

The Diary of Anatoly S. Chernyaev

1991

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This is the year of my 70th anniversary. It is also the year of Gorbachev's last chance and *perestroika*'s last efforts. [Gorbachev] made a New Year's address to the Soviet people. Yakovlev called today, saying, "You know, it seems the words aren't very banal or anything. But it's just out of steam!" I also catch myself thinking that no matter what Gorbachev says now, it really is "out of steam." I felt this very acutely during the Congress. He is no longer regarded with respect or interest; at best, he is pitied. He has outlived his achievements, while disasters and chaos exacerbate the people's irritation with him. He does not see this, from this stems his even greater drama. His overconfidence is becoming absurd, laughable even.

After recording the New Year's address to the Soviet people and the Americans, he called Shakhnazarov and me to his office. He shuffled papers on his desk and "put down" some resolutions. We sat there, quietly. Then he spoke. He asked us whom to name Premier. Shakhnazarov suggested Abalkin. I objected: he is intelligent and honest, but psychologically unacceptable. People have even come up with a term: "Abalkin's tax." I suggested Vol'skoy. Gorbachev did not agree, hinting that he knows more about him than I do. I began to rant, saying that we need someone fresh, not from the deck. Even if there is a mistake, he could be removed. But if someone like Voronin gets appointed, that's it! The people will lose their faith completely. Gorbachev started discussing Masliukov. I expressed my concerns: the military-industrial complex. Plus, it is a little puzzling to me why he likes Masliukov so much. He started telling us that many people are imposing Pavlov on him, the Minister of Finance. I personally met Pavlov, surprisingly enough, at the pool. Even more surprisingly, this rather heavy-set man swam athletically and quite fast. I had a hard time keeping up with him. Sometimes we exchanged political opinions in the locker room. He grumbled. Still, he won me over with his sharp remarks regarding Ryzhkov's actions and positions. However, as I told Gorbachev then, Pavlov stained himself with unpopular measures as the Minister of Finance. The people will not accept him, and even the Supreme Soviet may turn him down.

Sobchak was on the tip of my tongue, but I did not say his name at the time. I did not want to flare the President's temper right before New Years. He later connected Yakovlev through the intercom to our conversation. Yakovlev also did not name Sobchak, although he later told me that "Sobchak would have been alright."

I suggested Sobchak yesterday on the phone, when M.S. was telling me about his conversation with Bush. (It seems they are great friends, M.S. again was very emotional when talking about him). Unexpectedly, M.S. paid attention to my arguments, even though as a refrain he kept repeating that he "would not pass."

I got impudent: "Pass by you, or by the Supreme Soviet?"

My arguments were that he is smart, has an organized and rigorous mind, has character, is persistent, has already had a taste of administrative affairs in Leningrad and understands that it is nothing like a meeting or having popularity at a Congress or the Supreme Soviet. He might even be the Trojan horse for the regions.

M.S. neither rejected him, nor did he agree. But maybe the idea will take root, we shall see!

Sobchak's personal qualities are not what strikes me as his most useful aspect. He is, of course, a demagogue, you can feel that strongly. But he is from the radical democrats. And such an appointment would be like an outstretched hand from Gorbachev in that direction—toward the creation of, in effect, a coalition government; of shared responsibility with the principal critics, inviting them to show what they can do. By the way, it would be a counterbalance to Yeltsin.

My God! I've picked up so much knowledge over the years! Is there a topic I haven't touched? But I never studied anything in depth... I've read so many philosophers and poets, and regular authors. But if anyone were to ask me in particular about any one of them, I would not be able to give a good answer, oftentimes I do not even remember the basic plot... even of Dostoyevsky's novels...

Why is all of this in me?!

Yesterday M.S. told me that Petrakov submitted his resignation. He started swearing. I said, "This is not good, Mikhail Sergeyevich."

"Give it up!" he got worked up. "All these newspaper outbursts, saying that everyone is leaving Gorbachev one by one, you think they matter?"

"They do. Besides, Petrakov is offended and rightly so."

"By what?"

"You did not remember about him even once in all the days since Volynskoe, even though Presidential decrees in his field, the field of economics, followed one after another. You and Pavlov spoke at the Congress about the economic situation in the country. The draft Congress resolution was submitted in your name. And, remember, it did not pass. Then why do you have an economic adviser, if you do not remember about him even when preparing such documents?"

"Did I have the time?"

"And in general, Mikhail Sergeyevich, the person has been working for you for a year, and Boldin has not even given him a secretary. His ID badge still says that he is the adviser to the General Secretary, not the President."

"Really?"

"Yes."

"Why didn't he say anything?"

“To whom? Should he have bothered you about the ID badge?”

“You’re right, it’s outrageous. Boldin in general should be relieved of his duties in the CC. Let him concentrate on the Presidential apparatus. We will create a unified Presidential apparatus.”

At this point, I made a short speech about the fact that it’s been a year since Gorbachev became president and he still does not have a Kremlin apparatus. As for Petrakov, I added, he is a shy man, and with dignity.

“I did not want to ruin his mood before New Years when he first told me about his resignation,” M.S. responded. “I said, ‘It’s out of the question, just work.’”

M.S. is self-assured even in this. He does not understand that it is not so attractive for an academician to serve as an adviser, especially when he is pushed around.

January 7, 1991

Today, on the orders of Yeltsin and Silaev, was the first official Christmas throughout the entire Russian territory. But the CC had to work, and M.S. demonstratively came to work. I had to work too; spent all day sitting in the office. Boredom. A feeling of powerlessness and pointlessness. Even foreign affairs, which under Shevardnadze centered around us, are now starting to pass us by. We increasingly find ourselves on the sidelines, in the offside, in the mythology of the superpower. M.S. no longer seriously thinks about foreign policy issues. He is busy with “structures” and “small affairs”—talking with one person or the next, whoever is imposed on him: one day he meets with Bronfman, then Japanese parliamentarians, then somebody else. He does not prepare for anything, he repeats the same thing ten times.

In the meantime, a ground war in the Persian Gulf is approaching. Nothing is being done on our side. Opinion-based journalism is on a rampage, starting to touch foreign policy as well. Even *Izvestiya* and *Novoe vremya* are turning hostile towards “Shevardnadze’s line,” implying Gorbachev.

I’m sick of it. But what can one do?

I spoke with Primakov—tried to convince him not to run from M.S. right now. They will line all of us up: Yakovlev, Bakatin, Shevardnadze...

Judging from Petrakov’s words, it doesn’t look like Yanaev’s committee (he is tasked with making proposals for the Cabinet) will have any new figures. They just want to change the titles.

And so it will probably happen.

Meanwhile, Sobchak—he rose high with “Vozrozhdenie” [Rebirth]—is making St. Petersburg TV, a marathon to collect means to rebuild the city. And his New Years speech to Leningrad residents cannot even be compared to M.S.’ yawn-inducing one.

January 8, 1991

Today the front page of *Izvestiya* featured Shalnev's correspondence from New York on Fitzwater's speculation whether the February 11-13th meeting between Gorbachev and Bush will take place as planned. For some time now, American newspapers have been going on about this. Matlock (he visited me Saturday), Braithwaite (on Thursday) and today the Japanese Ambassador have asked me whether the meeting will take place. I decisively averted their doubts, referring to a letter from Gorbachev to Bush about Shevardnadze's resignation, as well as the telephone conversation between the two presidents on January 1st.

But alongside Shalnev's note, an article appeared by the *Izvestiya's* diplomatic correspondent, Yusin, titled "Will there be a summit?" It cites a senior official within the Foreign Ministry, saying that worries about the meeting are not groundless, because the Soviet Union deceived the West with conventional weapons. The Paris Treaty is up in the air, people do not trust us, and we should not think that Bush will come "no matter what." In a word, the article contains all the points of Shevardnadze's hysterical letter to Gorbachev from January 4th; the military men, according to him, are undermining START, Bush' visit, and the European process.

I called Kovalev. As usual, he doesn't know anything and did not read *Izvestiya*. I called Yefimov (*Izvestiya* editor). He is out, at Lukyanov's. I called Gorbachev. He is in the Walnut Room with the CC Secretaries (probably cooking up policies). I managed to get a hold of him only at 9 p.m. He immediately pounced: "How could you all (who is "we all"?) have allowed such an article to appear in *Izvestiya*?!" I mumbled something in response, myself indignant.

He said: "Why are you getting all emotional on me? Figure this out together with Ignatenko." With that, I went home. But as soon as I closed the door, there was a phone call. Gorbachev. "I just called Shevardnadze," he said, "it seems he hasn't read the article. I told him that his advisers are fouling things up. He should find out who did it, and throw them out of the MFA immediately. I ordered Lukyanov to summon Efimov (he is the editor of the newspaper, which is an organ of the Supreme Soviet) and figure out who is this anonymous senior official in the MFA. This whole chain needs to be worked out and... kicked out!"

I pointed out: "In general, Mikhail Sergeevich, you need to decide something about Shevardnadze. A mismanaged agency is the most dangerous kind." I reminded him of Kozma Prutkov's saying, "When leaving, leave!"

January 11, 1991

Tonight Gorbachev spoke with Bush over the phone. In recent days the Americans are always on M.S.' mind for two reasons: the Persian Gulf and the Baltic states. But the conversation began in a roundabout way. Gorbachev said that we are "tacking the budget," that we reduced military spending by over two billion. A very critical analysis of the entire situation is at hand, so we can begin market processes in the coming months, but in a way so as not to disrupt economic ties. To do this, we are insisting on economic agreements between the republics.

M.S. told Bush that tomorrow at the Federation Council there will be a discussion of candidates for the posts of Premier and Deputy Premier. He did not mention names. He said that he intends to accelerate work on the draft Union Treaty.

Bush asked about the Baltics. Gorbachev said that Lithuania was “one of the critical moments,” and added Georgia and Karabakh to the list. He assured Bush that he is trying to avoid sharp, radical turns. However, not everything is simple, he said. He complained that there is great pressure on him. People are demanding that he introduce presidential rule in the Baltics.

“The trouble is,” he continued, “that the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet and Landsbergis are not willing to make any compromises, they make no steps to meet us halfway. I addressed Lithuania’s Supreme Soviet. Today, the situation is not comforting. Strikes have started. I will try to exhaust all political methods, and unless some emergency arises, I will continue with these methods. Not everything depends on us. Already there are clashes, some people were hurt. Nevertheless, I will do everything to prevent bloodshed.”

I could not understand everything Bush said, I was not on an extension line. So I could only guess. In any case, mostly it was Gorbachev who spoke, while Bush reacted with questions and comments.

On the Persian Gulf War you could hear reproach in Gorbachev’s voice. “You are being polite,” he said, “you appear to seek advice, you seemingly listen to Moscow’s opinion. But you still do things your way. I would like us to have total agreement, since we started working as a team. Eduard [Shevardnadze] had constant contact with Jim (Baker). I am ready to send Bessmertnykh to you right now, in order to discuss the whole situation in detail. My offer to hold a brief meeting according to the ‘Helsinki’ formula (referring to their meeting in the Finnish capital in September, 1990) remains in force. See what Bessmertnykh brings you. If we can come to an agreement on that basis, I would send him to Baghdad immediately.” The date of January 15th was mentioned as the final deadline for the ultimatum to Hussein. Gorbachev agreed, but added, “There should not be any be any breaking out, though our common strict position remains. Let us remain optimistic. The Soviet Union and the United States mean something in this world.”

January 13, 1991, Sunday

Twenty years ago I buried my mother.

Never did I think that the inspiring processes started by Gorbachev could come to such an ignominious end. I am worn out by the confusion, and, alas, the arbitrariness of our work; some kind of “spontaneity” in our affairs; and most importantly, Gorbachev’s tendency to believe “his own” people, and in the end seek support precisely from them (the CPSU!).

All of this led to the “spontaneous” actions of commandos and tanks in the Baltics and ended in bloodshed. They say there are 180 wounded and 14 dead in Vilnius in one night!

The radio is buzzing with insults and accusations of Gorbachev. Russian deputies are already publicly saying, “Gorbachev and his clique,” “Gorbachev—the greatest liar of our time,” “He lied to everyone and Yeltsin first and foremost,” “Dirty regime,” “I will not serve his regime.”

Deputy of the USSR Supreme Soviet Wulfson was crying on the phone: “Anatoly Sergeyevich, help us! The same thing (as in Vilnius) will happen here (in Riga) tomorrow. Where is the Parliament looking? Where are the deputies?” In the meantime, Bush has already petitioned Congress about invading Iraq.

The radio continues to shriek. I try to record as much as I can: “Gorbachev is creeping up to the Russian Parliament.” “Vilnius is the handiwork of the puppet Lithuania Rescue Committee, which is under Gorbachev’s protection.” Svyatoslav Fedorov: “A boat is ready for me, Sobchak, and Popov, to send us abroad.” (A reference to the deportation of philosophers in 1922). He announced that he will put down his deputy mandate “from the Red Hundred.” Some worker woman on the radio called people to protest Gorbachev’s actions by putting down their Party tickets.

“Twenty-one Russian soldiers defected to the Supreme Soviet of Lithuania and protected the parliament building.” “A soldier in the hatch of a tank with tears in his eyes.” They also comment that there are soldiers who are ready to kill 100 and 200 people per minute without blinking an eye. There are reports that six out of the fourteen people killed cannot be identified because their faces were mutilated.

“Bloody victories of the Soviet Army over its own people,” “Black colonels running the show,” “People are being killed for wanting to be free.”

There are calls to the radio, which immediately go on air: “I am ashamed to be Russian,” “Gorbachev is worse than Hitler,” “The events in Lithuania are a signal to all the republics,” “The republican parliaments should have their say.” “We should not count on the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union.” All of this is punctuated by calls for “a trial of the executioners,” and demands to raise the question of stripping Gorbachev of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Yuri Afanas’ev, Starovoitova, Chernichenko, and Stankevich led a rally on the Red Square. Then they headed a demonstration down the streets, raising their parliamentary credentials. The crowd chanted, “Freedom for Lithuania!” “Shame on the executioners!”

On Friday I insisted that Gorbachev call Bush on the Persian Gulf on the eve of day “X.” The conversation was “friendly.” But M.S. talked a load of baloney regarding Lithuania, he promised to avoid using force. Before this, Bessmertnykh sent a telegram to Washington with Primakov’s plan. Bush did not accept the plan. M.S. was resigned to this. But it is important that the world found out that M.S. intervened once again in favor of a peaceful solution.

Bessmertnykh has started on the job. Gorbachev chose him (to replace Shevardnadze). In my note with candidates for the Minister of Foreign Affairs, he was number two. I did not really expect him to be selected. But I was convinced that we need a de-ideologized person, who would

be connected with Shevardnadze and known in the United States. As for Shevardnadze, he got out in time (as a political figure, not as the Minister of Foreign Affairs)!

The Lithuanian affair has finally ruined Gorbachev's reputation and maybe his post as well. Yes... this is so, even though he hates "alarmists." The radio is broadcasting poems by Pushkin, Lermontov, Mayakovski, reminding us about the violence authorities commit against their own people, about the responsibility of kings.

In the meantime, Velikhov and Khairov are pressuring me with their "Foundation for the Survival of Humanity," on the occasion of the 5th anniversary of Gorbachev's declaration about a nuclear-free world by the year 2000 (January 15). Gorbachev agreed to meet with this foundation's Board of Directors. But how can one say trite phrases about peace in 2000 when the Persian Gulf and Lithuania are before our eyes?

