is time to intervene, and said: “You can take that tone of discussion out in the hall.” He proceeded to sum up this point of the agenda.

“It is such a tragedy! The life of an entire nation has been disrupted. Remember the history of this nation, it is a tragic history. Now the children of Armenia are dispersed throughout the

country; 700,000 including refugees are homeless... Such a disaster...

When you return home, you must all check how matters stand with help for Armenia. It is shameful when relief plans get lowered without permission and we do not deliver on our promises. This is not only a political problem. This concerns our morals and our humanism.” Etc.

Everybody listened quietly, glancing at Sokolov as he sat in front of the senior ranks of the party and the newly elected PB and CC Secretariat members, looking like he'd just been dragged through mud.

Tremendous Mikhail Sergeyeovich. This is how he attempts to teach political culture.

The PB discussed national grain balance figures. It turns out that free self-financing led to a 37 million ton shortage of grain in the state granaries, while this year's harvest yielded 205 million tons.

Vorotnikov called for taking the grain with an iron fist. Ryzhkov threatened that we are standing on the edge of an abyss and a catastrophe. Similarly to his previous speeches on the outcomes of the Plenum, there was a note of hysteria in his speech, even though he opened with his usual phrase, “Of course, I am not trying to be dramatic...”

M.S. found a Solomonic way out: when our comrades go back home, they should check what else can be done. Those who will sell to the government in excess of the plan will get reimbursed with construction materials, gasoline, vehicles.

In the lobby I spoke with Valjas and Brazauskas. They are genuine... But neither Ryzhkov, nor the departments want to listen to them. They see them as nationalists and separatists.

October 5, 1989.

Yesterday, the Supreme Soviet published a decree declaring martial law on the roadways in Transcaucasia. It is intended to lift the blockade on Armenia.

Today the Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet passed a ruling on their sovereignty, in which it declares complete power over Karabakh; excludes any intervention in its affairs; inviolability of territory; the “Center,” Moscow, keeps only the rights that Baku voluntarily concedes; the right of free succession from the USSR.

On the radio it has only been said the blockade of Armenia continues and trains are not given passage.

While we were talking with the Balts and scaring ourselves with their “departure,” the Muslims started to collapse the state. If troops go in to free the trains to Armenia tomorrow, a general strike will be declared, followed by armed resistance; if we bring in troops it will be called

aggression, they will turn to the UN for help, etc.

Meanwhile, tomorrow M.S. is flying to the GDR for its 40th anniversary. He really does not want to. He called me twice, said that he polished his speech to the letter, knowing that they will be examining it under a microscope... there is not a word in support of Honecker... but he will support the Republic and revolution.

Today in Dresden 20,000 people came out to demonstrate. Yesterday in Leipzig there were even more. We are receiving information that during Gorbachev's visit they will storm the Wall. There were terrible scenes surrounding a special GDR refugee train passing through Dresden on the way from Prague. The West-German TV recorded this and is showing it in the GDR. The Western press is brimming with articles on the "reunification" of Germany.

Tomorrow a Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party [HSWP] in Budapest will declare the self-liquidation of the "Socialist Hungarian People's Republic." Needless to mention Poland: the Polish United Workers Party [PUWP] not only lost power, but it is doubtful whether it will survive till its next Congress in February.

In a word, a complete dismantling of socialism as a factor of world development is in process. Maybe this is inevitable and good. For this is a matter of humanity uniting on the basis of common sense. And this process was started by a regular guy from Stavropol.

Perhaps Thatcher is right when she admires him precisely because she thinks that "in his heart" he envisioned the self-liquidation of a society that is alien to human nature and the natural order of things.

It is another matter... whether Russia needed the year 1917... and once again (!) our great sacrifices so that humanity would come to this conclusion.

Tomorrow the Supreme Soviet Parliamentary Committee will begin to examine the Afghan question. Arbatov, who is in charge of the project, stopped by today.

October 8, 1989.

Yesterday M.S. got back from the GDR. It appears from the speeches and the TV interviews that he navigated the situation successfully.

At the airport, Shakhnazarov and Raisa Maksimovna were describing how it went... As M.S. and Honecker walked together, a continuous roar in the air: "Gorby! Gorby!" emanated from the thousands, or hundreds of thousands of people. Nobody paid attention to Erich. At the meetings there were posters in Russian: "Gorbachev—you are our hope!" Besides Gorbachev, there were around 20 various leaders in attendance (Zhivkov, Ceausescu, Nicaraguan Ortega, etc.), but nobody

gave them much heed. All the festivity concentrated on Gorbachev's presence in Berlin.

He came back satisfied. The recognition and support he receives "over there" encourages and reassures him, in contrast to the worthless treatment he gets from his own people.

Krenz said to Falin: "Our Erich sees everything, but does not want to admit anything." On October 10, the Socialist Unity Party of Germany will have a Plenum... They might overthrow Erich. Otherwise, it will soon come to a storm on the Wall. In any case, the Prague-Dresden-FRG refugee trains passed through a row of exalted greetings, were showered with flowers, etc. The policemen waved at the Russians...

What are my feelings? They are comprised from what I get from the press, the internal ciphers, the reports from the regions to the CC, from notes and various letters. All of it creates the impression of general collapse...

Nujkin published an article in *Ogonyok*. It is an intellectual depravity. Overall, the *perestroika* intelligentsia has become confused when the time came to do "positive" work. The majority, in any case... In their inertia, they are stuck exposing the past.

Ogonyok printed Bazhanov, who was Stalin's adviser from 1922-28 and afterwards fled abroad. Along with embellished bragging, it contains some unique information, particularly on the role of the leaders' secretaries and advisers. The system which has survived until the days of Gorbachev was created under Lenin. Some people from the PB and CC Secretariat still look at me according to that tradition, considering me to be "more important" than some PB members or even the PB itself (particularly Biryukova, Baklanov, even Slyunkov, and some ministers). It is amazing how Stalin felt which levers would allow him to control the country, and created those levers... which are relevant to this day. Even M.S. uses them, particularly in the "clerical" (drafting documents) aspect.

During the conversation at the airport, N.I. Ryzhkov described the following episode (present were Yakovlev, Shakhnazarov, Frolov): "I called Vezirov (after the Supreme Soviet's decree on martial law for Transcaucasian roadways) and asked him whether I should be talking to him or the People's Front? Give me a straight answer, I said, I don't need an 'interpreter.' Do you still have the power, or should I go directly to them? I am giving you 24 hours. If you do not lift the blockade, I will bring in troops with all ensuing consequences... Vezirov replied that he will 'consult' with leaders of the People's Front. At first, 8 out of 16 'members of the board' arrived. They said that they will not make a decision without the quorum. Finally, they assembled a quorum... And said that they will start to slowly let trains go through... They got a bit scared, even though they put on airs," concluded our Premier.