In a word, I am again facing Czechoslovakia-1968. But then, the problem was to break with Brezhnev, whom I barely knew. Now it is Gorbachev, who is associated with a great historic cause, even though he is ruining it with his own hands. The press here and in the West is wondering whether the Vilnius action was done with Gorbachev's knowledge, or whether events in the country have slipped out of his control entirely. Or was it the initiative of Lithuanian communists and military men? I, too, am unsure. But I suspect that Gorbachev, secretly even from himself, wanted for something like this to happen. It was provoked by a workers' demonstration in front of the Supreme Soviet in Vilnius, which led to Prunskiene's resignation. However, if this had not happened, something else may have had to be "invented." It seems M.S. considers it inconceivable to betray Burokevičius and Shvets (Secretaries of the Central Committee of the CPL). Apparently, from the outset they fostered a "fifth column" in Brazauskas' Communist Party.

Radio. 1:50 a.m. Vilnius is blockaded with tanks and armored personnel carriers. The TV station, radio, and the Ministry of Finance are under attack. The windows in the republican Supreme Soviet building are filled with sandbags. There are 100 thousand people on the street.

Yeltsin has left for Tallinn to "discuss the situation" with the leaders of the Baltic States. At the Federation Council he was the "ringleader" (Gorbachev's terminology) of the resolution condemning the actions in Lithuania.

At a meeting with Bronfman, Yeltsin condemned anti-Semitism. He announced that he will not allow it to spread in Russia. In a word, Yeltsin knows how to use any opportunity to boost his rating.

I foresee that tomorrow's Supreme Soviet meeting will be a bunch of baloney. Lukyanov will make sure of it. This morning Stankevich called me from the Moscow City Council [Mossoviet]. He clearly expected to get some information on Lithuania from the top. What could I tell him? I did not even know the things that were broadcast on the radio for many hours. I need to think about what to do with myself.

January 14, 1991

The “Echo of Moscow” radio station broadcasts: A demonstration in defense of Lithuania and Russia is planned for January 20th. Its slogan will be “Gorbachev’s team must resign!” and it will proceed along the Sadovoe [koltso], then down Arbat and to Staraya Ploshchad’, because there, according to the radio, is the “devil incarnate,” from there stems the “Party-military coup.”

Today the Supreme Soviet began, of course, with Lithuania. Pugo and Yazov made stupid, false, boorish speeches. Gorbachev himself spoke after the break, and his speech was pathetic, inarticulate, and full of pointless digressions. And no policy. It was sickening—plain hypocritical evasion. There was no answer to the most important question. The speech was worthy neither of the former Gorbachev, nor of the present moment, when the fate of his entire five-year cause is being decided. It was embarrassing and sad to hear.

In the morning, Ignatenko spoke to me about resignation. Andrei Grachev came from the session of the Supreme Soviet and asked not to be confirmed as the Head of the President’s International Department. “I’ve had enough with 1968 and 1979. This is intolerable.” What about me?

By the way, the CC cafeteria started using coupons for food. This is after last year the “feeder” came to an end. What does this mean? Is it compensation to the nomenclature?

January 15, 1991

I did not go to the meeting between Gorbachev and Velikhov’s Foundation for the Survival of Humanity. It would be nauseating to meet with them, embarrassing to look people in the eye. I thought he would cancel in such circumstances. But once again, I “underestimated” him. He went. He called Yakovlev, Boldin, and Bessmertnykh, who was just appointed [Minister of Foreign Affairs] by the Supreme Soviet. And, as if nothing has happened, he went on for nearly two hours in front of the Americans and others about his commitment to new thinking. They, as was expected, did not ask any questions...

Ignatenko stopped by. He told me that last night he, Yakovlev, and Primakov tried to persuade Gorbachev to go to Vilnius, lay a wreath, speak at the Supreme Soviet, meet with the collectives, the military, etc. Gorbachev seemed to welcome the idea and told them to prepare by morning the texts for his speeches there. They prepared them; put them on his desk in the morning. Then, all day long Ignatenko tried to catch Gorbachev in order to find out what he decided. M.S. pretended that nothing happened and there had been no conversation with these three men. From this, Ignatenko concluded that M.S. is not “misinformed” as many people think, but that he is carrying out his plan of intimidating the Balts. During the day, the military took a technical radio station and there are no plans to leave either the TV tower, or the House of the Press. In Riga they captured a military school and dispersed the students.

I woke up at 5 a.m. and could not fall asleep again. I thought about my intentions. When I came to work, I dictated to Tamara a six-page explanation to Gorbachev, sharply and frankly, roundhouse-style, with the conclusion: “I am also leaving.” Here is the text:

“Mikhail Sergeyeovich,

Because the break has finally come and because it was hard to imagine that it would be so sad and shameful, nobody has the right to remain silent.

For some time now we, your advisers, have noticed that you do not need us. We know nothing of your intentions, plans or prospective actions or nominations... You are clearly not interested in our opinions. But that does not mean that we do not have opinions about what's going on.

I have sincerely and truly devoted everything I could to your cause, but now I consider it my duty to tell you the following.

Your speech at the Supreme Soviet is a sign of the end. It is not what our country and the world were waiting for. It is not the speech of a great statesman at a time when his entire cause is hanging in the balance. It was confused, inarticulate, with some strange impressions from a meeting with Prunskiene, with a faulty "plotline" of events, about which the world knows ten times more. There was a total sense that you are simply uninformed or are trying to tiptoe around what you really wanted to achieve.

The speech was missing the most important element—policy. As you taught us yourself, policy is always a choice. This time, the choice is either to say directly that you will not allow even an inch of the Soviet Union to break off and will use all means, including tanks, to prevent it; or to admit that a tragic event has taken place without the Center's control, and that you condemn those who used force and killed people, and you will bring them to justice.

In the first case it would mean that you are burying everything you said and did during the last five years. You would be admitting that you yourself and the country were not ready for a revolutionary turn toward a civilized path and that things will be done, and people will be treated, as before.

In the second case, the matter could still be corrected for the sake of continuing the *perestroika* course. Although something irreversible has already happened. No prosecutor or investigator, no matter what conclusions they reach on the ground, can change the assessment the international community and all the political echelons of the Western world have given to the events. The official conclusions would also not affect our public opinion, which you obviously underestimate or simplify because you are misinformed about its real content.

You seem not to know the people's feelings towards you—on the streets, in shops, in trolleybuses, at meetings, in hallways and smoking rooms. You are bombarded with telegrams (although from your past experience, you are well aware how this is done) from thousands of people. But you simply do not want to know the opinion of the other tens of thousands, and millions, of people; they do not fit into your intentions. Do you know what "Echo of Moscow" and even "Mayak" are broadcasting practically around the clock? They already have a regular term, "Gorbachev and his clique." And it's all over the world. Yesterday's broadcast of Leningrad TV appalled people: coffins, corpses, sobbing women, tanks with rotating turrets, a girl pulling her umbrella from under a tank, etc. Is this not supposed to influence policy? Only telegrams selected personally for you are supposed to affect policy?

Trust--the main achievement of new thinking policy--is being destroyed. People will no longer believe you, no matter what you do. It is a moment of triumph for people who warned that new thinking is merely a shell that would be discarded at the right moment (or when things got tough). I can imagine the mood of Bush, Baker, and dozens of others who sincerely trusted you.

You gave Yeltsin & Co. another, perhaps the final, chance to beat you. After all, the agreement he made with the Balts and appealed to the UN, the "council of four" he created with Ukraine, Belorussia, and Kazakhstan, with "no place for the Center," means that they will carry the new state formation (whatever the Soviet Union might be eventually called) to the global community--bypassing you, in spite of you, and against you. You started the process of returning the country to civilization, but it got stuck on your tenet of the "one and indivisible." You said more than once to me and other colleagues that the Russians will never forgive anyone for the "collapse of the empire." Meanwhile, Yeltsin is impudently doing just that in the name of Russia, and you don't see many Russians protesting. Even Polozkov-followers in his own parliament do not dare to protest in any effective way.

As a result, you doomed yourself to a policy with an objective that can only be achieved by force, thereby coming into conflict with your own declared philosophy.

You publicly mentioned many times that as long as you are in power, you will not allow armed violence against the people. Let's say you "didn't know," did not give permission to shoot and crush people with tanks that night in Vilnius. But what happened was the result of your policies, your unwillingness to let Lithuania go in good time.

It was announced on the radio yesterday that a "cautionary political strike" will take place in Moscow and other cities, summoned by the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR. On Sunday there will be a mass demonstration led by Yeltsin, which will wind up on Staraya Ploshchad'. Their slogan is "Gorbachev and his team must resign!"

You know the resolutions of the Presidiums of Supreme Soviet of Ukraine, Moscow City Council, Leningrad City Council, etc, etc. But somehow one does not see any demonstrations in support of the actions taken in Lithuania. It was hard to justify our policy there before; but now, after 13 dead and hundreds wounded, it is unthinkable, if one has a conscience.

The only justification that has any formal resonance to people, and not to very many, is that Landsbergis & Co. are violating the USSR Constitution. But of all people you should know that there are various kinds of legality. And if the law has to be imposed by tanks and APCs, then... well, we've gone over this already. It is not the legality of a law-based state, which, according to your own statements, can only be the result of a democratic process.

Eighteen months ago in Crimea, when the Balts built a many thousand kilometer-long human chain, holding candles, if you remember I told you that only tanks could stop their withdrawal from the USSR. You brushed me off. Now we are watching it happen. The question is, why and for whom is this necessary? After all, *perestroika* is for people! And if out of Lithuania's population of over 3 million people, 150 thousand or so want to remain in the Soviet Union, it does not mean that for their sake, headed by Shvets and Burokevičius, we can treat the

other representatives of the republic in such a manner. The excuses Pugo and Yazov tried to present yesterday sounded pathetic and disgraceful. They are discrediting you, representing the Center in an absurd light. Then again, you repeated their “logic,” which is the logic of a village street: I got beat up (when the delegation of the Committee of Salvation appeared at the Supreme Soviet of Lithuania), so I will call my big brother and he will show you!

In a state that has declared that it wants to be law-based, you cannot replace political and legal assessments with a story about a public organization that became outraged at radio broadcasts, called out for help from troops and together they went to storm the TV tower. This is equivalent to some group in Moscow getting offended by “Vzglyad” or “120 Minutes,” asking a regiment or division commander they know to allocate a neat little battalion for them in order to besiege the Ostankino Tower and drive out all the personnel from there. And if the policeman at the door started shooting at them, they would send in tanks. In essence, that’s all the explanations our parliament and the entire world heard are worth.

In a word, for the sake of keeping Lithuania in the USSR, you are ruining with your own hands the work that, as you correctly said on many occasions, was intended to change the world.

I have the impression that you do not read even the ciphered telegrams from abroad, which are full of protest, indignation, anger, disappointment and threats to break off all planned communications with us—from the governments, parties, and the public. It is a picture (including around the fences of our embassies) that we seem to have forgotten since the days of Sakharov in Gorky.

Against this background, the appointment of cabinet members in the Supreme Soviet looks like some strange phantasmagoria: a government is being appointment for nobody knows what state. We can forget about your version of the Union Treaty.

I know you well enough, Mikhail Sergeyeovich, to anticipate how you will react to this note: you will say, “Another one has ‘rolled back,’ he broke down.” So be it. But I am in my 70th year of life and it will be very difficult for you to suspect me of some kind of ambitions, vanity, or conceit. After all, you got to know me a little bit too, even though you were never very interested in me. I did not chase after promotions or seek out anything for myself personally. The point of this message is to say that I have faithfully served “that” Gorbachev—the great pioneer and author of *perestroika*. But now I do not recognize or understand him.

Prague [1968] was a very painful experience for me. I condemned [the Soviet government’s actions] in my heart, among my friends, and to my daughter, who was a schoolgirl then. I told her, “Remember, a great country covered itself in shame, and we will have no forgiveness.” I did not conceal among my CC International Department colleagues my strong indignation when we invaded Afghanistan. My moral responsibility for the policies leading to those events was only what could be expected from a regular apparatchik. But I had a close connection to the policies of the last five years. These policies precluded the possibility of something like 1968 or 1979 happening again. As it turns out, this is not the case. I cannot have anything to do with a policy that is capable of betraying its very nature.

Mikhail Sergeyevich! Ever since I started working for you I never thought that I might feel the painful shame for the Soviet leadership's policies as I did under Brezhnev and Chernenko. Alas! It has happened...

Respectfully,

A. Chernyaev.”

At first, Tamara refused to type it. Then, having typed it, she hid it in her safe. She told me, “It would be such a blow to him from your side. And he cares about you so!”... Women have their own cunning. Maybe she feels sorry for me, and not him? Brutents stopped by. She told him about it and asked what he thought. Naturally, he advised “not to hurry.” Everyone thinks about himself, too...

I listened to Bessmertnykh's smart speech when he was appointed by the Supreme Soviet, and I wavered in my determination to “wave goodbye to Gorbachev.” Politics are truly dirty, and a lifetime would not be enough to get clean. But it depends. You can make amends for something with an important action, but you're unlikely to fix anything. After all, a gesture is an action. Shevardnadze's action had no impact on Gorbachev. On the contrary, he does not care about such gestures. But as soon as you come in contact with some new information about the events, your heart cries out. For example: a girl was crushed by a tank, an old man was shot point-blank from a tank, etc.

January 16, 1991

Today is the last day of the Supreme Soviet session. Gorbachev had his last chance to deal with Lithuania, and to restore his image as the leader of *perestroika*. In the morning, he even assigned Primakov to draft a text. Zhenya and Ignatenko drafted it, naturally condemning the events. But M.S. didn't use it. After a report by Dementey, who led a Supreme Soviet delegation (with Oleinik and Ter-Petrosyan) to Lithuania (their report was empty and formal), after the ensuing discussion, he offered... to suspend the law about the press and introduce a censor from the Supreme Soviet in every agency. There was an uproar, M.S. did not insist. But he showed his face and intentions. It appeared as if he is on the side of the killers in Vilnius—he has things to conceal.

Nevzorov¹ made a TV program in Vilnius, about the attack by the special police forces. It is a completely Black Hundred-type program. The Supreme Soviet ordered it to be shown, while other “sketches” from Vilnius, including foreign ones, were restricted.

Today Primakov asked for resignation. M.S. told him, “I, not you, will decide what to do with you.”

The entire team of “Moskovskie Novosti,” led by Yegor Yakovlev, withdrew from the CPSU. IMEMO, headed by Martynov, its director and member of the CC, adopted a resolution

¹ Alexander Nevzorov was a prominent and influential journalist, and the host of the popular TV program “600 Seconds.” [Translator's Note]

condemning the events and made a statement that the institute refuses to cooperate with the country's leadership.

There was no reply from Gorbachev to our proposal for him to meet with his advisers. Anna, my daughter, is clearly in favor of me "leaving." Today I saw her for the first time since she got back from Copenhagen. I outlined for her my take on Gorbachev, whose only driving logic now is to stay in power at any cost. His new speech against Landsbergis and about Yeltsin's press-conference, just like the previous one at the Supreme Soviet, was confused, empty, off topic, petty and "personal." Completely not at the level of the moment.

January 17, 1991

The war in the Persian Gulf has started (ground campaign). I had no doubt that it would. They woke me up at 4 a.m., went to the Kremlin. Stopped by Primakov's, Dzasokhov and Falin were there. We started working on Gorbachev's statement.

Around 7 a.m. in the Walnut Room M.S. called together—my jaw dropped when I walked in—members of the Politburo, CC Secretaries... "We have come full circle," I thought. This is a symptom. Of course, Yazov was there too, he spread a map on the table and showed what he thought would happen (by the way, he guessed correctly).

If only the Americans knew... It is nighttime, an emergency situation. The gathered group consists of amateurs in the issue at hand. The President's rooms have neither a fax, nor any direct line to the information service. We waited for the stenographer for half an hour. It took over an hour to re-type a two-page statement with corrections. Gorbachev asked Yazov, "When did you 'see' it?" (Meaning when did he learn from the military and technical intelligence about the start of American attacks). "I did not see it, I heard it. About an hour after it started. We intercepted an exchange between a B-52 and Milwaukee (aircraft carrier)."

That's the company M.S. had when he decided the question related to an event, the consequences of which could surpass the results of World War II in terms of state conflicts, factors, and the regrouping of all the world powers.

I am not sure whether Ignatenko was lying or telling the truth when he said that he was sitting next to one of the CC secretaries and when ships were mentioned in the course of the conversation, he leaned over and asked, "What have ships got to do with it? Is it close to the sea?"

By the way, Boldin was the one who called people and sent cars out to the dachas. But he did not call or notify me. It was Primakov who called and said that we are all meeting. This is curious. After all, I am the President's adviser on international relations and everybody knows that I am involved in this issue.

After Gorbachev let people go around 9 a.m., he suddenly beckoned me into his office. He talked about Lithuania. I understood that he got wind of my backroom conversations and intentions. Meanwhile, *Moskovskie Novosti* fired off: "bloody Sunday" and a list of accusations

at Gorbachev, signed by around 30 politicians—from Abuladze to Karyakin, from Bovin to Gelman, almost all Gorbachev's former favorites. It made an impression on him. The day before, when he was presenting Bessmertnykh at the MFA, he referred to the article, saying: "They are already calling me a criminal and a murderer."

I thought it was a filthy thing of them to do. This publication plus the outbreak of war in the Persian Gulf have cooled my desire to give him my resignation letter, which Tamara locked in her safe and guards carefully. Gorbachev talked, seemingly regretful that things were turning out this way. Such a confrontation, such a split, such hostility in society, it is as if the walls have started marching against each other. I told him, "So let them fight each other, even until death. But why tanks? It is the ruin of your cause. Is Lithuania worth such stakes?" "You do not understand," Gorbachev said. "It is the army. I could not openly disassociate myself from them and condemn them after the Lithuanians humiliated them and their families in the garrisons."

Precisely, I thought. This only confirms the analysis of the situation coming from all sides: M.S. has fallen into the embrace of "Petrushchenkovs" against his own will and found himself without a base. Now he is forced to follow the logic of protecting power at all costs. He does not feel the danger. But the strike is coming tomorrow and on Sunday there will be a demonstration in Moscow under the slogan "Gorbachev must resign." But why he called me over: to work with me, in light of the fact that Petrakov and Shatalin not only resigned, but signed that very article in *Moskovskie Novosti* where he is called a murderer. Does he want Chernyaev to leave too, the "most loyal" one?

January 18, 1991

Gorbachev had three telephone conversations:

- With Mitterrand. The latter called. No substance. It seems he just wanted to show himself next to Gorbachev in being distanced from Bush's direct and uncompromising position on the Persian Gulf.
- With Kohl. M.S. called him. Congratulated him on his election as Chancellor of United Germany. They are on familiar terms with each other: Misha, Helmut. The same declarations of love and faithfulness. Kohl assured M.S. that he does not believe that Gorbachev turned away from *perestroika* and moved into the right-wing camp because of Lithuania. He assured M.S. that everything will remain as they agreed at their meetings in Arkhyz, Moscow, and Bonn.
- The conversation with Bush started out coldly. M.S. did not consider it necessary to praise him for taking on the war upon himself—for everybody. He did not express his condolences for the boys who already died. He immediately started on his two-phase theory: there is already victory in the first phase (Hussein is politically discredited, his military potential is undermined, the risk of hegemony in the region is removed—so why should we keep killing others and put our boys on the line?)

He laid out his plan: a pause in hostilities under the condition that Hussein declares that he will withdraw from Kuwait. A promise to negotiate on all issues after the withdrawal.

Bush did not agree. This was followed by a dropped call for “technical reasons.” In reality, Bush probably needed to consult with his team. After the line was reconnected, he said he did not believe that Hussein would accept such a plan. I noticed that Gorbachev’s attitude was: if that’s what you want—okay, go ahead, later you can tell us how it went.

This morning I made a scene to Gorbachev in the presence of Bessmertnykh, Pavlov, Primakov, Ignatenko: “Again Boldin did not notify me that people are gathering in the Walnut Room to discuss the war in the Persian Gulf. I am not needed in international affairs? My opinion is of no interest in this important matter?” Gorbachev started to apologize, trying to turn it into a joke. He cursed Boldin, but at the same time justified him by saying that advisers should attend such events automatically and do not need separate invitations. “See,” he said, “everyone suspects me. But if Chernyaev started to suspect me, then the matter has gone really deep in our society.” This was said against the background of the abovementioned action by 30 members of the intelligentsia in *Moskovskie Novosti*, and then 116 more members of the intelligentsia, including some close to Gorbachev, in *Rossiiskaya Gazeta*. Then there was another group in *Komsomolka* [*Komsomol'skaya Pravda*]. And another collective statement in *Rossiiskaya Gazeta* that praised Yeltsin: he supposedly saved the honor of the Russian people, in contrast to Gorbachev, who disgraced Russian people. Add to that Petrakov’s resignation and the grumbling and resignation threats from Yakovlev, Primakov’s statement, Shatalin’s endless interviews in newspapers where he rails against Gorbachev, and Vitaliy Ignatenko’s talks with him (Gorbachev). Against this background, Chernyaev seems to be the last redoubt; everyone is leaving and betraying him. He felt that I was on the brink. Though, I repeat, I remain by his side because of the Persian Gulf War. By the way, he threw out this joke: in some Canadian newspaper, some Canadian millionaire, whom M.S. never met, is inviting him over, promising him a country house and a lifetime pension. He jokes: “Maybe we should go? We’ll write memoirs together.”

Yesterday, *Kuranty* published an excerpt from Ligachev’s book, about how he made Gorbachev General Secretary. The book is called *The Birth and Demise of Perestroika*. The author is glad that finally, after Lithuania, *perestroika* is returning to its proper course, i.e. the one always indicated by Yegor Kuzmich.

January 19, 1991

I spent the whole day at work. I was preparing materials for the visit to Japan. Judging by Gorbachev’s conversation with Bush yesterday, the US President is not cancelling his visit to Moscow, for now. Hussein has not yet responded to Gorbachev’s plan. The Americans continue to clobber Iraq.

January 20, 1991, Sunday

In the morning I went to Uspenka alone and raced on my skis for about three hours. It was precisely racing, because the traction was so good that I was surprised at myself, how can someone at 70 ski so fast! It was effortless fun, almost without dipping below racing speeds.

The traditional hard frosts of the season are only at -3 degrees Celsius.

January 21, 1991, Monday

I was awakened at night by Bisher (Deputy Chairman of the Latvian government). In a panicked tone he told me that the special police force attacked the Interior Ministry building in Riga, four people are killed, eight wounded. What could I tell him? In the morning I wrote to Gorbachev about it. I did not get a response. It was impossible to reach him. The whole day he either had meetings with Rujtel (so the same thing does not happen in Estonia as in Vilnius and Riga), or was laying a wreath at Lenin's tomb (tomorrow is his birthday), or once again was behind closed doors with Pugo, Yazov, Kryuchkov, etc... Instead of going to the podium and stating his position—the position of the leader of a great power.

The Russian parliament. Extraordinary session. Yeltsin presented a report on the situation in the country, in a generally “balanced” (as people say nowadays) way, without any direct insults to Gorbachev and without agitating to overthrow him (as he did yesterday on Manezhnaya Ploshchad', in front of 3000 people). Anyway, this might be even more dangerous for M.S.

Our attempts (Primakov's, Ignatenko's and mine) to reach Gorbachev and have a serious conversation with him led to nothing. The mass media is already issuing an official version: the events in Riga were a domestic conflict. A woman from the special police force was raped; people's patience ran out, etc. In a word, they are reducing it to the level of a kitchen squabble. Meanwhile, the political significance of these events is in the world's response to these squabbles.

The radio is transmitting a session of the Russian parliament. Many of the things they say are sensible. But almost everyone rails against Gorbachev and stings his most painful wounds. Among others: Yeltsin immediately went to Vilnius when he heard about the events... as opposed to Gorbachev, who is silent and lying low.

January 22, 1991, Tuesday

Primakov, Ignatenko and I continued our attempts to get Gorbachev to speak on Lithuania and Latvia at the Supreme Soviet. Last night he agreed only to see us at 10 a.m. We showed up. He immediately came down on yesterday's Russian parliament. Then he started telling us how he worked things out with Rujtel, and is now waiting for Gorbunov and Rubiks.

He agreed to let us write a draft for his speech in Lithuania. He gave me Shakhnazarov's version (which means that he was already thinking about it yesterday). After coming back to my office, I wrote five pages in half an hour, using some things from Shakhnazarov. At 1:30 p.m. M.S. called people to the Walnut Room to discuss the Persian Gulf War. Present were: Yazov, Kryuchkov, Pugo, Bessmertnykh, Primakov, Belonogov, Ignatenko and I. We discussed the situation and agreed that I will write a draft letter to Bush, Bessmertnykh to Baker. So far, M.S. has not agreed to my proposal to invite Bush to have a close meeting somewhere like Helsinki instead of his visit to Moscow. Afterwards, Primakov, Shakhnazarov, Ignatenko and I got to

work on the text of M.S.' speech on Lithuania. M.S. started to re-dictate it based on my draft. He threw out some of the "most interesting" parts, including the approval of Sunday rallies as an expression of a living democracy. But the essence remained: the events in Riga and Vilnius are not Gorbachev's policies. They were spontaneous, the result of a crisis and the violation of law by the authorities themselves. In a word, he disassociated himself. He expressed his condolences. He denounced the appeal to the army in a political struggle and the use of troops without orders. In short, he said everything that should have been said a week ago. Then, maybe there would have been no events in Riga, no rallies in Moscow, no curses, no flight of intellectuals from him, no anxiety in the West with threats to stop supporting us.

But M.S. is his usual self—always late. *Komsomolka* published Shatalin's appeal to Gorbachev to resign. Yet another interview with Petrakov is published in *La Stampa*, along the same lines. This is filthy. It is self-expression at the level of petty vanity, on the verge of betrayal: because they know Gorbachev, they know that he has not changed the fundamental course, only made another unfortunate maneuver.

January 24, 1991, Wednesday

In the morning Matlock requested to meet with Gorbachev. I convinced him to see the ambassador. It turned out to be a very important meeting. M.S. (after listening to a translation of a letter from Bush, which Matlock brought with him) spent an hour convincing him that Bush is not reacting adequately to the situation in the Baltic States, that Bush seems ready to sacrifice the unique relationship between them, without which "none of this would have been possible" in the world. He spent some time interpreting Bush's expressions from the letter. Matlock, even though he knows Russian very well, sometimes does not feel the nuances in the language. That is why one could have interpreted the translation to mean that Bush already imposed sanctions against us, while Matlock assured us that Bush would impose them, if Gorbachev did not improve.

Andrei Grachev stopped by again. I held off on telling Gorbachev about Grachev's refusal to become the Head of the President's International Department. But I told him today. With all due respect to Andryusha, to his intellectuality, something gnawed in my heart because of his insistence in this matter.

A currency exchange has been announced: 50 and 100 ruble bills. Pavlov's "reforms."

In connection with Grachev's visit, I viewed the recent article in *Moskovskie Novosti* somewhat differently. It was called "Look who left." The gist is that Shevardnadze, Yakovlev, Bakatin, Petrakov, and Shatalin have left, and Gorbachev is stripped in an intellectual sense. He preferred the company of mediocrity. But dear sirs, neither Shatalin, nor Petrakov, nor especially Bakatin contributed much intellectual substance to *perestroika*, or they did not have the time to do so. As for Chernyaev, he is outside the intellectual circles, for a very simple reason. Because he has not betrayed Gorbachev. Had I signed one of the appeals and manifestos condemning Gorbachev, I would have immediately become a big intellectual. It's a good thing that Tamara held on to my letter to Gorbachev immediately after the events in Lithuania. How petty is our intelligentsia, consumed by vanity through and through.

January 25, 1991

In the morning I was composing Gorbachev's response to Bush, which Bessmertnykh will take to Washington tomorrow. In the style of: George, how could you think because of Lithuania that I betrayed *perestroika*? Etc.

In the evening M.S. invited me to his office together with Bessmertnykh. He went through the text, removing the more "lively passages." Then I started relating to him other people's requests, in particular the requests of other advisers. He said to me:

"What salary are you receiving? The same as them? So don't play the role of advocate and solicitor."

"But they turn to me... If their messages did not go through me, you'd never get them."

"You are the same as them."

"Alright. I will proceed from this..."

"The difference is in your actual position..." And, turning to Bessmertnykh, pointing at me, he said, "I want to appoint him as national security adviser, the Secretary and member of the Security Council."

"What is a Secretary of the Security Council?" I asked.

"We'll see."

"But if it turns out to involve administrative duties, I refuse. I am useless as an administrator."

"Okay, okay."

"Not okay... Maybe as a "research supervisor" (people noticed this at the university) or as the supervisor of a consultative group (colleagues noticed this at the International Department) I may be adequate, but as an administrator—spare me.

"Okay," and he showed us both to the door.

In the vestibule Aleksandr Aleksandrovich started to actively persuade me not to decline the position: "God forbid this post goes to someone like... It would be the doom of our foreign policy."

"Yes... But don't think it would be anything like the American Security Council. This one will contain everything—from the economy, to healthcare, to the Ministry of Interior Affairs."

We argued for a long time. When I got to my office, Primakov also started persuading me over the phone. I thought to myself: why do I need this? To ruin my life's work in my last years... Or is this Gorbachev's reward for my "loyalty" despite Lithuania?

The currency exchange is disgraceful. It is as though M.S. decided to go "all in" with his authority. It is so humiliating for people! Through these fifty ruble banknotes they are checking to see whether you will exchange your hard-earned money... All our Lumpenproletariat mentality, our rudeness, jealousy and filth are coming out. Supposedly we are moving toward a "free economy," but at the same time there are orders to look into each other's wallets, to see a crook and a dodger in everyone. And what a humiliating ordeal this is for the elderly!

January 26, 1991, Sunday

Went to work. There was information from the war. It seems like the end is near, and it will be a bloody end. The Americans cannot linger. The end and the outcomes will be quite different from what was expected, which was to punish the aggressor. After such a punishment, one wouldn't have enough gunpowder to punish someone else this way.