So this is the situation. We are saying that the PUWP has been removed from power and reduced to an insignificant size, and the HSWP is next in line. Meanwhile, in our Azerbaijan the same thing is happening as in Lithuania!

October 9, 1989.

Today, Oleg Uralov visited me for the second time. He is the producer I found to make the film "Portrait of Gorbachev." It is M.S.' idea. About two weeks ago he called me and said to undertake this project... for the visit to Italy. But it should not consist of clichés and banalities.

Uralov turned out to be the right person for the job. He is very interested in the project, he is smart, handsome, educated, and, as it turned out, a talented man of considerable culture, with good taste.

He interviewed me thoroughly. We talked for about two hours. I tried to show him the characteristics of the portrait. I was quite frank, said some things which I had not told before to any outsiders. In the end, he said that if we are to do this project, it would have to start with a conversation with Gorbachev. It would provide a direction and some content for the script. Plus, there are some practical questions...

I sent M.S. a note. He called me when he got back from the Supreme Soviet. He said that it is too early for the kind of portrait Uralov has in mind. It is not the time. Right now, the portrait has to consist of deeds... Then he said he will explain this to Uralov himself, and in an hour and a half, Uralov and I were in M.S.' office.

He charmed the producer in his usual manner. M.S. supported his ideas and plans and explained why right now is not the right time. In a year or two we need to make a breakthrough and bring our society into equilibrium. We have to earn the right for a "portrait" through achievements.

Uralov: "But the portrait is needed right now; later it will only have a historical significance."

M.S.: "Yes, you are right. For now... could you make a simple film for the Italians, cut it out from material that is already available... But do not discard the bigger idea, you can get started on it right now. And here... (he pointed at me) all questions go to A.S."

Uralov: "Yes, A.S. and I understand each other well."

M.S.: "I trust him completely... Anatoly and I think alike, and he knows everything. Of course, sometimes he gets carried away and I have to keep him in check (he laughed). But it is good when a man his age can still get carried away..."

Uralov: "It seems like you are also the type who gets carried away."

M.S.: “Yes, alas. Thus, we found each other...”

This is the unexpected “declaration of love” I received.

All of Europe is raving about M.S. in Berlin. And everybody in Europe is whispering in our ear: it is good that the USSR has delicately expressed its stance against German reunification.

Zagladin traveled all around France and met with everybody--from Mitterrand to mayors. He has buried Moscow with records of his conversations (with gusto! There is nothing he likes better). They all say in unison--nobody wants a unified Germany. Attali (Mitterrand’s adviser) brought up the possibility of restoring a serious Soviet-French alliance, including military “integration,” but camouflaged as a joint use of armies to fight natural disasters.

Thatcher, when she asked to go off record during the conversation with M.S., expressed her views decisively against Germany’s reunification. But, she said this is not something she can openly say at home or in NATO. In short, they want to prevent this with our hands.

October 11, 1989.

Today M.S. met with Rakowski (the Polish Premier). I was not present, but read the record of his meeting with Jaruzelski and Rakowski in Berlin. One on one, M.S. said to them and Honecker some things that he probably should not have said. He was playing along, or maybe paying tribute to whatever orthodoxy is left in him when he said that the PUWP and the HSWP have lost, let things get away, receded from the positions of socialism.

He did not say this to the Hungarians. As for the Poles, he agrees with them when they say it themselves.

Record of conversation with Honecker... when speaking with me and Shakhnazarov, M.S. called him scumbag. M.S. said, “He could have said to his people that he has had 4 operations, he is 78, he does not have the strength to fill his position, so could they please ‘let him go,’ he has done his duty. Then, maybe, he would have remained an esteemed figure in history.” Shakhnazarov and I were doubtful that he would get a place in history if he did this right now. Two-three years ago, maybe. Right now he is already in a position similar to Kadar’s. He has been cursed by the people.

The PB in Berlin is meeting for the second day. Krenz asked our ambassador to convey to M.S. that he will raise the question about change. Honecker warned Krenz that should he do this, they will be enemies. But it looks like he did it anyway. What will come of it?

The day before yesterday, Kohl tried to speak with M.S over the phone. Yesterday I reminded M.S. about this, but he brushed it aside--he did not want to. Today he called me and said:

“go ahead, put the call through...” As soon as I reached for the phone, he called again: “Should I? The results of the Berlin PB are not clear yet. And in general...”

I told him that he should, otherwise it would be awkward. Plus, I am sure that he is calling to disassociate himself from his statements regarding reunification (in connection to the flight of GDR citizens to the FRG).

The conversation lasted 17 minutes. Kohl promised to help in Hungary and Poland, planned a visit to Warsaw, and most importantly--assured M.S. that he will not destabilize the GDR. M.S. replied: “This is a very important statement. I will take it into consideration.” They talked about bilateral economic ties in follow up to M.S.’ visit to Bonn.

Shakhnazarov and I led a pogrom against Shevardnadze and Kryuchkov’s note on our country’s politics towards countries with a “socialist orientation.” They offered timid changes. We, on the other hand, are against the very essence of this category of “socialist orientation;” against dividing the third world based on ideology; against exporting weapons, which tempts them and distracts from what they should be doing...

In a word, we suggested to radically change this course. The old one, which formed according to ideological motifs and military-strategic concerns of yesterday, did not meet expectations, it became bankrupt, and showed that it is not compatible with New Thinking.

M.S. agrees with us, judging by the fact that he sent our memorandum to Shevardnadze and Yakovlev, and told them to rewrite their note.

Without realizing what I was doing, I gave Borovik (a renowned international affairs journalist) permission to invite Peres (Israel) to the Soviet Union. Sure, it would be a social, not a political, visit, but he is still the Deputy Prime Minister of a country with which we have no diplomatic relations. Borovik snuck up on me between sessions of the Supreme Soviet International Committee, presented all kinds of arguments and promised that it would be beneficial. I said: if you have the authority, invite him. And now Peres is giving newspaper interviews on what he is planning to do during the visit. Naturally, his plans are not to talk commerce with the Peace Council but to do politics. M.S. and Shevardnadze will find out about this from the interviews. I might get a thrashing for this!

On the whole, when I speak with M.S., observe him, see and hear him at the Supreme Soviet sessions, I do not get the feeling that a civil war has broken out in the country. Military trains and escorts through Azerbaijan to Armenia have come under fire, there have already been several “battles” with the use of automatic weapons.

I am preparing a “world outlook” material for M.S.’ meeting with Brandt (October 17). We

are moving toward a renewal of unity, liquidation of the historical split between the Social-democratic and Communist movements (if the latter still exists).

October 15, 1989.

On Friday, M.S. had another meeting with the leaders of the mass media. I did not go--I am running out of time on Brandt. But Serezha Morozov (now the editor of the *Za rubezhom* [Abroad] magazine) described the meeting in detail from his notes.

I think this event will be compared with the meeting between Khrushchev and Pasternak, or Khrushchev's meeting with the intelligentsia, which started the open rollback of the Thaw.

The day before, on Thursday at the PB, M.S. declared: "I will tell them (!) tomorrow..." (this was a reaction to yet another attack on the press by the republics' CC Secretaries!)

He started with the usual, even excusing himself that he has to repeat the banalities: "*Perestroika* is going through what is most likely the most difficult period. Everything is under tension. As difficult as it may be, I am going to stay the course. People blame me for sitting on two chairs. No. I am on one chair, the *perestroika* chair. But what are you doing!" (The entire time he addressed the audience as "you," i.e. indiscriminately). "Some of you are shouting 'catastrophe!', others are threatening us with a coup. Poltoranin writes and broadcasts (at the CC Higher Party School) that regardless of anything, there will be a rebellion. Except, he states, if we go down the path suggested by the Inter-regional Deputies Group (of which he is a part), there will be 5 million victims. But if we keep going down Gorbachev's path, there will be a 100 million victims.

"We have heard this before," M.S. continued. "Do you recognize it?" Somebody from the audience answered--Mao! "Correct. People are truly agitated, nerves are strained, we are standing wheel-deep in kerosene. Meanwhile, some people are shamelessly playing with matches. Take Zaslavskaya for example. She said on TV that we are inevitably moving toward bread rationing. What happened after that? People rushed to buy up flour. All the milling plants in the country started working 4 shifts. But there is still not enough, everything gets wiped off the shelves. This is what you are doing!"

Shevardnadze took Shmelev with him to the US (Shmelev is an economist). (Further I continue quoting Gorbachev). "They had a conversation with Baker, who is Secretary of State right now, but he is also a renowned financial expert, he was Minister of Finance. He said to them: 'We ran some calculations based on the CIA's analysis, and we are not as pessimistic about the outlook for the Soviet economy as your economists are (in the USSR).' Shmelev replied: 'no, you are wrong, the USSR is moving towards disaster.' Upon returning to Moscow he published an article in

Vecherka [Evening news], arguing that Baker is wrong. What have we come to!

There are mass attacks on the Party. People say to me that this is a frank analysis of the situation in the CPSU. But I am not naïve and I can differentiate analysis from intentional slander, discrediting, and undermining of the party position before the elections for the republics and regional Soviets.

Next in line is the abuse of the leadership and the General Secretary. There are discussions that the leadership does not have a conception, it does not know what to do, it is ruining *perestroika* through half-measures, it is going to bring about a rebellion. There is a dead end everywhere--in relations with the working class, in national affairs. While a war rages in Transcaucasia, the leadership is imposing meager laws instead of finding the political solutions it always calls for...

What is your conclusion? It is as follows: there are alternatives to Gorbachev and his team--Lukyanov, Nenashev, etc. Look how many smart people have shown themselves; there are plenty of fish in the sea.

The People's Deputies receive similar unequal treatment. Some are praised, others humiliated along the lines of: 'Alekseev is alright, but he is a far shot from Sobchak!' Even *Izvestiya* [News] is doing this. *Argumenty i fakty* [Arguments and facts] has gone so far as to publish a list of names of 100 Deputies, with a 'sociological' survey right next to them. Of course, the favorites have the most points. Sakharov leads in popularity, and Shevchenko (a woman from Ukraine) is the last on the list. Is this a study!

"In your place," (he turned toward the editor of *Argumenty i fakty*, asked whether he is present, and the man stood up) "as a Communist, I would go into retirement after such a publication." (Actually, M.S. told me the day before that he is going to remove him!)

"The Inter-regional Deputies Group has created its own 'forum' in Leningrad. They have their own Politburo, ready to replace ours, and their own General Secretary--Yu. Afanas'ev. They have a program: multi-party system, market economy, anyone who wants to can leave the USSR (the Baltic States are first on the list), freedom of the press, etc. I do not know why we allow such people in our party. If Afanas'ev has his own platform, then he should leave the party and follow his own course. We do not need this kind of 'communists.' This is a different era (in the sense that he won't get imprisoned)... but if he disagrees with the party, what is he doing in it? I think that the Inter-regional Deputies Group and the Party Control Committee need to deal with Afanas'ev. We cannot allow such a person to head an institute and to teach our students. This also has to be taken care of."

This was his speech. Again and again he comes back to his favorite toy: consolidation. He

continued: “There has been enough of scandals and squabbles in front of the entire nation (between journals and newspapers). What kind of *glasnost* do we have? You pick up a journal and when you see a question in the headlines, you already know what the position is going to be. They give the floor to some people, and stifle the others. I have to say that *Ogonyok* did recently publish its ‘opponent,’” (he must be referring to Kozhinov), “but immediately gave him an editorial rebuke.”

(By the way, I explained to M.S. on several occasions that people are laughing about this requirement of his. The different faces is what separates one journal from another. This has always been the case in Russia and all over the world. If he is pro-*glasnost* then he cannot insist on conformity of opinion. It is not logical. But he is stubborn...)

“And look at what is happening on the television,” M.S. continued, “Irresponsibility and instigation are rampant. People are beginning to turn off their receivers. I was recently listening to *Mayak*, which was playing songs from the 50s and 60s, when the host announced: ‘And now we are going to play rock-music. Fans of the previous program can turn off their radios--you won’t understand anything anyway!’ Is this necessary? How are you treating people!”

M.S. remembered Marinicheva’s article in *Komsomolka* from a week ago (I also noticed it and almost started crying myself, like she did). The title is: “To the core, but what for?” Plus Svetlov’s “Grenada,” about the ideals on which generations were raised. We cannot trample them just because of Stalin’s blemish. Otherwise we have emptiness and soullessness. I had wanted to send this newspaper issue to M.S., but it turns out he noticed it himself. That’s how it goes!

Yesterday morning he called and asked if I had been at the meeting.

I: “No, I did not have time. But I know what happened, I was told in detail...”

M.S.: “Yes, I decided to go into an attack. As I was later told, they ‘exchanged’ (another favorite word of his) among themselves, saying, ‘It’s true that we (the press) have crossed the line.’ And you know, nobody wanted to speak after me. There was silence. I offered several times. In the end I said: If this is the case, I will see you next time.”

He decided not to publish this speech (he spoke for almost two hours). I told him that is a good idea, since he had named names, there will be ripples. The ripples will spread in any case and people are going to attribute things to him, which were not there... “It’s alright,” he said, and we moved on to financial matters.