By the way, yesterday I forgot to note... when Bessmertnykh and I were sitting at M.S.'s, Bronfman came up in conversation. M.S. said: "People kept trying to get me to meet with him. So I did! And look whom he turned out to be. Before meeting with me, he was kissing with Yeltsin. And that's where he went after our meeting, too. That's all his business... Oh well, he found a suitable partner! And in general, see who surrounds Yeltsin, look who is on his team: Jews, all Jews."

I thought about who I know from that team. And indeed, mostly they are Jewish. And they constitute the majority of the turncoats, including one of my close acquaintances, about whom, by the way, Bronfman said the following, "When I first met this gentleman five years ago, he assured me that he was Russian. Now he is arguing with the same ardor that he is Jewish." Yes, the Jews are in fashion nowadays. Their worst quality is coming to the surface. The Jewish press strongly provokes the intelligentsia's flight from Gorbachev.

January 28, 1991

I wrote a letter from Gorbachev to Andreotti. The MFA draft is once again garbage. There is information... The West is turning away from us, the *perestroika* atmosphere has evaporated. Internal information shows more and more that the only levers of power Gorbachev has left are the army and the KGB. And more and more openly he is leaning towards using them. His moral-political isolation is a fact, he is sustained by inertia. The country simply does not know what to do with itself.

Money was taken away. But Muscovites, even those who exchanged their money, did not get the exchanged 50-hundred ruble bills in their salaries: there are not enough banknotes. The government is afraid to print them, because it is unclear what State emblem the country will have soon, and what the country will be called. Not to mention, which leader will have to be printed on the banknotes.

January 29, 1991

I put the following passage in the letter to Andreotti: “To the person who best understands us and can stop the disintegration of good relations with the Soviet Union, save the European process and prepare all of us to build peace after the Persian Gulf War.” M.S. corrected the text heavily, removing the most “heartfelt” parts.

Bessmertnykh convinced Bush and Baker to stop the Lithuania-related economic reprisals. The Americans still need us—to finish off Hussein.

Kryuchkov brought Gorbachev another batch of bogus information that the U.S. is about to strike Hussein with nuclear weapons. Tolya Kovalyov, following Kryuchkov’s lead, immediately composed a statement from the USSR MFA in protest. I asked to see it... then attached a biting note to it and sent it to Gorbachev. He returned it to me with the resolution, “Hold until special circumstances.” What nitwits we have in our departments! They simply cannot tell apart big-time politics from tactical propaganda games.

Petrakov stopped by to say goodbye. We parted as friends. In my parting words to him, I suggested that he shouldn’t slam the door anymore. Usually that’s done once, not four or five times. Still, I told him, “In your place I would have done the same, if M.S. had changed foreign policy” (for which I feel responsible).

In *Sovetskaia rossiya* there was a brazen article about Shatalin, “Lumpen—academician.” Shameless. Though perhaps he really is as much of a scholar as Ponomarev, Yegorov, and the like. I.e. exclusively for their time. Looks like it. When one talks with him, one does not get the impression that he is a scholar—*uchenyi*—in the normal, intellectual sense of the word (i.e. not a derivative of the word science--*nauka*, but of the word for learning—*uchenost*’).

Ignatenko and I covertly went to the President and threw a scene about Yazov and Pugo’s “initiative” on patrolling the cities. M.S. yelled at us: “This is none of your business! Do you have nothing better to do? You don’t understand! This is nothing special! It’s normal practice. And in general, you scurry around and panic like the intelligentsia: one foot here, one there.”

I didn’t give up, kept saying that it’s the job of city and the Supreme Soviets to invite troops to patrol the city. Otherwise it is the introduction of martial law, which is unconstitutional. M.S. was angry, threw various arguments at us, along the lines of Ignatenko and me being worthless. I stood my ground.

“We are on your team and have to know your intentions and maneuvers.”

“I will tell you my maneuvers when I see fit.”

“It is impossible to work under such conditions.”

“It’s possible!”

“No, it is impossible. If you want real work, we have to find out about such things not from the newspapers.” And more, along the same “elevated-official” style.

In the evening he called me and said that he signed an order to do away with the patrols... taking into consideration the positions of local and Supreme Soviets.

He practically doesn't read the newspapers anymore. His main source of information is what this or that person tells him. But, as we know, not everyone has the right to “say” things to him. Especially directly. The people who can are Lukyanov, Yazov, Kryuchkov, Pugo. Such is his current circle of “real” advisers.

January 30, 1991

I met with the Finnish ambassador. I praised Koivisto on Gorbachev's behalf. I promised a letter from Gorbachev and even a date for Koivisto's visit to the USSR. Indeed, if Finland had taken a position on Lithuania similar to, say, Denmark, we would have been in a much more difficult position.

Moskovskie novosti has been printing issue after issue of crushing articles against M.S. There is the currency exchange, and Lithuania, and the end of *perestroika* and democracy. On the cover they show a soldier in an armored personnel carrier and the title: “*Perestroika's* over. Time for a break!” And more along those lines.

The RSFSR People's Deputy Tarasov wrote in *Vecherka* that during negotiations with Nakayama (Foreign Minister of Japan) Gorbachev sold four islands for 250 billion dollars...

Late last night M.S. called Shakhnazarov and me to edit an article about the referendum. It tries to persuade the reader that the Union should not be broken. By the way, “socialist choice” is no longer mentioned. Two hours before this at the Politburo, to which the advisers were suddenly invited,² the Moscow secretary Prokofiev and others demanded that tomorrow at the CC Plenum Gorbachev said directly: we are no longer talking about a struggle for power, but about changing the social system, about capitalism.

In general, the Politburo creates a very strange impression of being some underground party. Rubiks and Burokevičius are insolent, demanding their rights. Nobody puts them in their place.

February 1, 1991

Yesterday the CC Plenum took place. I did not go. I find it repulsive. I was told that each person spoke according to his personal interest, to the degree of his understanding of the essence of recent events, and according to his knowledge of what Gorbachev actually thinks right now and for the future.

² Once we ceased being advisers to the General Secretary, we were not supposed to attend the Politburo.
[Author's note]

In general, judging by the responses, the very fact that the plenum took place is a demonstration of the fact that M.S. is returning to “his” environment. Because it appears that he does not have another one. It is terrible. It is terrible that Yeltsin speaks the truth. Yesterday on the TV program “Koleso” he said, “The ground is slipping from under Gorbachev’s feet, we are witnessing the agony of State, of the regime... and it is dangerous.”

How right Ignatenko and I were regarding the city patrols! The republics one after another are prohibiting the implementation of the decree on their territories, arguing that it is illegal. One more blow to the President’s prestige... next to the currency exchange.

I am losing interest in my work. I sit behind a closed door in my office. However, ambassadors do stop by: the British, Italian... today I had the Japanese. I shame them: “How could this happen? You believed Landsbergis over Gorbachev.” I must appear to be a true Gorbachev-patriot, but in my heart I no longer believe him—not as a person, but as a statesman. He improvises on a very shallow level. In the first 2-3 years of *perestroika* it was good and effective, but right now it is fatal.

February 5, 1991, Tuesday

On Saturday, February 2nd, we were sitting in the Walnut Room: Gorbachev, Yakovlev, Primakov, Medvedev, Shakhnazarov, Boldin, Ignatenko, and I. “Privy Council,” I called it, to Gorbachev’s displeasure. We started speaking freely about everything, even though he specified the topic: the situation in the country. Everyone gave his own assessment. I talked mostly about the fact that salvation is in orientation toward the sovereign energy of the republics. And in the end again and again, like the Roman Cato, I said: we have to let the Baltics go! M.S. raised an eyebrow.

On Monday I was at work. Letter to Koivisto. Response to Mitterrand, letter to Rajiv Gandhi. The Persian Gulf War: I am watching where we are going with it and after it. The BBC is pestering me for an interview.

A Jewish woman has been calling non-stop about Hasidic manuscripts. Gubenko³ has been ignoring her. She spoke beautifully, in the well-phrased language of a highly educated Moscow Jewish woman. “Gubenko,” she said, “Treats me as a vulgar Jew, who was hired to plead the cause of the community beyond the cordon.”

Later, when I joined her in the ironic tone, she told me she is the most intelligent and most beautiful woman in Moscow. What can you do—this Jewish trait is indestructible! It even made me want to spend some time with her.

Gorbachev took pity on me. Asked if I need a vacation. It turns out that Boldin was the one who told him that I am worn out. I reminded him of my previous request: better he should give me a day or two of rest when I request it; it would seem improper to take a vacation right now.

³ At the time he was Minister of Culture. [Author’s note]

Arbatov called. I told him to go to... Yeltsin. He did not get it right away, but when he did he was offended. It seems this is it for me and him, after 30 years of camaraderie and sometimes even friendship.

I had a good conversation with Anna (daughter). She imitated her "collective" at work (the Institute for International Labor Movement, USSR Academy of Sciences, directed by Timofeev). They are all tattered, externally and internally confused people who've lost their footing, the meaning of their life and work. For 30-40-50 years they worked on something that turned out to be empty, useless rubbish. In a very artistic and natural manner, Anna portrayed all of them together and some of them individually. It is very unpleasant for her there. What do these researchers do on a daily basis? They sit for hours in the cafeteria, which has started serving vodka.

On February 2nd it was five years since I joined Gorbachev's team. Only five years! And how much has happened, the whole world is upside down.

February 7, 1991

In the morning I chaired a meeting of experts on the Persian Gulf War: Yura Mirsky and his team (thirteen people). They said many smart things. Surprisingly, these narrow specialists are also divided into Westerners and Arab patriots. Nevertheless, the conversation was much more interesting and useful in a practical sense than yesterday's meeting of the official "Group on the Persian Gulf War," headed by Bessmertnykh (Yazov, Primakov, Kryuchkov).

I rewrote the draft statement on the Persian Gulf prepared for Gorbachev by the MFA. Returned it to Aleksandr Aleksandrovich.

Gorbachev sent my note on Polozkov to Ivashko, Dzasokhov, and Shenin, which really set me up. Although, he is playing an open game: if you have an opinion, don't be afraid if the people against whom it is directed find out about it.

February 9, 1991

On my insistence, Gorbachev held a meeting of the Persian Gulf War group. Baker has already announced the course of action, and Mitterrand too. Everything in noble terms. Plus, Iran got active, ready to "get things done," it offered its mediation. Our orthodox people raised a public outcry about the horrors of war. The subtext is obvious: Hussein is our ally and embodies the anti-imperialist forces, while we are betraying him.

Gorbachev was a little capricious about the text of the statement. He made mean jokes along the lines of "Chernyaev didn't go far enough in editing the MFA text to ingratiate the Americans." And then he stepped up the text precisely in this sense, adding that we are affirming our support of the UN Security Council's resolution. Today the text will go on air. On the spot, Gorbachev decided to send Primakov to Baghdad. It would be a strong step, he said, not like Kryuchkov's proposal to invite Aziz here again.

We speculated a little about the prospects of events. I shared the analysis of experts I had received recently. Overall, it looks like this: the war is ending. Hussein will surrender as soon as ground troops start advancing past Kuwait. It will look “honorable”—in the face of superior forces. Not capitulation! He is counting on appearing a hero in the Arab world. He dared to raise a hand against Goliath himself (?), so to say, and even hit Israel with some missiles. Unreciprocated! He will get the airplanes back from Iran. The prisoners will be released home from Kuwait, though without weapons. And he will have an army again to continue ruling. Since the whole world will be dealing with the Arab-Israeli conflict—it cannot be avoided—Hussein will be able to boast that after all these years of waltzing around the problem he made it move forward, making sacrifices for the “great Arab cause” and “for the glory of Islam.” We’ll see whether this view will be justified.

We decided to discuss the Warsaw Pact while we’re at it. In the morning, over the phone, I started to “kick back” Dzasokhov and Politburo’s idea, they were insisting on having another high-level PCC [Political Consultative Committee]—at the same level at which the Warsaw Pact was created (the underlying idea is to persuade the participants to save “something” for the future). I vehemently argued that this is an illusion. A PCC with Gorbachev would be the Warsaw Pact’s first-class funeral. This would mean shame, it would mean Gorbachev would once again expose himself to all kinds of Petrushenkos and Alksnises in the press and in the Supreme Soviet.

Bessmertnykh supported me at the group meeting. As a result, we quickly put together a telegram to the heads of Warsaw Pact states. Yazov grudgingly agreed. So we will bury it at the level of the MFA and the Ministry of Defense.

Yeltsin created a Presidential Council. “Russia’s intellectual powerhouse,” one newspaper wrote in rapture. He himself presents the brightest example of this intellectual power. All the participants of parliamentary struggles gathered over there. “Buffoons,” Ryzhov⁴ called them, adding that such “councils” existed under the tsar to speak the inconvenient truth.

The political significance of this latest initiative is to remove Gorbachev. After that, they will remove this pathetic, cowardly public, maybe even with the butts of rifles. And nobody will make a peep. It’s not yelping at Gorbachev for you! Maybe Starovoitova will stand up to them with her big breasts.

February 10, 1991

Yesterday, when we were sitting in the Walnut Room discussing the Persian Gulf War and the Warsaw Pact, Gorbachev, as usual, went off on unrelated issues (many of them I’ve heard a dozen times before). But he did say one thing that’s worth noting—about military intervention in civil conflicts. Turning to Yazov, he said: “Remember when there was shooting in Riga at night between the special police forces and the Latvian people’s guard? Your and my telephones were ringing off the hook with calls from the government, saying there is bloody

⁴ Academician, future Ambassador in Paris, at the time a member of Gorbachev’s Presidential Council. [Author’s note]

murder going on, asking us to send in a military unit, to stop these developments! Neither you nor I took that step. And it was a provocation—to drag in the soldiers and then blame everything on the Center, on Gorbachev.”

February 11, 1991

Matlock visited me. He brought an alarmed letter from Bush to Gorbachev about our violation of the Treaty on Conventional Weapons (after signing it in Paris we “repainted” three land divisions into naval infantry with a thousand tanks). The problem came up in December, back when Shevardnadze was Minister. He was nervous about it. Incidentally, it was one of the reasons why he left. Bessmertnykh brought from Washington Baker’s protest and in my presence tried to convince Gorbachev that we have to resolve the matter, there’s no way around it. It was clearly a fuckup [*ob’ebalovka*], so to speak, on our side.

Also in December, I wrote a note to Gorbachev on this topic. He sent it for examination to Akhromeev and Moiseev. They kept saying that since the Americans refused to negotiate on naval armaments, what do they care now what we have there. When asked why we have a thousand tanks in Murmansk, they avoided the question with the generals’ usual “elegance.” And now Bush has gotten involved in the matter, qualifying this action as a blow to trust and the reliability of our signature on agreements in general.

While Matlock was over, I took the opportunity to open a lively discussion on the Baltics. I raised the issue to the level of the fate of the European process and the new world politics. He fended me off with hackneyed arguments. Overall, he is no Braithwaite, who recently sent me a quote from Turgenev, indicating the magnitude of his understanding of what is happening in our country.

I sent it to Gorbachev with a note: “Mikhail Sergeyeovich! Look in what categories the British Ambassador Braithwaite sees our *perestroika*.”

“Dear Anatoly Sergeyeovich,

I was recently reading I.S. Turgenev’s speech from 1880 in honor of Pushkin. It reminded me of what you said during our last meeting. I enclose a copy.

‘The living thing changes organically by growing. And Russia is growing, not declining. One need not try to prove that such development—like any growth—is inevitably tied to illnesses, painful crises, with most vicious, seemingly hopeless contradictions. We know this not only from general history, but even from the history of every individual. Science itself tells us about necessary diseases. But only obsolete or shortsighted people can be embarrassed by this, can mourn the old, relative calm and try to return to it and return others to it, even by force. In eras that are called transitional, the thinking man’s role, the role of a true citizen of his homeland is to move forward despite the path being difficult and often muddy, to go without for a moment losing from view those fundamental ideals on which the whole life of society is built. He is a living man in this society.’”

I immediately sent Bush's letter to Gorbachev with my commentary. Then I went to lunch. It turns out that in the meantime, he gathered the "interested persons" on this matter. They couldn't find me. Bessmertnykh, Kryuchkov, Yazov, and Moiseev discussed it and satisfied American demands. The usual story: to try and see whether impertinence might go unnoticed. And then we get offended that people do not trust us and always demand inspections.

February 12, 1991, Tuesday

Today I wrote a very "strong" (on a first-name basis) letter from Gorbachev to Kohl. He signed it without a single correction.

Gorbachev had a meeting with Dumas.⁵ M.S. spoke very frankly about our affairs. He spoke sharply against suspicions that he stepped away from the ideals of *perestroika*. He presented his version of events in Lithuania and Latvia, suggesting that Landsbergis and the Latvian leaders provoked "all of that" to put blood on the hands of the Center and save themselves from being overthrown like Prunskiene. He barely gave Dumas a chance to open his mouth. The latter threw in little spiteful questions, but Gorbachev ignored them.

Dumas left, Bessmertnykh and I stayed behind. Suddenly, M.S. announced that he is appointing Komplektov as ambassador to the United States. I brazenly asked Aleksandr Aleksandrovich whether it was his idea. He shook his head. M.S. interrupted: "It's my idea." I pointed out that Komplektov is a one-dimensional, small-caliber man, a petty official. This is not the kind of person we need in the U.S. right now. But once Gorbachev makes up his mind, you can't argue with him. I wonder who tossed this idea to him?

By the way, the Turgenev quote that Sir Roger Braithwaite sent to me—Gorbachev read it in "his circle" and asked them to guess the author. Bessmertnykh, Zaikov, Yazov, and Moiseev thought for a long time and finally all agreed that it is a modern, *perestroika* author. But the text is 110 years old.

February 15, 1991

Yesterday M.S. met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kuwait. His name has many "Sabah's" [Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah]. He is a most cunning Arab. M.S. knows how to make an important international move in a simple way, for example, with the phrase: "I hope that in the near future Kuwait will again become a prosperous state..."

Today he met with the Foreign Minister of Iran, Velayati—smart, reserved, intelligent, but a Persian! Velayati barely said anything the whole time, only asked two "clarifying" questions in the end. He wrote down every word. Gorbachev won his confidence by sharing his concern that the Americans will deal with the region according to their own plans if they crush Hussein militarily and if the political factor is not added in time. Naturally, he found an "anti-American understanding" with his interlocutor. While yesterday, when he spoke with the Arab, he was full of conviction and unequivocal about the inviolability of our unity with the United

⁵ Roland Dumas, Foreign Minister of France between 1984-1986 and 1988-1993. [Translator's Note]

States against aggression, about the USSR's commitment to the UN Security Council's resolutions, etc.

The *New York Times* published an article on Gorbachev in the worst tradition of the past: he is a dictator, a liar, he's playing a double game in the Persian Gulf, tricked the Americans with disarmament, etc.

There is a scandal around Pavlov's statement in *Trud* ["Labor" magazine] that the Western financial capital created a plot to destroy Gorbachev through the influx of 50-100 ruble banknotes into our country. Gibberish?! Or maybe a special maneuver?

When I was speaking with Matlock, I tried to disassociate from Pavlov, saying that in the capacity of the President's adviser I don't have information to support the Premier's statements.

Shakhnazarov and I made a speech to Gorbachev on this account, demanding that he address this statement. M.S. remained silent. And Bessmertnykh in such affairs is, alas, no Shevardnadze.

February 18, 1991

I've gotten lost in the cobwebs of service. On Saturday a trio from the European Community was in Moscow—the ministers Michelis, Poos, and Van den Broek. They came to preach to Gorbachev about democracy and the Charter of Paris. But they got a counter-attack: are they not ashamed for believing that Gorbachev betrayed *perestroika*?! The ministers got confused, mumbled some banalities. However, the campaign to unmask Gorbachev persists in Europe. They don't want to hear any of his arguments. They have no doubt that there was an attempt to "restore order" in Lithuania and Latvia by force.

Today Aziz was here (Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iraq). Gorbachev handled it masterfully. He outlined his plan for Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait. This time, Aziz did not make a peep. Gorbachev made it clear that Bush really does not want to appease Hussein. He wants strike him dead (for the morale, and considering the interests).

Gorbachev is trying to beat Bush on humanism, but by American standards it is worth nothing. We'll see whether Hussein will agree to his plan. One has to worry that the Americans might strike precisely during these days to foil the plan. But Primakov seems to have done his job. In his time, though, Shevardnadze also did all the right things by joining the UN Security Council's resolution and in effect reaffirming our agreement to military action should other measures fail.

Today I sent information to Bush, Kohl, Mitterrand, Andreotti, and others, on the outcome of the meeting with Aziz. M.S. assigned Bessmertnykh and Primakov to write it, but I ended up doing it.

Meanwhile, the intelligentsia press keeps saying that after the departure of Yakovlev, Shevardnadze, Bakatin, Petrakov, and Shatalin, "nobody is left" in Gorbachev's circle. As though they wrote "*Perestroika*" (book), dozens of documents and speeches, including the UN

speeches, Congress speeches, the XIX Party Conference... where the New Thinking was formed and a new style of international relations emerged. Alas, everything is based on mythology, on vulgar journalists' symbolism.

I want to and will leave as a "gray shadow." Although, my soul has gotten so old that all of this no longer bothers me; all of it is empty vanity, except feminine beauty and great books. The other day I read in Rozanov, "Corporeal beauty is a terrible and powerful force not only in the physical, but in a spiritual sense as well."

On Saturday I got a whole stack of books on philosophy: Frank, Losev, Florensky, Yurkovich, Tkachev, Rozanov. I devour several pages from each book without any system. I'm amazed: on the one hand, I've never been a stranger to these thoughts (from my schooldays, from my Roshchinsky home); but on the other hand—our intelligentsia and our spiritual life were deprived of such wealth! And now the intelligentsia, without properly understanding the essence of this heritage, picks out from these great books passages to quote for cheap journalism. Only a handful of people are studying this seriously. For example, for several years the public shouted and demanded the publication of the collected works of Klyuchevsky, Solovyov, Karamzin and other great Russian historians. They were published, some even several times. But show me a single person (of course, not a specialist historian) who read even a couple volumes from these collected works?!

February 19, 1991

Today Yeltsin spoke live on air for 40 minutes. Prior to this, for a whole month there was talk of how he, the head of Russia, does not have access to central television. Thus, the country was at attention: he, the savior of Russia, would speak about prices, the referendum, the army, about all the most urgent issues. In his inarticulate style, roughly and clumsily, he did just that. But he promised to speak about the referendum later, right before the event. And then he read out what seems to have been the most important aspect, the reason why he was bursting to get a TV appearance—a text that seems to have been prepared by "Russia's intellectual powerhouse": Gorbachev is lying to everybody, his policies are against the people, he has the blood of ethnic conflicts on his hands, he has ruined the country, he is guilty for the people's increasing poverty, he hasn't fulfilled any of his promises. Therefore, he, Yeltsin, is calling for Gorbachev's resignation.

Thus, the glove has been thrown from the highest position. He mentioned similar things before many times—in interviews with foreign newspapers, even on the radio, and to all kinds of leaflets created by the day-laborers of the leftist press. Now it was said "at the state level"—on behalf of Russia.

Yesterday in the vestibule, before the meeting with Aziz, M.S. got into a conversation with Ignatenko and me about Yeltsin. The gist of it is that Yeltsin's number is up. He can't get anything done and the people are already expecting things from him. He is running in panic. But even the people from his closest circles are walking all over him, cursing at him, and in the parliament they said that they will not be his herd of sheep, etc. Someone brought this info to M.S. Probably, Kryuchkov.

In a word, M.S. seems to have written Yeltsin off as a threat.

But Pavlov will bring him down before Yeltsin does. I just heard his replies and polemics at the Supreme Soviet on prices. He is smart and professional. The various parliamentarians are whelps to him. He despises them and strikes down any argument from them. He is a cynic, and unlike Ryzhkov does not try to hold on to his post. He could care less what they and “the public” as a whole think about him. He will do as he considers best.

Judging from the responses to our information on Aziz sent to Bush, Mitterrand, Kohl, etc., it looks like Bush at least is not satisfied with Gorbachev’s plan. It’s getting in the way of striking Hussein.

February 20, 1991

Today Gorbachev twice convened his “Privy Council” (Yakovlev, Bakatin, Medvedev, Revenko, Primakov, Shakhnazarov, Ignatenko, Boldin, and me). We discussed Yeltsin, advised Gorbachev not to get involved. It looks like he did not want to himself. As for the assessments, mostly people agreed that Yeltsin chose the moment to topple Gorbachev when people are on the brink because of prices.

All day today the USSR Supreme Soviet discussed Yeltsin’s speech (they have nothing better to do). They passed a condemning resolution. At the “Privy Council” there were thoughts that the Supreme Soviet of Russia should ask Yeltsin on whose behalf he spoke, and demand to convene a congress. There was a hint at possible impeachment. In a word, again there is a fuss because our democracy spewed some dregs to the surface... And again, mediocrity reigns.

In a demonstration against Gorbachev, the intelligentsia is slowly leaving the Party. I heard that the writer Baklanov already left.

February 22, 1991

Gorbachev called Washington today at 7:30 p.m. Baker was on the phone. They greeted each other. Baker spoke for a long time. Five-seven minutes later, Bush showed up and joined the conversation. Gorbachev told him that he was at an event to mark the anniversary of the Soviet army. There were six thousand people present. This is why he could not phone earlier. He said that Jim (Baker) outlined the position currently held by the U.S. administration in regards to what to do with Hussein. “I have a question,” Gorbachev said, “Is it true that the various resolutions to the situation we have been discussing with Iraqi representatives over the last 24 hours, that these ideas are unacceptable to the United States?” He listed the points of the plan that he pressed upon Aziz earlier, and which had been conveyed to Washington. This is the plan Jim had been reacting to.

1. Hussein immediately declares full and unconditional withdrawal of troops from Kuwait.
2. The withdrawal starts the next day after a cease-fire.
3. The withdrawal takes place strictly within a fixed timeframe.
4. After 2/3 of the troops are withdrawn, the economic sanctions against Iraq are lifted.

5. After the full withdrawal of troops, the causes of the UN Security Council's resolutions in effect disappear, and the resolutions are annulled.
6. The withdrawal is monitored by observers appointed by the UN Security Council.

The most difficult question is the timeframe for withdrawal. "You recall," Gorbachev said, "That I categorically rejected the six weeks first mentioned by Aziz."

"And now," Gorbachev continued, "I heard from Jim that none of this is acceptable. The question arises—what do we prefer, a political method or a military action, i.e. a ground offensive? In working with you, I saw my role in protecting the population and the soldiers from terrible casualties, while at the same time achieving strategic objectives—to eliminate the conflict. If you have the same position, then we have to find a solution that would be tough, but doable. If you make an ultimatum, you are paving the way for a military solution. If a political solution is unacceptable to you in principle, that is another matter. I think based on what we were able to achieve in Moscow with Aziz, and considering your suggestions, we could call a meeting of the Security Council and somehow integrate both plans (yours and mine) to find a political solution. We should do it urgently, within a day or two.

The most important thing, and I want to emphasize it right now, is that from the beginning of this conflict and until the last moment we stand together. We used all imaginable and unimaginable means, including the first phase of military action, to force Hussein to back down, to comply with the Security Council's resolution. And we achieved it. This is already a lesson to everybody. This is the new reality, which everyone—all potential aggressors and war mongers—will have to reckon with.

Thus, we have an opportunity to salvage the situation at the brink of its transition into the most difficult phase associated with a war on the ground. I think this already is a major victory. The world and the people of the United States, I think, will appreciate the actions of their president. And the fact that during the crisis we worked together not only with each other, but with other major partners, will mean it is a joint achievement also. Everybody will see that both presidents, while remaining steadfast in achieving their goal, nevertheless did not forget that the human life carries the highest value. I think you can be 80-90 percent sure that the entire world community would approve.

I repeat, right now there is every reason not to lose the chance for a political solution. Let us not succumb to pressure, let us not be nervous. There is pressure here, and in your camp, and all around the world. Our responsibility is very high, George. If right now we make a move to avoid further carnage in its worst form, it will be a major achievement for many years to come. These are my arguments; forgive me for my 'grandiloquence.'"

From the other side of the wire poured clarifications about Aziz and his ability to actually convince Hussein to completely withdraw. It seems that Bush was fervently arguing that this will not happen. M.S.' attempts to jump into the conversation were unsuccessful. After listening for 2-3 minutes, M.S. kept saying "George! George! George!" But the latter would not let up.

“I understand everything,” Gorbachev said when Bush finally stopped. “We do not have different views on Saddam Hussein. His fate is sealed. And I am not trying to whitewash or justify him, to preserve his image, etc. But we both have to deal with him because he is a real active player who opposes us. We are not talking about Hussein’s personality or his methods. We are talking about using what we achieved to curb his aggression—the enormous contribution to this effort by the United States and the American President—to transfer the solution of this issue into a purely political track and avoid a greater disaster and tragedy for a great number of people. This is the central issue. The prestige of our countries and ourselves, George, are locked in this matter.

I will convey your demands for Hussein through Aziz. But I repeat my final suggestion: let’s maybe determine it right now, namely that we present a joint initiative to convene the Security Council and immediately start a review of the entire package of demands to Hussein. We have to squeeze everything we can out of him to force him to meet our requirements.

Remember, George, that our priority is collaboration with the United States within the framework of our responsibility to our own people and the world community. At this moment this responsibility is to resolve this conflict and achieve the goal while avoiding a catastrophe.”

Bush again objected. Gorbachev told him that we are waiting for a new response from Baghdad (after the nighttime talk with Aziz). Therefore it is crucial right now to ask oneself: are we taking a course for a political or military solution.⁶

February 25, 1991, Monday

For the whole day on Saturday, February 23rd, Gorbachev (and we with him) was telephoning Bush, Major, Andreotti, Mubarak, Assad, Mitterrand, Kohl, Kaifu, Rafsanjani... Trying to convince them that Hussein will leave Kuwait, that he has no other options.

And nobody, including the people he is on close terms with, told him directly: “Don’t fuss, Mikhail! Everything was decided two weeks ago. Nobody wants Hussein to withdraw, or more precisely, Bush doesn’t want him to withdraw, and we can’t stand in the way. He has to stay so we can arrange a modern-day ‘Stalingrad’ for him.” They played games with him. Sometimes he felt it, but kept hoping that the New Thinking criteria would kick in, that trust means something. But no such luck! The logic of traditional politics was at work: where there is power, wealth, and interests, there is “right.” And it was easy to find a moral cover for his, especially against Hussein.