I asked Serezha Morozov if M.S. was agitated at the meeting. He said that overall he was not. He spoke as usual, with passion when speaking without notes. But sometimes he got wound up, his eyes grew dark and you could see that some people had really tried his patience.

I thought to myself that he probably (most likely) does not want to go back on *glasnost*.

However, he must feel (not without help from hints in Klyamkin and even Aleskseyev's publications) that it is time he was more authoritarian, before the empire falls to pieces.

Yet, while the store shelves are empty and the crime rate high, it is impossible to stop the movement without completely shutting down *perestroika*. The kinds of actions taken with Afanas'ev and Starkov (from *Argumenty i fakty*) only discredit him personally. We already went through this with Nikita and we all remember how it ended.

It is very important for him to keep the image he developed in the first years of *perestroika*. If the distinction between him and Ligachev (who is also pro-*perestroika*) fades, all will be lost.

Gorbachev is staggering on his way... I must not forget to describe the "Russian question," which he brought up very testily at the PB, in connection with Chinese border negotiation directives for Rogachev (deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs).

October 15, 1989.

My home phone nearly rang off the hook: M.S. is looking for me. I called him. The entire Finnish program is mangled. Koivisto got mad. M.S. assigned me to prepare several pages for the Defense Council on our foreign policy during *perestroika*, explaining why we still need to strengthen our defense. This is for tomorrow. But tomorrow I also have to prepare two speeches for Finland and material for a meeting with the papal nuncio, plus something for the Supreme Soviet International Committee on the Afghan question.

When am I going to do all of this?! How much longer will this last? It is so simple for him--we (I) are instruments that can do anything, if he needs it.

October 16, 1989.

Reaction to the meeting with the press. The participants' feelings are: if this is how Gorbachev treats us, the praetorians of *perestroika*, then we will find something else to do. If he puts everyone like Sobchak, Zaslavskaya, and Shmelev into the opposition camp, with whom is he planning to build *perestroika*?

In reality, M.S.' mass base is the intelligentsia. The working class is for Yeltsin. What does Gorbachev plan to achieve by moving toward Ligachev in his relationship with the intelligentsia? If a "case" is started on Afanas'ev (as it is bound to, because his primary party organization is not going to expel him, which means the Party Control Committee will have to do it, disregarding the democratic process) it would open the gates for a multi-party system. No argument will remain for preserving the CPSU monopoly.

If Gorbachev is calling for consolidation and in the meanwhile reverting to organizational conclusions, it is the end of *glasnost*. It means people will act not on their conscience, but with a consideration for conforming to the leadership's views. Consequently, we could bid farewell to Gorbachev's own appeals --"let's do it together." Now it looks like-- "let's do it how I want, in a way that suits me."

Yeltsin has convened a meeting, after recovering from the "attempt on his life," which was actually a drunken fight that started after he hit on somebody's wife. The theme of this meeting was: Gorbachev has exhausted his potential and has to be immediately removed.

Regrettably, it were Afanasiev and Starkov that M.S. proposed to expel from the party and remove from their positions, not Yeltsin (even though an according resolution by the CC Plenum already exists). And now, Yeltsin & Co. together with Afanas'ev & Co., who have nothing to lose since all their bridges are burned, will launch a desperate attack. They say that a demonstration is scheduled on October 25th by the CC building, to demand that three people be removed--Ligachev, Zaikov, and Vorotnikov. For now.

Even Ryzhov (director of the Moscow Aviation Institute and now Chairman of the Supreme Soviet Science Commission) spoke on the TV yesterday from Yeltsin's positions. And he is one of M.S.' friends.

In a word, this "meeting with the press" was a mistake. These steps lead to the path taken by Khrushchev.

I spent all day writing a speech that will be presented at the "Finlandia" Hall. Composed some materials for the Defense Council; plus a hundred other small tasks and phone calls. The MFA is once again letting us down. There is still no draft for the speech at Koivisto's lunch, nor any materials for negotiations with him. Kovalyov is a wind-bag and too petty to be the first deputy of the MFA.

I composed a draft for Gorbachev's letter to Bush, which Primakov will deliver with the Parliamentary Delegation.

October 23, 1989.

Drop by drop M.S. gave me his thoughts and edits for the Finland texts, removing some of my compliments addressed to the Finns. He explained that he does not want our Balts to feel jealous of how we treat Finland and imagine that they could also be like Finland, only if...

Yesterday I read a heap of Western analyses of our economic situation, and their recommendations. Many of them (except for Pipes and Brzezinski, of course) are interested in

perestroika's success. A Thatcher-style success, mostly. But the most serious of them realize that we cannot completely turn into a Western society. There are also some who prognosticate a "Soviet economic miracle," if...

There is a common consensus that Gorbachev needs to finally decide to make a breakthrough; he cannot linger and play on the safe side any longer, he has to step away from half-measures, time is working against him. Difficult times for some layers of society are inevitable, but there are worldwide laws of economic recovery and nobody has been able to circumvent them yet.

There is another common factor in the Western scholarship--the personification of our reforms. Everybody appeals to the personality. If Gorbachev would do this and that... If would make up his mind so and so... if he would implement the following measures, etc.

But the problem is that Gorbachev no longer has the power to do anything decisive, even if he makes up his mind. This is not because, as the West thinks, he is hindered by Ligachev, the apparatus, or the bureaucracy. It is because Gorbachev does not have a mechanism through which he can implement his decisions. There is nobody to enforce them. The Party is no longer recognized as a governing body. The Soviets continue to be helpless. The economic executives are split between two chairs: there are no orders from the top, but at the same time they do not have the freedom to conduct affairs themselves. They do not know whom to turn to in order to make their industries work interdependently with each other, otherwise they will simply stop functioning. The regional apparatus is either demoralized, or is waiting with their arms crossed until everything will fall through. The nomenclature has nothing to lose.

Gorbachev's slogan to "include the regular man" proved to be inapplicable because our regular man became lost without a guide to show him every step of the way. Now the regular man is angry, because he does not have anything and there is no one from whom he can demand, all he can do now is shout abuses.

The working class is raising its head dangerously. It is being led by members of professional unions and regional committee party bosses, who understood that the only way for them to save their positions at the upcoming elections is through double-dyed populism and demagoguery aimed at the very top. The meetings of different "workers' fronts" are conducted under the slogans: "Give us Marxism-Leninism," and "*Perestroika* the socialist way, not the capitalist way!" etc.

Meanwhile, M.S. continues to play up to people like Yarin (workers' leader from Kuznetsk Basin). At meetings, people demand that this Yarin be made a part of the PB. Ideology trips up *perestroika* even here, not only in the economy and *glasnost*.