⁶ Comment years later, post factum. Baker had called Bessmertnykh to inform him that the offensive had begun—the tanks started moving. From this we can once again conclude that when he and President kept up the discussion with Gorbachev over the phone, the decision had already been made. All orders had been given a long time ago. And the troops were on the “line of attack.” The U.S. Administration’s intention to use this opportunity to strike Hussein hard, at the same time showing all the Arabs and the world who is “running the show,” had acquired a very concrete “content” in the headquarters of the armed services. I do not think that Bush “did not care” about the fact that he was fooling “his friend Michael,” after all, for some time they had led a “fair game.” But the instincts of the “old thinking”, well-coached in the Cold War, were still too strong. And after Gorbachev left, they were again decisive and dominant. [Author’s Note]

Records of his telephone conversations are the swan song of new policy aimed at “a new world order.” As could be expected, he turned out to be a dreamer-idealist. He believed that humanity will become the core of world politics. And we, the people around him, also believed it, even if we doubted it at times.

In a word, Gorbachev passed the “test by Hussein.” The West did not pass it. Allah and the Christian God will note it for us. But that’s about it.

We are doomed to be friends with America, no matter what it does. Otherwise we’d again face isolation and everything will go haywire. The remains of *perestroika* would also be lost. Though today, when I advised Gorbachev not to respond to Hussein’s latest message, he said: “You are right. What is it now! It’s a new era. Even in our country it is already post-*perestroika*. All revolutions end in failure, even if they change the country, and some change the whole world.”

Late in the evening we dragged M.S. into Yakovlev’s office. Primakov, Bakatin, Ignatenko and I were already there. The conversation was lofty, but in the traditional Russian style of “Do you respect me? I respect you.”⁷ Gorbachev said many smart things, but I don’t remember them because I was drunk, though I held up well. For the first time he embraced me as a [World War II] veteran (and not just Yakovlev, as he has always done before). There was a reason: The Day of the Soviet Army.

In the morning I was again writing “Persian motifs;” though I didn’t go to work but got a courier to bring my work home.

On Saturday (before the calls to various capitals) Yakovlev and I were sitting with Gorbachev. Suddenly, right in front of us, he started signing decrees on presidential advisers. Yakovlev said to him, “You could at least call me a senior adviser.” I jumped in and suggested that Yakovlev should be called the “president’s representative for special assignments.”

“What is this position? Before whom would he be representing?” Gorbachev objected.

“But you cannot place Alexander Nikolayevich at the same level as, say, Ozherel’ev...”

“Come on, Tolya, the important thing is that we are still together. That is the most important thing.”

“But only you, I, and maybe a few other people know this important element. In society, however, people are judged by their position.”

My persistence didn’t work. He doesn’t want to identify himself with Yakovlev officially; he knows that it will be troublesome in the Politburo and that the Supreme Soviet—Gorbachev is sure of this—will not pass it.

⁷ A common phrase that invites drinking and toasting. [Translator’s note]

Then we started picking others, just advisers. Besides Zagladin and Akhromeev, Gorbachev named Medvedev, Osipyev, Abalkin, Aganbegyan. Then we started looking among the writers. He said, "I would take Baklanov, but I heard he left the Party the other day." I suggested Shatrov. We discussed him and Gorbachev included him. I also suggested Dedkov from *Kommunist*, Gorbachev included him as well. Martynov, Yadov, Zhurkin—directors of academic institutes—also made it on the list. By the way, I think Velikhov is also on the list. But Brutents, whom Gorbachev promised to include a long time ago, was not included. Already a week ago Medvedev tripped Karen up.

February 26, 1991, Tuesday

During the day I was at home. Gorbachev went to Belorussia. I decided to give myself a day off. However, I did stop by work in the morning. It turns out that Hussein sent Gorbachev an "SOS!" He swears to leave Kuwait. He no longer calls Kuwait the nineteenth province of Iraq, and asks us to request the UN Security Council to stop the offensive. He reports that he will leave the city Al-Kuwait tonight; he even announced it on the radio.

Bessmertnykh called Baker. But what good is it now? At one point, Aziz demanded two months to withdraw troops, then six weeks, then some other amount. M.S. had agreed to 21 days, while Bush said one week, and three days later launched the ground offensive. Now Americans are acting as if "nothing is happening" and no matter what Hussein might say, they continue with their offensive. So it is! Power proved that it still makes real policy.

I walked around the dirty streets for a little while. Moscow is an appalling spectacle. Trash bins, mountains of snow, huge puddles, queues at every store. Milk will probably soon disappear completely: our milk processing plants don't have the raw materials—imported milk powder (for hard currency). And our cows have no feed.

Burlatsky called. *Pravda* came down on him for the round table he held with Alekseyev and Shatalin: they want to create a social-democratic party within the CPSU... I thought, why are people always itching to do something? Can't they see the incredible polarization and unprecedented atomization of society? People are thinking about survival. Right now, no party will be able to offer or do anything more than squabbles on the surface.

By the way, Primakov is quickly writing a pamphlet entitled, "A war that could have been avoided." *Pravda* is starting to print it by chapter. Yesterday he called me:

"Can I read one page to you?"

"Sure."

"... First it talks about the creation of the Crisis Committee headed by Gorbachev, with Bessmertnykh as deputy. The following people were included (he lists), including the President's adviser Chernyaev... (He reads) 'This person is always in the shadows. He must think that his position requires it. But in reality he plays a major role in international politics, in its development and implementation.'"

“Zhenya, please, take out that part. Gorbachev won’t like it. He had a disagreement with Shevardnadze over the same thing. He saw similar claims from him as from Yakovlev, who practically openly declared that Gorbachev is merely voicing the texts and carrying out the advice he gets from Yakovlev. This is not true, Zhenya! In essence it is not true. Not to mention, of course, that it is insulting to Gorbachev to hear something like that.”

Primakov argued noisily that he will not take it out. I started pleading with him, “Do it for the sake of our friendship!” He cursed, “Why did I ever call you!” But he promised to take it into account.

March 2, Evening, Gorbachev’s 60th anniversary

The day before, the women—two Tamaras and Olga—demanded that I write a birthday address from them, from the people who are here but are not officials... I kept putting it off, I was busy. Suddenly Shakhnazarov called me. He said, “I wrote something up, take a look.” I looked at it, and it was conventional stuff. So I dictated my text to Tamara off the top of my head. By coincidence, she came across a quote from Lincoln in a Carnegie book. I included it. She typed it up.

Yakovlev called, invited me to sign their address. It is mostly from the former members of the Presidential Council. Shakhnazarov and I hesitated, but signed their paper. In the morning, on March 2nd, we had to find a moment to “appear” before the birthday boy in a break between official congratulations. We got a chance when he stopped by his office in the CC after greetings at the Politburo. It turned out very sweet. He was moved by our message. He kissed all the girls, said something to each one and rushed to the Kremlin to continue the events.

Our top officials, ministers and others, gathered in the “TV room.” Lukyanov made a speech. Advisers and former members of the Presidential Council—Yakovlev, Bakatin, Primakov, Medvedev, Revenko, and some others—did not feel comfortable interfering there. Afterwards, he joined us in good spirits. He said, “Who is going to give the first speech?” Alexander Nikolayevich stepped forward. He opened his folder and started reading the text that Shakhnazarov and I barely decided to sign. After the first paragraph, M.S. took away the folder, closed it, put it on the table and, turning to the orator, asked him to speak freely. Yakovlev started to speak freely, but his impromptu speeches are always worse than his flowery texts.

M.S. hugged everyone and led us to the same room where he met with the senior officials. There was a table with drinks and sandwiches. We drank, a conversation got going. M.S. spoke well and a great deal. He spoke clearly, smoothly and profoundly, as he does when he is at his best and surrounded by understanding and sympathetic people (as often happens in the company of foreigners). Too bad I couldn’t take notes; our technology for recording such impromptu speeches is practically nonexistent.

Suddenly he said to me, “Anatoly, where is that address of yours?”

“It was left at you office.”

“Get it over here.”

I stepped out and told the couriers to bring the text from M.S.’ CC office with lightning speed. In ten minutes it was presented to Gorbachev.

He began reading it himself, with obvious pleasure. His glasses were not in his pocket, so I offered him mine. He laughed. “You see,” he said, “Chernyaev and I even see things through the same glasses.”

Boldin quipped: it’s a good text, almost as good as ours (i.e. the one Gorbachev did not listen to).

Here is the text:

“Dear Mikhail Sergeevich!

This is not political congratulations on an anniversary. You will receive plenty of those from every corner of the world; most will be more sincere than not. This here is an expression of our admiration for you and, maybe, our astonishment (an anniversary allows you not to be shy in expressing feelings).

Usually in such cases we say “This mission has befallen you,” and corresponding words to follow. But in this case it is not quite true—you took this great historical burden upon yourself at great personal risk. You did it for your people, for the dignity and wellbeing of your country; you were moved by conscience and shame for the state to which our country was brought by your predecessors.

Six years ago it was difficult to imagine that you would be able to move this continent from seemingly dead-set rivets. We know that you foresaw what this might mean for such a country and for every family, for a rather drawn-out period. But this did not scare you, even though you do feel a tenfold sense of responsibility for everything that happens.

However, history, which is always right, has already entered you into its most significant pages. Nobody will ever be able to cross this out or cover it up. Though one of the most regrettable aspects of the current situation is that such attempts are taking place on a massive scale in your own homeland.

You seem to have learned to take it in stride. However, your temperament and liveliness of mind make it very difficult for you to restrain yourself from trying to explain, to persuade, and to appeal to common sense even in cases when it would be better to heed Pushkin’s advice: “do not argue with a fool.” Your trust and love for people often let you down. But this is because of your great soul. This trait also makes us in awe of you, same as your unpredictability, which is a trait at the heart of the Russian nation.

Hundreds of books and countless articles have been written about you, and thousands more will be written in the future. Allow us to make a comparison with another book, to indirectly give you some advice. For a long time, Abraham Lincoln also had to learn to ignore

the fierce criticism waged against him, until finally he said, 'If I tried to read all the attacks against me, not to mention respond to them, I would have no time to do anything else. I am doing everything I can, absolutely everything, and I intend to continue to do so until the end. If in the end we succeed, then all attacks against me will be irrelevant. If we fail, then even if ten angels swear that I was right, it would not change anything.'

We entreat you to use this advice to save your energy and nerves to continue your great cause, which will inevitably win in the end. Everybody is going through a hard time. We, the people close to you, suffer with you at the defeats and rejoice at large and small victories. We are nourished by your amazing vitality and confidence that all obstacles can be overcome, that anything can be done if the goal is worth it. We are proud to belong to an era that will forever be associated with your name, and we are proud that fate has placed us at your side, to work for the country in an atmosphere of goodwill, spiritual openness, and intellectual demand that you create around you. The fact that we can say what is on our minds to 'such superiors,' and even hope that some of it will be taken into account, is already immensely satisfying. We trust you.

With that, we will win."

We started dispersing. But then, an incident took place that could have implications for my relationship with Ignatenko and Primakov.

M.S. asked Primakov, "What is your Saddam up to, has he fled already or is he still putting on airs?" We talked. Yakovlev joined the conversation, "Mikhail Sergeevich, Baker is going to the Middle East, and we should send one of our representatives to the region as well. Our presence should be felt; we shouldn't give all the glory to America. And when Baker comes here, we will have our own notes. After all, the Arabs won't tell him everything, and so on."

I realized what was going on. The night before, Ignatenko presented this idea to me vividly, he is good at that. He suggested that Primakov loved the idea and of course he should be the one to go. Later, Primakov himself called me and suggested that we persuade Gorbachev. I mumbled, tried to make excuses, chimed in half-heartedly. I didn't promise to approach Gorbachev with this, only if a good opportunity came up.

I immediately had suspicions and a bad feeling about this idea—it was a petty and fussy way to try to snatch up a piece of American victory. We would appear before the whole world as trying to "latch on to glory." During the war, Gorbachev's efforts were justified as humanism in the eyes of the world. In spite of Bush's annoyance, he was trying to avoid new casualties and destruction, and he was defending the priority of peaceful means (in the spirit of new thinking). Now these motives are gone and our attempts would look pathetic. In a word, the idea seemed to me to be fussy and not respectable.

There was no way out, so I voiced my objections rather sharply. M.S. looked at me askance and asked uncomfortable questions. But he could not knock down my position. In the end, he said: "Indeed, why should we fuss? It will not be respectable. They will be fine without us. We did our duty."

An awkward silence followed. In the evening, Bessmertnykh called and thanked me for shooting down this idea. By the way, Gorbachev told him about this episode, not without some spitefulness.

March 3, 1991

The week was quite varied. M.S. went to Belorussia to explain to the people “where we are” and “where he is,” what he plans to focus on (seems like on centrism, which he understands to mean common sense). As always, he is late... the positions have been finalized and it is difficult to combine them. Although, yesterday in a close circle at his 60th anniversary he analyzed the situation as follows: there are about 25 percent of “extremists” on both sides, and the rest could follow the “center,” i.e. in line with national self-preservation.

So, I used the opportunity while M.S. was gone and went to Uspenka...

In the meantime, the war came to an end. The “Persian Gulf emergency team” met without me (even without Gorbachev), as a mere formality. On the 1st I came back to work. A mountain of work piled up. The British ambassador came by with girl whose skirt was down to her navel (my grandson’s expression). The new Prime Minister John Major’s visit is coming up.

Afterward, I led a three-hour meeting with scholars and experts on the topic “What I would do if I were the director (i.e. president)”... There was once a column with that name in some newspaper during the stagnation years. I wanted to find out what they thought we should do after the resounding American victory over Hussein.

Two academicians were present—Simonia and Zhurkin, plus Brutents, Bovin, Galkin, Diligensky, guys from the CC International Department—Weber, Kuvaldin, Yermovsky, Malashenko, Likhotal. Overall it was amateurish; with few useful ideas that could be suggested for policy that I would not have myself thought to tell the President. But the majority of serious and sensible stuff came from Bovin, Kuvaldin, and other guys from the apparatus, not from the scholars-experts.

I recorded the meeting on tape.

March 5, 1991, Tuesday

All day yesterday I prepared materials for Gorbachev’s meeting with Major. But, he led the conversation according to “a different logic” and in his manner. It was optimistic, but with a warning that “you” (i.e. the West) could get someone else in this seat (i.e. at the Catherine Hall of the Kremlin), and you will regret it.

Major is a nice guy, tactful, smart, calm, natural, with no flourishes or arrogance that is usually inherent to leaders—this is British political culture. He will probably go far. A modern statesman.

Gorbachev hosted dinner in the luxurious Schechtel mansion on Alexei Tolstoy Street. A pretty setting.

In the evening M.S. spoke with Kohl over the phone. The German requested the call, to “congratulate himself” on the ratification of agreements on German unification.

March 8, 1991

Yesterday M.S. spoke for two hours at the Supreme Soviet, on various subjects. His speech was complex and confusing; he was presenting members of the Security Council. They are all senior officials—Pavlov, Yanaev, Pugo, Yazov, Kryuchkov, Bessmertnykh, plus Primakov, Bakatin and Boldin.