Yegor Yakovlev called me. He asked for a meeting with M.S. for him, Gelman, Adamovich,

and Klimov. I wrote Gorbachev a note. On Saturday, for a long time he explained to me over the phone what to say to Yegor. He praised all four of them very highly, gave each one a precise testimonial and promised to meet with them as soon as he can. Right now he does not have a minute to spare, whereas he would like to sit down with them to a serious conversation, especially since Yegor told me that they plan to “open Gorbachev’s eyes” to the real ideological situation in Moscow. In the meantime, M.S. told me to explain to Yegor & Co. that they should not panic and try to understand him: his main task right now is to save the course from the rightists and the leftists. Both are touring the country and instigating people against the General Secretary and *perestroika*. If they succeed, it will be the end.

I think he finally understood the danger of people like Yarin, but he is directing his anger at Yu. Afanas’ev and his company; even though he made a clever move after the meeting with the press and removed another Afanas’ev (Viktor) from his post as editor of *Pravda*.

Today at the Supreme Soviet session Gorbachev once again spoke against electing him President through a nation-wide vote. “We have seen where saviors of the Motherland have brought us,” he declared. I was looking at expressions on the Deputies’ faces as he was speaking. They were derisive and ironic. They no longer take him seriously with his constant calls to “let’s get along” and “most importantly, we are on the right path,” etc.

He does not seem to sense this. He still believes in his ability to convince anyone. He still hold a paternalistic air with the Supreme Soviet and other contenders for power. He sermonizes and admonishes, he takes it upon himself to draw “final conclusions” from what others say and discuss.

October 29, 1989.

October 25-27th in Finland. Gorbachev’s success is stunning. He combines all the temperaments. The key to this is not only his personal charisma and the ability to almost always find the optimal version of what to say and how to communicate with an individual. The additional factor is his frankness in speaking about ourselves and his freedom from ideology; even though this is less effective now that everyone can see for themselves what is happening in our country.

The second impression is that we are hopelessly behind. It is true that some people in the West predict a Soviet economic miracle, if we only finally follow “their path.” Even in this case we would need 10 years. M.S. has let the moment pass while he was being cautious and afraid to lose our socialist values, even though he knew that these values consist of wave-leveling, social egoism, and dependency that is a millstone around the government’s neck.

Now all these socialist values are turning against him as the workers’ movement is arising

with its natural law of trade-unions: “give me what I want, and I could not care less about the rest.”

I’ve never been to Japan so I can’t compare, but Finland struck me as a truly modern, civilized society, successful and highly developed; where there is no difference between the capital and a small town like Oulu.

The visit took place against the background of political strikes in Vorkuta and a civil war over Karabakh. When they show our soldiers on TV it becomes difficult to understand what is happening: they are shot at, there are armed ambushes against them, the local authorities prevent them from going where they do not want them to go, and there is nothing they can do.

Gorbachev is calm, to the surprise of the entire world. They give him credit for that. In Finland he once again developed his New Thinking ideas and continued to expand them in comparison to his UN speech in Strasbourg.

My third impression consists of my own personal feelings. I am losing the desire to serve him. Of course, I could always reassure myself by saying I am not serving him, but the cause--the country, the world, preventing war, working for the victory of common sense over militarism and our militaristic psychology, etc. In the end, however, I am serving him. He is a very prominent figure, a world-class politician; he was able to use all means available to irreversibly change the situation at the core. But his thoughts and actions need to be faceted before he steps into the outside world. Sometimes he needs other people’s thoughts. This is my job. I am not always alone. The MFA, the CC International Department, academic institutions and other departments also prepare materials for him. But theirs is a semi-finished product. I am the one who supplies the final versions, I am the one who develops the final form. In these matters, form substantial--each phrase is meaningful. I am the one who composes messages for the press on his meetings with Western leaders. The world judges what took place through these publications. Any one of his meetings only becomes a political action when it is published. In our country, this form, which I invented, replaces the interviews Gorbachev’s foreign interlocutors usually give to the press after the meeting.

I do not think that Gorbachev does not understand this. But in the four years that I have worked for him he has never shown it to me, and much less to others.

Yesterday I visited Brutents in the hospital on Michurinskiy Avenue. He had a heart attack in Dublin. We talked for about an hour and a half, mostly about what this world is coming to, and what Gorbachev thinks about it. I told him about my belief that M.S. sincerely believes in his formula that “socialism is the creation of the masses.” So let them create, and we’ll see what they come up with.

Karen agreed with me, but added that at the same time, someone has to govern.

I said to him: how can you govern if there is no governing mechanism? You could create a

plan, but nowadays people do not want to live by plans, they have had enough. And even if they wanted to, they will not be able to. We have proven convincingly to everybody and to ourselves that a society cannot develop through plans. The government can... until a certain moment when it becomes completely disconnected from society.

We also discussed the fact that more and more often M.S. includes personal issues into cadres politics and politics in general. This discredits him. The most dangerous symptoms of this personalized reaction is his treatment of Yu. Afanasiev, Starkov's work, his praises of Van'ka Frolov and the fact that he appointed his adviser as editor of *Pravda*.

A couple of days before the trip to Finland, A.N. Yakovlev came to visit me. He has the same issue with Gorbachev's ingratitude. He has not received a single "Thank you" in their five years of working together, not even for what Yakovlev initiated. Sure, he has a friendly relationship and trust (and sometimes a pretence of trust). But not a hint of recognition or reward. Most likely, Gorbachev does not want to identify himself with Yakovlev in front of the PB or CC (where they hate Yakovlev), or society. By identifying himself with Yakovlev he would be disassociating himself from Ligachev once and for all. He is keeping A.N. "for himself," for when he needs some advice, or to assign him to write something.

A.N. complains: during *perestroika* all the former and current PB members spoke at the November 7 (October revolution anniversary) and the Lenin days. Yakovlev was never assigned to do this. And this time Gorbachev gave the speech to the newly-made PB member Kryuchkov. A.N. is worried about it. For the umpteenth time he is "asking my advice" on whether he should retire. Of course I protest, even though I understand that he just wants to get it out of his system. If he were to actually leave, everybody would clearly see that it is the end of *glasnost* and Gorbachev is definitely heading down Nikita's path.

When I was walking him to the door, he asked me in a whisper: what is the deal with M.S. bringing up the idea that maybe it is time for him to retire?

I answered that I am not surprised. When I went with him on vacation, sometimes I would hear about this on the airplane, when the three of us would be there: myself, M.S., and Raisa Maksimovna. This is her idea. Last January in Pitsunda and this summer in Foros she was arguing almost seriously, in my presence: "It is time, Mikhail Sergeyevich, to leave, to lead a private life and write your memoirs." One cannot underestimate her influence on him. Once, she directly said: "Mikhail Sergeyevich, you have done your part."

I am re-reading "Gulag" in *Novyi Mir* [New World] No.9--about 1917-21. It is tendentious about the war, etc. It is not very historical. But... A year ago, M.S. declared that he will not let it be

published. Now “Gulag” is being printed in both the leftist and rightist journals. Next year a complete works will come out. And most importantly, as V. Astafiev recently said in *Komsomolka*: this is a blow not only to the October ideology, but to all of history that claims we “really were building a bright future.” This is a blow with the weapon of morality. The power of language. Here it is mighty in its zeal.

November 6, 1989.

“Forgive us, as we forgave you.” These are M.S.’ words to Ligachev at the PB. Ligachev, after yet another indignant reaction at the press, made a gesture to signify it is a lost cause and said: “You have put everything up for execution, trampled everything in the mud--the past and the present, there is nothing left.”

Regarding one of Ryzhkov’s latest hysterias that the all one can hear from every side are cries about the crisis: “The economy--in crisis, society--in crisis, Party--in crisis, supply--in crisis. Everything!” M.S. pointed out: “But they are only repeating what we said ourselves, at the XIX Party conference among other things... when they start speaking of catastrophe, this is where I disagree.”

M.S. must have remembered the note I forwarded him from the academician Goldansky when he said that we should examine anti-Semitism when creating a state committee on the nationalities question within the RSFSR government. Ligachev immediately reacted: well, then we should also examine Russophobia. M.S. stopped short and added: yes, of course, examine Russophobia as well. (Ligachev does not affect him as a personality, but through the layer of our country’s society he represents).

Berdyayev’s opus *Christianity and Anti-Semitism* is relevant to the “Friendship of Nations” issue... We need to crush *Pamyat*’ with the help of our Russian classics. You cannot get them any other way. Not even them, but the stench with which they are filling society.

I am getting tired of Gorbachev. Or rather, of his instrumental attitude to me. He is so sure that if I take up a task it will be done right, that he stopped “talking” with me. He no longer advises with me, only unburdens his mind on rare occasion. And now he almost never formulates ideas ahead of time for the assignments he gives me, as he used to do. This was the case with all the last visits: to England, the FRG, Paris, Strasbourg, Finland.

In addition, he started heaping on me the preparation of all kinds of drafts for messages to foreign leaders, salutatory addresses for conferences and anniversaries. There are vast numbers of preliminary authors like the MFA, the Union of Soviet Friendship Societies, the International

Department, the Peace Council, etc. But what they provide is “cud,” as he expressed himself, and he has stopped reading their precursory versions. If some text of a message or a telegram in his name, some greeting passed me by and goes to the PB, I later revise it overtop many PB members’ signatures. Then M.S. puts his final signature on it, taking my revisions into account and sometimes correcting me, as well.

I am paying compliments to myself. I (truly) do not like doing this. I left Ponomarev’s school, where quality was determined by pleasing the superiors. My age does not allow me to engage in this. But this kind of work takes up 60-70 percent of my time and deprives me of the opportunity to think seriously and globally about the long-term outlook; to think substantially about major issues. Or else, I have to do it in a hurry and under pressure.

He must think that I have no “personal life” and need no “free time.” That is why he calls me on Saturday, Sunday, late at night, sometimes at midnight. If he cannot reach me, he makes displeased jokes. Yes, of course, he has the CC, the Kremlin, his home, and the dacha with Raisa Maksimovna. All of it! My schedule is similar, but does not exactly coincide with his. I am cheating my real time. But there is barely any leeway for such cheating.

He is very worried that the leaders of the regional deputies’ group (G. Popov, Yeltsin, Afanasiev...) have come together with the “workers movement”--Vorkuta, Sverdlovsk, Kuznets Basin, the nationals. They make up the ideological headquarters. The Cooperatives Union, for example, made an agreement to supply materials to the Vorkuta strike committee. They will be providing printing machines, paper, allowances for the strikers. In other words, they are giving the strikers an economic base. All of this is directed against Gorbachev’s *perestroika*.

Askol’dov (the author and producer of the movie “The Commissar,” which spent over 10 years lying on a shelf) described a meeting with Yeltsin, Afanas’ev, and Popov at the Palace of Film. When greeting Yeltsin, the “intelligentsia” gave a standing ovation for several minutes, yelling hysterically... And had the same reaction to all of his and Yu. Afanas’ev’s anti-Gorbachev’s tricks.

This is low and disgraceful. This is not a real intelligentsia... It only inherited the superficial traits from the classical Russian intelligentsia which we thrice destroyed, but there is no trace of its essence.

November 10, 1989.

The Berlin Wall has fallen. An entire era in the history of the “socialist system” has come to an end.

Honecker fell after the PUWP and the HSWP; today we got a message that Zhivkov is “leaving.” Only our “best friends” are left: Castro, Ceausescu, and Kim Il-Sung, who hate our guts.

The most important, however, is the GDR and the Berlin Wall. This is no longer a matter of socialism, but of a change in the world balance of powers, the end of Yalta, the end of Stalin’s legacy and the defeat of Nazi Germany in the Great War.

This is what Gorbachev has done! He is truly a great man because he sensed the footsteps of history and helped it to follow its natural course.

A meeting with Bush is approaching. Will we witness a historic conversation? There are two main ideas in the instructions M.S. gave me to prepare materials: the role of two superpowers in leading the world to a civilized state and the balance of interests. But Bush might disregard our arguments... We do not really have anything to show except for our past and the fear that we could return to totalitarianism.

It is Slutsky’s 70th anniversary in the Writers House. I knew Slutsky. I used to visit him at home in his truly barracks-like apartment near the airport, back in the days when his wonderful Tanya was still with us.

November 12, 1989.

I am under pressure at work. It is time to be preparing for Italy, Malta is approaching rapidly, while I am stuck with routine work: [Roland] Dumas, [Rita] Süßmuth, Kohl (yesterday M.S. spoke with him on the phone). Last night he once again assigned me to write the text for the upcoming speech at a student forum (he will be speaking after Medvedev, Ivan Frolov, Yakovlev). I spent all evening and this morning working on it. I am performing my usual task--expressing ideas in literary language. While I’m at it, I took out some stuff, for example more railing against the press. I wonder if he will notice.

Yesterday we talked for a long time. He called me from his car. He was affected by my note, in which I wrote about A.N. Yakovlev (regarding the fact that M.S. subordinated him to Medvedev for the preparation of the Party Congress) and what this means in light of the upcoming “dialectical overcoming of Lenin”...

He justified himself by saying that what is important is the cause, not ambitions (one of his favorite words). Most importantly, he criticized the intelligentsia, who is criticizing him for coming down hard on the left. He had to do this because the left is provoking the right; they “mobilize” them with their shouts and attacks on Lenin, the October, socialism... They raise a panic without understanding that for me (Gorbachev) the path backwards or to the right is closed. I am doomed to

go forward and only forward, and if I take a step sideways, both I and my cause will perish. How could they think that I am with Ligachev?! Etc. He cursed.