Primakov and Boldin did not pass the first voting round. After lengthy persuasions from the Chair, Primakov passed the second time around, gaining seven votes over 50 percent, but Boldin didn’t make it the second time, either. Another slight to Gorbachev. After all, he is not dragging Boldin along for a good reason, but for “gratitude for his service and loyalty.” What kind of a Security Council or Cabinet of Ministers is this?! Besides two new faces, it is made up of the same people! Who is he going to “confer” with--Yazov? Kryuchkov? There is a conflict with department interests, plus they are not shining with brilliant intelligence, not to mention a fresh worldview.

In the meantime, a plenum of the RCP [Russian Communist Party] CC took place. Polozkov presented a scheduled report. So the “Party of Order” is fully formed, and it includes the “Black Colonels,” and... Gorbachev himself.

It is not based on Marxism-Leninism, though it does defend the Leninist legacy. It also does not reject the market, but recognizes class struggle. It is something that could appeal to tens of millions of “regular people.” Especially because they promise to “restore order.” It doesn’t look like they plan to push it as far as civil war, but they are warning that a dictatorship might be “necessary.” Against this background, the mass media—from Korotich to Yegor Yakovlev—look like squealing intellectuals, grumbling in defense of *glasnost*.

A.N. Yakovlev called me, “appalled,” saying that nothing like this has happened since 1937. But no, this is different. Far from 1937. It looks more like a sign of the kind of polarization that could take us back to 1918.

Yakovlev is slighted. M.S. never did offer his candidacy for the Security Council... his excuse was that Yakovlev would not pass. Although, most likely he would have passed. M.S. simply does not want to publicly “stain” himself with Yakovlev—“the reformist, revisionist who broke up the Baltics and the Marxist-Leninist ideology, who gave the press into the hands of counterrevolutionaries.” Privately, though, he probably loves his “Sashka” and considers it dishonorable to turn away from him completely. After all, they started out together!

Yakovlev said yesterday, “I asked Eduard Amvrosievich why he made such a show at the Congress and left.” Shevardnadze said, “For a while now, I felt insincerity (from M.S.)” This is probably the case. From the beginning, he was somewhat dodgy, it is in his compromising nature. Yakovlev is suffering, saying that it’s time to leave. “Remember,” he said, “M.S. was

selecting advisers with us for the president's group, which I was supposed to lead? That was the end of it. For the third week now, I haven't heard a word about it."

My friend Kutsenkov stopped by. He was in India for six weeks. He would like to be ambassador to India. I mentioned this to Bessmertnykh; he asked for a paper—an objective. Tol'ka has started looking after personal ambitions lately. Oh, this vanity! Yakovlev, and Primakov... all are in his power. It is embarrassing and sad.

March 10, 1991

In the evening, still at the dacha, I started preparing materials for the arrival of the Turkish President Ozal. M.S. called, hurried me along. In the morning on the 9th I came back to Moscow. Came to work. There I heard Yeltsin's speech over the radio, from the meeting of left-wing parties in the Palace of Cinema. The speech was completely unbridled: "The President is a liar, he is cheating everywhere. The CPSU is mobilizing. It is time to act to preserve democracy. You say I broke up the Union? That's a lie. The President let the Union disintegrate through his criminal policies. The Army? I support the army, but I object to it being used against the people," and more along this line. Right now there is a demonstration in Moscow in support of Yeltsin, with the slogans, "Down with Pavlov and his prices!" and of course, "Down with the President!"

In the evening I sat down to write a letter from Gorbachev to Kohl. Over the phone M.S. did not tell him about his request, but it is an "SOS," because hunger has already started in some regions, the Kuznetsk basin went on strike, also "Down with the President!" In the stores in big cities the shelves are empty, quite literally. M.S. is asking Kohl to help immediately—to make the banks give us some credit, and also to give us a cash advance under the mortgage of military equipment that is being left behind by our troops leaving Germany. The letter has been sent.

The collapse is approaching. The March 17th referendum could serve as a detonator.

March 14, 1991, Thursday

On Monday, M.S. gathered the advisers in the Walnut Room, including two members of the Security Council (Bakatin and Primakov), plus Boldin. He held such a meeting for the first time. He put everyone on the same level... to Yakovlev's increasing despondency, whom he thereby made equal to Ozherel'ev and Yegorov.

Judging by this meeting, M.S. is growing more and more petty, and becoming more irritable. And he is less informed. It turns out, there exists an "Information Department," headed by Boldin, about which nobody knew until now. I discovered this by accident, when the "girls" brought me some paper that mentioned it. I became curious and found out that this department makes daily reviews for the President. I asked Boldin to show me at least one example of these reviews. He sent it to me, with a note "Please return." This explains a great deal. This is an ultra-biased, totally Brezhnev-style review of the press and cables. This is where Gorbachev gets his petty offenses, where he gets his "conclusions" and assessments of recent events.

He gave his assistants and advisers (whom M.S. equalized in salary) each 4-6 consultants, while members of the Security Council got 8 consultants plus two secretaries. Yakovlev lost a consultant and his secretary. This is one more sting, one more insult! One gets the impression that M.S. is pushing Yakovlev to resign "on his own volition."

Overall, it was a pointless and rather tactless meeting, where Gorbachev swore to us that he will not turn back, but also ordered to serve only him. If someone wants to act differently, he should leave. And if he notices that someone is acting the wrong way, he will ask him to leave.

I butted in (immediately remembering my audacity in relation to the battalion commander in 1942): "So, Mikhail Sergeevich, disagreeing with you is no longer allowed?" He gave me a long look, but did not deign to answer.

Yesterday I sent him a note: following Baker's instructions, Matlock is organizing a "Party meeting." He is inviting presidents of the Union republics and the chairmen of their Supreme Soviets to the embassy. And they already started up their airplane engines! What an embarrassment! M.S. was furious. In the morning he ordered Bessmertnykh and Dzasokhov to get on the phone. He also started calling the capitals of the republics. We succeeded in thwarting Matlock's "event." And I, by the way, had to "explain" to Yakovlev, Bakatin, and Primakov that it would not be the best idea for them to go there.

But what impudence! I don't understand whether we have a different mentality, a different take on ethics, that we can't understand what's normal for Americans. Or is this a conscious rudeness of victors over Hussein, when they no longer need Gorbachev or the "European process."

The issue of the "naval infantry" (our carrying out the Agreement on Conventional Weapons in Europe) is still unsolved. M.S. does not delve into the matter. Though, this is the case for everything nowadays. For example, he did not prepare for the meeting with Ozal and was boring and banal despite his interlocutor's enthusiasm about the "Black Sea Economic Community" and his readiness to provide telephone service to all the Soviet villages...

He is suffering from vanity (despite everything!) and he is worn out by the internal political scandals, the persecution. It seems like he is tired "strategically"⁸... And he doesn't leave, because he missed the best time, when he could have left with respect and glory.

Lukyanov is the cleverer one, though. In *Komsomolka* he said: "We did what we could. We tore this continent off its chains." Let others finish the job. This is what I wrote to M.S. in his 60th anniversary greeting.

Yesterday he, Yakovlev, and Shakhnazarov were composing a speech for a TV appearance on the referendum (to keep the Union). In the evening he asked me to look at what they came up with. I re-wrote it, it was too perfunctory. In the morning, after a tempestuous outbreak in reaction to Baker's "action" (the abovementioned "Party conference" at the American

⁸ According to Mao Zedong, one can be tired "tactically," or "strategically." [Author's note]

embassy), he sat down with Shakhnazarov and Kravchenko to re-dictate his TV speech. I don't know what he'll use from my version, and what he will retain from yesterday's silliness, like the reference to Yaroslav the Wise...

Izvestiya carried an article by Latsis called "Masks." He writes very accurately about what is happening in the so-called social movements: public consciousness has been emasculated... What can one say if the refined cultural elite at the Palace of Cinema applauds the commonplace, vulgar, semi-literate, boorish "leader"! Who will believe that they do not understand who stands in front of them? This means the elite wants this? But does it itself know, for what?

March 17, 1991

The referendum: "Our Motherland--to be or not to be?" In reality, phrasing this question in such a way is yet another example of demagogy. There will be nothing, no matter what the results of the referendum.

The second question of the referendum has to do with a President of Russia. If it is not Yeltsin, why not?

Baker visited M.S. on Friday. He acted as if nothing had happened, as if it were last November or December. But this is thanks to Jim, who knew that he did something wrong, and immediately took a conciliatory course. And M.S. had been putting together some material to present to him, to say that he is engaged in some subversive activities over here. In reality, Kryuchkov is the one conducting subversive activities, either out of stupidity or in the line of duty. M.S. is very susceptible to the things, which that department produces. I think I put together a pretty good report on the meeting with Baker. M.S. was inspired and voluble. He spoke like in the olden days.

Yesterday I was preparing materials for the meeting with Genscher. In the meantime, we "stole" Honecker. I don't understand it. I, the president's adviser, found out about it from the radio, even though it started back in December (Yazov and Kryuchkov's first note, which M.S. had ignored back then). Why should we smear ourselves with this? How is this going to look with new thinking? We abducted a citizen of a foreign country, plus one who is on trial? Apparently, Kohl didn't know anything about it. But he did not say anything. Actually, for them it is probably good riddance. Still, it is too impudent. What about the sovereignty of already-united Germany, aspiring to the status of a great power?! I don't know how M.S. is going to make excuses for this one.

March 20, 1991

What happened this week? On Monday we had Genscher. He barely touched the subject of Honecker, just enough for a checkmark. Not a shadow of indignation, no demands. I guess they are happy with such an arrangement. Let the Russians get smeared with their piece of shit one last time, so to say.

One gets a real sense of history when talking with the Germans, a sense of irreversible transition to a new era, historical moments are passing into history. I had a similar feeling when I was present at M.S.' interview for *Der Spiegel*. But there is another, sadder, observation: Gorbachev is repeating himself. Words, phrases, examples, trains of thought, arguments that were shocking in 1986 and still impressive in 1988, now sound like standard blather. He is stuck in his discoveries; he hasn't evolved at all, especially since *perestroika* went into a gallop. He used to read articles and even books that became available through the freedom he made possible. He read and tried to discover in them something relevant to him, and he developed himself. But when things went downhill, he started seeing any new thought as opposition, as something aimed against him. And he is becoming intellectually impoverished and hardened. He has become monotonous and dull in politics... He is looking for ways to avoid change. How could one stay ahead of the curve this way!

Right now everyone is asking about the outcomes of the referendum, about the framework and general concept of sovereignty. He has not once mentioned that he might allow someone to leave the Union. He is making excuses about the "constitutional process" and legality... And no reaction when Baker advised him to make a speech after the referendum and say, "Republics, you are free. I am letting you go." Then all the talk of divorce and remarriage would follow a normal course. But no, he continues to repeat that "we are indivisible." He said it again today, despite the fact that at the referendum, Russians practically voted against the empire.

Yes, he has exhausted himself intellectually as a politician. He is tired. Time has passed him by; his own time, created by him.

We are busy with the program for his visit to Japan. Dunaev is "enriching" him and Raisa with knowledge. Raisa keeps changing the lists, throwing out people who ever said any word against M.S. But the most "interesting" part is that there is still no "concept" of the visit--will he give them the islands or not? And without this "concept" there is no point in going.

Yeltsin was at the Putilov factory. Live on Leningrad TV. He was vulgar, petty, confusing, muddled, impudent, and his whole message was directed against Gorbachev. But he presented himself triumphantly. The working class, the Leningrad aristocracy of workers, gave him a standing ovation. They joined him in a chorus, chanting "Gorbachev must resign!"

All things can be explained. But I still cannot understand why Gorbachev inspires such unbridled and irrational hatred. Probably a politician, especially a reformer, cannot be dodgy, cannot be inconsistent, and it is ill-advised to sermonize to the people.

In a word, he lost as a politician. He will remain in history as a messiah, and their fates are always the same.

By the way, yesterday when Augstein (publisher of *Der Spiegel*) was saying goodbye, he said that he wished Gorbachev luck in his "great work--like Lincoln in America." But, the German continued, "I do not wish you his fate." Very tactful! But, I think, M.S. did not notice the slip.

March 24, 1991

Yesterday Gorbachev gathered a group at the Kremlin to discuss our position before the visit to Japan (Yanaev, Yakovlev, Bessmertnykh, Boldin, Falin, Rogachev (Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs), myself, and, of course, Primakov).

The Foreign Ministry suggested returning to the formula from 1956. I said that having studied a bunch of analyses and brainstorming sessions from the institutes, I came to the conclusion that we will have to give them the islands eventually. The question is when and how. If you don't do it, Yeltsin will. He will become president of Russia and he'll do it—to the applause of the Russian people. You remember how you were afraid that the Russian people would not forgive you, or any politician, the smallest step that could be interpreted as destruction of the empire. And now Yeltsin is openly and impudently collapsing the Union—the empire. And, incidentally, the Russians are the ones giving him standing ovations.

M.S. replied, “I'd be very happy to give this mission to Yeltsin.” Then he kept talking and admonishing us for a long time, and in the end decided not to give away the islands. He leaned toward veiling the issue in pretty words and to promise a “process”—a favorite word of his from his “theory of compromise,” which brought us here... It is boring.

Of course, we started talking about Yeltsin's speech at the Putilov factory.

Gorbachev started out with a question: “Should we show this speech on Channel 1 on TV? The people will see it and realize what pit Yeltsin is dragging the country into.” I strongly objected. If we show this impudence, this insult, these chants of “President must resign!” on TV, then people will be completely convinced that there really is no authority, at least in the central government if such things are allowed. They will assume that one can wipe his feet on the President.

Gorbachev complained that in no other country are the mass media allowed to sneer, jeer, insult the President, and lie like this. He said that he will stand until the end. And what are these democrats, he said, who appeal to the mob, to the “mine” (referring to the miner's strike), who, supposedly for the people's sake, destroy everything created by the people, etc. etc.

All these arguments are stemming from his helplessness and maybe a feeling of doom. Gorbachev no longer has a position or a policy that would be adequate for the present moment. And where would he get one? (The advisers also cannot offer anything). Yeltsin and his “democrats” don't have a policy either. All they have is lust for power.

For three days M.S. spent hours going over his TV speech on the outcomes of the referendum. At the same time, he is completely disconnected from the real reaction to this referendum. Plus, no matter what he says, nobody cares anymore. The only thing that would bring a reaction right now would be his resignation. But even that would fade very quickly (that's what happened with Ryzhkov, so quickly!). He would turn into an object for historians, who will “pay homage” to him (and even in this, only the Western historians at first). Our historians will again rewrite history according to the situation.

March 25, 1991, Monday

I persuaded M.S. to meet with Matlock. It turned out to be a good conversation, very sincere. M.S. said that he wants to be close with Bush, and wants Bush to remain close with him. He values his position. He wants everyone in the U.S. to know about the USSR (let the special services do their job). He praised the Ambassador, but asked that U.S. refrain from outlining its position on our domestic woes.