By the way, Yakovlev told me that he witnessed a scene in which Van'ka came into M.S.' office and said, "M.S., I spent time with some of my friends over the holidays and I have come to the conclusion that I must tell you this (he was shaking as he spoke): you have to get rid of Ligachev. People's disdain and hatred towards him is boundless. And most importantly--there is a growing sense that you and he are on the same page! That you are only pretending to be a *perestroika*-man..."

I asked A.N. about M.S. reaction. He said M.S. started pacing around the office. He was silent, and finally said: That is quite a dilemma you presented me with... That was the end of the episode.

December 31, 1989.

This is the last entry of the passing year. I would like to sum it up in the form of a New Year's address to Gorbachev.

For you this was a year to create the environment to break out of the crisis. The year 1990 will be a year of decisions. They depend on you (alas, the country holds on to the inertia of the cult of personality). You are falling behind. Some journals are saying that you have already stopped. Gifter from *Moskovskie Novosti* [Moscow news] wrote: "Gorbachev is stuck because he is not an opponent to himself." I have been with you for four years. I observed from the inside how you, appealing to Lenin, rejected your own postulates if they were refuted by real life. You still have a great deal of fear that everything will fall apart if we renounce all the old foundations and levers of power.

People are tired of your endless references to socialist values, which have long since lost their worth (such as the right to work, social protection, etc).

What happened with your rejection to introduce new laws in the fall (1989) to regulate land, property, the republics' economic independence, the division of power between regions and the center?.. In August, in Crimea you told me about this. Moreover, you had me prepare a speech for TV, in which you would promise this to the country. (It never took place). Now, it was you who made sure that these laws were postponed until 1990. Why?

You are afraid of these laws. But it is a step you are going to have to take. For how long did you oppose at the Supreme Soviet the laws granting the Baltic States economic independence?

Nevertheless, on the night before the decisive session you told me on the phone: I have decided. This is going to be a major step.

You started the foolish ordeal with the Constitutional Oversight Committee at the Congress. Everybody could see how unreasonable your stubbornness and lack of argumentation was. Twice, the Congress was shaken up because of this; first when it was put on the agenda, and then while adopting the resolution. But there is still no committee! We only elected the chairman and deputy chairman, and the committee is supposed to (according to the law) start working on January 1st! This is absurd.

Why did you do this? Is it a straw--to save the Union from collapse, to rein in the republics? But these reins will become taut and snap at the slightest turn.

You fought desperately against abolishing clause 6 of the Constitution. You tried to use the “obedient” majority at the Congress for this. I can understand your apprehension that it will spur “pogroms” against the regional committees and the oblast committees, stripping them of the party property, which they amassed at the nation’s expense. The PB will lose the legal right to be a de facto ruling organ. However, this is inevitable. Why draw it out, thereby increasing hatred among the population toward the party’s monopoly on power? Meanwhile, it cannot even use the power anymore. Look at the PB meetings... they discuss, criticize, hear proposals, and produce the habitual drawn-out resolutions on many sheets. But none of them, with the exception of supplying more weapons to Iraq or Iran, get implemented.

“In your heart” you have taken the course to transfer real power from the party to the Supreme Soviet. So what are you afraid of? Ligachev and his cronies at the Plenum? There is a suspicion going around, since he sits next to you at the Plenums and the word is given to each of you in turn (as if he is the “second in command” after you!). You are always communicating with him: joking, laughing, exchanging views, whispering with each other and showing in every way that you and he are in perfect harmony. This is hypocrisy. And it is disorienting people...

Are you seriously afraid of him? You think he represents the party? Then the party is really in bad shape. In that case you have to transfer power to the Supreme Soviet as soon as possible and create an executive cabinet under the President.

In the course of the Plenum, backstage over tea you decided to “fight” and threatened to resign. Ryzhkov urged you to stay, saying that we started all of this together, etc. Nobody took your threat seriously. But Yakovlev promised to resign if he continues to be treated like a whipping boy at the PB and the Plenums.

M.S. shared his impressions of the Plenum with me, which he said was worse than the December (12.9) and April ones. I told him that he needs to do away with these kinds of Plenums if he wants to keep the party for *perestroika*. The majority of this Plenum and the CC do not accept *perestroika* and despise you. My boys from the International Department--Ostroumov, Yakovlev's adviser Kosolapov--were sitting next to the generals on the balcony. Similarly to Plenums in the past, they could hear the spiteful commentary the generals exchanged amongst themselves. When at the December Plenum Gorbachev said that he will resign (after Mel'nikov's speech, in which he declared that Gorbachev's politics are aimed at pleasing the bourgeoisie and the Pope) the generals said almost in unison: "It's about time!" At the last Plenum Gorbachev again "banged his fist on the table" in response to the demand to prohibit *Sajudis* and expel Brazauskas from the party. He said that he will conduct the policies he followed all along, not any other, and he will not allow blood to flow. He has made his choice. Otherwise he will leave. The generals on the balcony reacted to that: "That's some threat he came up with! Would be great if he left!"

A kind of "spot" has formed in the auditorium where the Plenum is held, about 10 by 20 square meters, which holds 150-200 people. Concentrated in this spot are those who hiss and drown out any reasonable idea.

When we were discussing the outcomes of the Plenum at the PB, Gorbachev asked why the others, those who support *perestroika*, are quiet in the auditorium. He asked me that question as well. I told him: they were quiet until you exploded in one of your brilliant impromptu speeches. Until that point they simply did not know **how** to support you. At the Congress and at the December Plenum you let Ligachev speak before you, and his speech was directed against you and all your philosophy and policies. During a break in the Congress, behind the scenes, you even praised Ligachev for his essentially anti-*perestroika* speech. You said that he stood up for the Party! At the Plenum Ligachev made a speech that inspired his supporters in "the spot." They saw that they can put you down.

Your report on Lithuania contained both elements. On the one hand you swore that you will never resort to force; on the other hand you gave questionable arguments on what you are going to do to keep Lithuania. People could read the ambiguity in any way they wanted to. Supporters of *perestroika* (i.e. the CC members who are ready to defend you) were afraid to find themselves in the wrong boat because they could not understand your true intentions. Only when you "banged the table" did Ul'yanov, Zakharov, Ivanova, Novozhilov and others come up to the podium. The Ligachev crowd immediately grew quiet. This is the explanation. The Party is expecting clarity from you. Even Sakharov said: Gorbachev has to finally decide whether he is with the apparatus or with

the people. While you are publicly embracing Ligachev, whom you despise, there will be no renewal in the party.

M.S. knows how to be cunning! Fifteen hundred people signed up to speak at the Congress. Only a few over four hundred got the chance. But Gorbachev made sure to give the podium to Yu. Afanasiev, even though he knew what the latter had to say—he spoke against Ryzhkov’s economic plan. M.S. used Afanasiev in his concluding remarks, as he connected Ryzhkov’s plan with the urgent need to adopt new laws on property, land, regional independence, etc. at the next Supreme Soviet session. He not only created a connection between the two, but hinged the plan’s success on the passage of the laws.

I cannot understand whether it is a politician’s intuition or the old fear to break with the “friends” in the PB. Ryzhkov’s plan was confirmed not only at the PB but at the December Plenum as well.

My evaluation matched Yakovlev’s. He came to me on the third day after speaking with M.S. I don’t know whether he really said to him what he told me: “Mikhail Sergeyevich, you should have stood up and left at that moment when you exploded and uttered the indignant words against the pogrom-minded crowd (“blood,” “ruled out,” “persecute”). You should have said that you cannot and do not want to work with such a Plenum. This is what I would have done in your place. I assure you that Medvedev, Shevardnadze, Kryuchkov, Slyunkov and maybe even Ryzhkov would have followed you.”

To that I added: Over a hundred people would have gotten up and left the auditorium. Split in the party? So what! At some point it has to be done. It is impossible to continue *perestroika* with this crowd. Either it will ruin you together with *perestroika*, or you have to cut it off, maybe together with the CPSU in its present nomenclature form.

M.S. once asked me over the phone whether I am thinking about the platform for the CC January Plenum, i.e. the discussions before the Congress. I am. I wrote a draft platform. Sent it to him. No response. I am certain that yet another 80-100 pages of nonsense will be composed for the Congress under Medvedev’s guidance.

Gorbachev is going to Lithuania. For a while now, I have been advising him to “let it go” like Latvia and Estonia. Shakhnazarov suggested to him to go there not with admonitions and arguments, but with an offer to sign an agreement with the Soviet Union (as many other countries, including Central Asia, they did not sign a treaty of alliance in 1922-4). But once again he will only draw it out and increase the tension, as already happened two years ago with the recognition of the secret Ribbentrop-Molotov pact. Back then, this problem did not have to become the symbol of

separatism and provoke people to come out with candles and torches to form lines of hundreds of kilometers on August 23. This could have been prevented. He thought it would be fine. But it was not, Mikhail Sergeyevich! Eventually, after Yakovlev's committee (on the 1939 Pact), the Congress adopted an ever harsher resolution, virtually condemning the Pact, than it would have, had we in due time admitted at least that it was a mistake...

Postscript for 1989

I would like to direct the reader's attention to the last entry—December 31. It contains a summary of the year as I envisioned it at the time.

Here, I will describe how the author sees it from the distance of over ten years.

During this year, the **Soviet** state started to crumble. The center of power—the Politburo—lost its authority and the ability to enforce its decisions. It became a place for discussion about the inexorably deteriorating situation in the country. The Politburo virtually divided into two camps: supporters of Gorbachev and Ligachev. But neither of these groups was cohesive. The persistent refusal to split the Party and discard the burden of its reactionary part became more and more dangerous to *perestroika*.

In the regions, the Party rapidly lost its power functions. The Soviets proved to be incapable of assuming power. One can only wonder that the state survived two more years... In most of the country, it must have been primarily due to the inertia of horizontal economic and administrative interdependence developed over decades. The Soviet system and the CPSU were losing their legitimacy.

The Center no longer had control over society. The heavy criticism of the Soviet system and Soviet history (practically a denunciation and discrediting) did not meet a serious ideological and political resistance.

The intelligentsia did not accept Gorbachev's attempts to stop this destructive process through arguments and admonitions. Meanwhile, Gorbachev rejected the demands of his colleagues to use force: it would have called into question all his policies and the philosophy of *perestroika*; it would have been the end of *glasnost* and of the democratization course. The fall of ideology took out one of the two main pillars that held the stability of Soviet society. The other one—fear and repressions—had been removed by Gorbachev even earlier.

A great number of all sorts of political clubs, blocs, unions, societies, associations, "tribunes," "People's fronts," "platforms," "movements," etc., sprung up. They did not form a

united opposition but in general presented a broad anti-Gorbachev and anti-communist position, aimed at taking power. The opposition grew impetuously in correlation with the sharp deterioration of the economic situation (the “empty store shelves”). The Inter-regional Group of People’s Deputies (Yu. Afanasiev, Boris Yeltsin, Gavriil Popov, Anatoly Sobchak and others) emerged as the opposition leader, with a program that was called the “Five Ds:” de-monopolization, decentralization, de-Partization, de-ideologization, and democratization.

An opposition movement formed within the Party itself, the “CPSU democratic platform,” which extended its influence to about 40 percent of Party members.

The collapse of the planned economy became irreversible, opening the playing field for “shadow merchants” and new “market participants” who in essence acted on the basis of private property. Significant material resources were concentrated in this environment (which was technically a thieves’ operation). People and groups from this milieu also wanted to play political role, at this point mostly from behind the scenes.

The “nationalities bomb” exploded. In the Caucasus, a real war broke out between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Karabakh. The Baltic States were de facto no longer under Moscow’s control.

The Russian factor, the most dangerous for the integrity of the “empire,” came up. Together with it arose the “Yeltsin factor” and received strong support from the quickly-forming workers and strikers movements (aside from influential political forces).

The year’s paradox is that in contrast to the breakdown of the state, 1989 was the year that brought forth the truly historic fruit of Gorbachev’s foreign policy: the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan; the permanent rejection of the expansionist component from USSR’s international activity; the fall of the Berlin Wall and start of German reunification; the Malta Conference, which signified the end of the Cold War; the beginning of Eastern European countries’ exit from the “socialist commonwealth” and the liquidation of “communist” regimes there as the result of Gorbachev’s rejection of the use of force to preserve it.

The 1989 entries are saturated with personal feelings and impressions. They include a great deal about Gorbachev as a person and a statesman; critical observations of his behavior in various situations. Sometimes his actions could be contradictory, and they were not always suitable to his level.

However, the author of these entries is not inclined to accuse Gorbachev of any grave mistakes. Overall, this is not about mistakes. Long before Gorbachev came to power, the Soviet system exhausted its historic mission in Russia, and was doomed to dissipate. Objectively, *perestroika* could not have saved it; and as it turned out, this was not one of its goals. Nobody could

have stopped the flow of events that was spurred by the Russian understanding of “freedom,” granted by Gorbachev. It is no accident that responsible, competent and sufficiently numerous people did not come forth from the Stalinist era cadres to organize the movement to the new quality of society.