Still, all of this isn't what we need. How much time did he spend preparing his speech for TV? Shakhnazarov, who had been ill and only later saw what they came up with, was appalled and rejected the text. "Our President has not been given such dull mediocrity before. And you know, the trouble is that M.S. no longer senses that it is dull... He is losing the feeling for the audience's reaction... He must be completely lost. He assigned me to prepare a speech for the Russian parliament?! I will get it done, but I will protest against him speaking there. He already once helped Yeltsin to become Chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet. Now he's going to help him become President of Russia."

I cried out, "One has to be completely oblivious to the situation to go to the Russian parliament right now and speak against Yeltsin, to the hooting of the crowds. They will catcall him... or a fight will break out between the deputies!"

Shakhnazarov replied, "M.S. is sure that he will not allow Yeltsin to become President. In the meantime, March 28th could be the beginning of the end, if Yeltsin calls for a general political strike... Essentially, it was already started by the miners, metallurgists, Putilov factory workers, etc. And if Moscow goes on strike, you and I won't be here on Thursday."

As for myself, I am even curious to see what would happen. Something like that might take place. We will be left without a pension even, they will say, "Go get your pension through the Presidential apparatus," which will be gone by then. No matter! I could sell books and albums, I'd get by. Although, sitting here in our big offices, behind doors guarded by KGB officers, we have lost touch with reality. The kind of sense of reality you feel with your skin. Society is on the verge of explosion... Who will start shooting? A Romanian option is quite possible...

What is to be done, what is to be done? I am beginning to develop an idiosyncrasy [*idiosinkaziya*] for newspapers. I am sick of this intellectual political poison. But I cannot distract myself with classics... too anxious.

March 29, Friday

It has been a week to remember... the RSFSR Congress... and Gorbachev's ban on Moscow demonstrations in support of Yeltsin (after his Leningrad escapades!). The Moscow City Council condemned the ban. All the press, including *Izvestiya*, condemned the ban. The RSFSR Congress that started yesterday morning also condemned it... They made an orgy of it. They sent Khasbulatov to speak with M.S. But he did not back down. He told Khasbulatov that troops will be removed tomorrow, but today they are staying and I will not allow any

demonstrations in downtown Moscow! The Congress was “indignant,” as was the USSR Supreme Soviet (Sobchak from the Interregional Group suggested drawing up a resolution...) The Congress suspended its work...

Meanwhile, the streets were flooded with troops, police, blocked with trucks...

My car was not allowed past Moskvoretsky Bridge... I boiled over inside: how is that, not to allow the car of the president’s adviser to pass! But I did not say anything and presented my documents, which were studied at length. And I proceeded to work on foot. The same thing when I was going from work to the metro! But when I calmed down, I realized [the significance of this] and approved [of the action]... Whether Gorbachev did the right or wrong thing, once he banned demonstrations he had to follow it through to the end. Otherwise he would have lost everything. And in general... it worked. Demonstrations were localized and there were no casualties, no confrontations. To my great surprise, the Congress heard a rather constructive and “conciliatory” speech from Yeltsin today about the “Situation in the country—Russia.”

Yakovlev called in the morning. He cannot get over Shevardnadze’s laurels. He feels that he should have done the same, “remained in history” at the right time! Vanity! He fancies himself the author of *perestroika*, the “author” of Gorbachev himself. And here he is—an adviser, his salary reduced by 400 rubles and the boys removed from his waiting room. He laments...

He told me, “I was walking down the street yesterday, between the military trucks, and I was embarrassed. We are regressing, going back to all the familiar things... it was all for nothing, etc.” I made a half-an-hour speech in response.

The gist of it was: if you plan to remain in politics, think in political terms. The opposition has all the means to use democracy to the end (up to forming a new government). M.S. finally said this openly in his interview. Yeltsin has had plenty of praise and glorification. Ninety percent of the press is on his side. But that’s not enough for them; they want to show their force through mass actions. Well, M.S. still has means to counteract their force. And he did. Or, the other possibility is that the opposition has been acting until now (I’m hoping this will change with Yeltsin’s report today) based on the principle of forcing its policies, which meant destroying the country. But then we would have no place to implement policies. Yes, M.S. made many grave—not tactical but strategic—mistakes. Right now we are no longer talking about *perestroika*, but about saving the country. If you do not save it, if you allow the State to be destroyed...

Yakovlev: “What? You mean use force against those who don’t want to stay?”

I: “On the contrary. One of M.S.’ fatal mistakes was not letting Lithuania, and then Georgia, go right away. I repeat, this is what created the festering in the entire organism. No! I am talking about the State that can still be preserved...”

Yakovlev: “But still, should we use the army again?”

I: “There is no State without an army.”

Yakovlev: “But we shouldn’t rely on the army?”

I: “Then on what?”

Yakovlev: “On democracy...”

I: “Where is it? Where is democracy? What does it consist of? This swamp elite... these mounds, which disappear from under your feet. We do not have democracy. We have *glasnost*, freedom, which in the Russian interpretation means practically lawlessness [*vol’nitsa*]. Democracy means an organized society: parties, institutions, rule of law, respect for the law. Democracy means leaders competing to be in the government, not struggling against the State!! Where is it here? And what is the President supposed to rely on in his attempts to save the country?!”

He continued to whine. This person is finished in politics. He is plucked, he lost his political coordinates.

Meanwhile, a catastrophe is approaching. On Monday M.S. convened the Security Council (seating arrangements—Yakovlev, Medvedev, Revenko at the main table, even though now they are supposed to be on the same level as Chernyaev, Zagladin, and Ignatenko, who sat along the wall).

M.S.: “In 2-3 months there we will not be able to feed the country, even though there is bread in the country. The situation is similar to 1927. Think on it. We will convene again on Saturday (i.e. tomorrow!) and see what people come up with.”

Moskovskaya Pravda printed yesterday... An “Experimental Creative Center” on three pages, depicting an image of practically inevitable doom for the country, which is even more than an empire, it is a civilization, like Rome, Byzantium, the Great Mongols, Babylon, etc. The “seventh” version for salvation [sic] is the weakest point in this powerful analysis of the essence and consequences of *perestroika* and 73 years [of the USSR]. Yes! The seventh option, it’s another scheme... I read it twice... I will tell M.S. to read it too. He needs to know where he and the others stand.

We started writing speeches for Japan. Ozawa was here... M.S. did not “give” him anything and made no promises. Why are we even going? Nothing will happen. It’s not even that we won’t get a billion for the islands. But we will not even be able to develop them. Nothing fits!

M.S. keeps making speeches. First at the Agrarian Front (same stuff as two-three years ago), then at the All-Army Party Rally. The army, the army! The last thing left.

March 31, 1991, Sunday

Yesterday the Security Council met. The problem of food... But now more specifically—bread. We are 6 million tons short of the average norm. In Moscow and other big cities, bread

lines are similar to the ones we had two years ago for sausage. If we don't procure it somewhere, we could have hunger by June. Out of the republics, only Kazakhstan and Ukraine (barely) can sustain themselves. The idea that there is bread in the country turned out to be a myth.

We've scraped the bottom of all the barrels to find some cash and credits to buy [grain] from abroad. But we are already insolvent. Nobody will give us credit; all our hopes are on Roh Tae-Woo (M.S. agreed to stop on Jeju Island on the way back from Japan, to speak with the President of South Korea about a 3 billion credit)... There is still hope that Saudi Arabia might come through. Looks like Kuwait is refusing, though Faisal promised Gorbachev all kinds of gratitude for supporting them against Iraq.

Discussion at the Security Council is the same as two years ago at the Politburo. Instead of arriving with prepared calculations and suggestions and immediately starting to work on solutions, for six hours we sat figuring out what we have and where we can get some. M.S. was sitting with a pencil and questioning people, while the ministers and Security Council members got confused in conflicting data.

And again: the government (before it used to be the Politburo) has to find everything and distribute it! Two-three years ago we already saw the fallaciousness of this approach against the background of our stated intention for market reform. But we are incorrigible! And M.S. is the same.

Yeltsin presented his program at the Congress of People's Deputies. Now you can no longer say that the opposition does not have a positive program and therefore it cannot compete with us (only a few days ago M.S. repeated this in a TV interview yet again!). The program is clever, thorough, and impressive.

But everything is falling apart... Because the most important thing for the opposition is to realize the Russian referendum and elect Yeltsin as president. It has come down simply to a vulgar quarrel. But they are getting away with it because it is presented as part of an uncompromising attitude towards Gorbachev. Even those who are against Yeltsin are demanding Gorbachev's resignation. An indicative example of this is Isakov (from "the six" who, headed by Goryacheva, spoke for Yeltsin's resignation at the RSFSR Supreme Soviet). Isakov was making a report, and by the way mentioned, "I am for both Yeltsin and Gorbachev's resignation. I would be happy if Gorbachev was given some honorary diplomatic post."

M.S. had included Isakov in his Japan delegation. When he found out about the speech, he asked me: "When he said that Gorbachev should resign, what was the reaction, was there tumultuous applause?" "Yes." "And when he suggested the diplomatic post, were people also applauding?" "Yes..." He immediately ordered Isakov to be removed from the delegation. And that's all there is to it. These are all the means the President has available.

March 31, 1991, Sunday evening

I went to visit N.N. She is still sick and asked me to buy some bread. Mikhail Mikhailovich and I drove around all of Moscow, starting with Maryina Roshcha. All the bakeries

are either closed, or the shelves are terrifyingly, absolutely empty. Not a piece of bread! Moscow hasn't seen anything like this probably in all of its history, even during the hungry years. They say this is happening because the prices are going to go up. But you can't buy bread in advance. On this day probably nothing was left of Gorbachev's image. He is spiraling down catastrophically, already below zero. After all, everyone, even a well-wisher, can only say one thing when looking at this—that's where he brought us with his *perestroika* [*doperestroil*]!

Poptsov published a mean article about Gorbachev in *MN* [*Moskovskie Novosti*, Moscow News]. He writes: "Shevardnadze made a choice between power and integrity, and he chose the latter." Alright. But what is power for Shevardnadze? Material wealth, luxurious accommodations, popularity, an "image" obtained through Gorbachev, who put him in that post and gave him new thinking policies to work with. Eduard Amvrosievich's actual power (i.e. his authority and subordination) applied only to the Smolenskaya-Sennaya. That is the only thing he lost when he "chose integrity." Everything else remained with him.

Now to consider integrity and honor. Yesterday Shevardnadze made an appearance in the TV show "After Midnight" (he gives interviews practically every week now). He was talking about fundamental mistakes, complaining about the "military equipment" on Moscow streets on March 28th.

Alright! You, Eduard Amvrosievich, made these fundamental mistakes together with Gorbachev. But you left him alone to pay for them, while you are sitting comfortably in front of reporters, or talking with your Western politician acquaintances at your house. Or you are philosophizing about what would have been, had this or that happened, etc. You are condescendingly "patting M.S. on the shoulder," saying that he may still be useful to the country. So you did not want to get dirty at the most difficult time, when "glory" could have disappeared, and you decided to "catch the moment" and remain as a good guy in history. You call this integrity? Is this the honor of a Caucasian man?!

Maybe he is really aiming for presidency after M.S.? A presidency like Weizsacker's, when you don't have to do anything, don't have to answer for anything, you just show off in front of the world and the liberal intelligentsia, confirming yourself as a historical figure. Possibly...

Maybe Yakovlev should follow Shevardnadze's example. It seems that is what tortures Alexander Nikolayevich—that he missed the right moment. He would have been at rest as the initiator of *perestroika*, the "father of Russian democracy," and a "giant of liberal thought." Ugh!

No! I would prefer to be in my "statute," to stay with the captain on a sinking ship. And to feast in time of plague, with our beloved women!

April 2, 1991, Tuesday

After several days of hesitation, M.S. suddenly decided to receive Nixon. Last night we started looking for him, but couldn't find him. M.S. condescended: "Fine, tomorrow at 2p.m."

He sat with Nixon for an hour and a half, arguing that our course is unchanged, but that we need to stabilize events...

Perhaps it was inevitable to speak with Nixon. After all, he presented himself as Bush's envoy and traveled to Lithuania and Georgia, he met with everyone.

I was sitting with them, recording, and thinking that M.S. is acting on his own and doing "what's required;" the RSFSR Congress is also acting on its own and putting on a brutal show for the whole country; the miners are acting on their own and ruining our economy. The working class (the hegemony) does not give a damn about anything! All of this is just one more example of the collapse of Marxism-Leninism, of Communism, of the myth of the "historic mission" of the working class.

All of this is depressing. It is time to write speeches for Japan, but I have neither "inspiration" nor any thoughts... My "ability" dried up because the policy dried up. All that's left of it are verbal husks. New thinking has done its job; and now... same as in the internal *perestroika*, what was begun by Gorbachev is continued by the Americans as they create "their" new world order.

My presence alongside M.S. is becoming pointless. There is no momentum... But it is shameful to flee, even though I am tired—not so much from work as from the realization of a dead-end and defeat. Although... We've done so much through "new thinking"... But, that is in the past.

April 9, 1991, Tuesday

M.S. is still bustling. He is preparing the economic program with Pavlov. Today they were talking the whole day, sat at a session of the Federation Council... Yeltsin, having led his "triumphant" Congress and received emergency powers (though *Izvestiya* wrote that nobody understands anymore exactly what that means), has left for the Caucasus resort "Krasnye Kamni" to play tennis...

The country is heaving with the cry, "Down with Gorbachev!" Miners continue to strike... Following Minsk, all of Belorussia presented the same demands. Yesterday I read information from a dozen cities around the country; they are all on the eve of strikes.

In a word, things are coming to a general political fallout.

M.S. was brilliant, sincere, direct (almost to the point of cursing) at his meeting with miners—a momentary flash of his former charm... Everything is going to hell...

Meanwhile, I & Co. continue to feverishly prepare for Japan. The Ambassador was here yesterday... I conveyed M.S.' message (on Sunday he called me at Uspenka) that he, as a Nobel Peace Prize laureate and the author of the idea of a world without nuclear weapons, cannot avoid going to the sites of atomic bombings... (The Japanese really did not want this to happen, so as not to offend the Americans). As a compromise, M.S. agreed to change Hiroshima for Nagasaki. He renewed his agreement to visit Roh Tae-Woo on Jeju Island, on the way back from Japan.

In a word, he is going to be showing that “things are going as usual,” and the President is doing his work no matter what...

He rejected the calls to include people in the delegation from among Yeltsin’s appointees. He chose Isaev... The duller one, but one of Yeltsin’s opponents (his deputy as Chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet).

I am reading Artsybashev (*Sanin*). I’m even a little “disappointed” in comparison to my reaction to him when I was in school. Almost classics: Kuprin, L. Andreev, even Chekhov... And no pornography in the modern sense... But that is not even the point. The point is that unlike so many generations “after me,” I’ve known about Artsybashev since my school days. Same with Sologub, Merezhovsky, Gippius, not to mention Blok... Our “Serdey”—the literature teacher—managed to initiate us into everything, though we could not always get our hands on the works themselves. Though many times we did get hold of them.

I am outraged at the ineptitude, unprofessionalism, and shabbiness of the materials produced by the MFA and others for the Japan visit (and for other occasions as well). Except now I’m pressed for time, plus I’m sick. But everything came down to me, again.

April 21, 1991, Sunday

About the visit to Japan. On the 14th we flew to Khabarovsk. Two nights and a day. On the 15th M.S. “discussed” with the local leaders possible ways out of the crisis. His meetings with the most active leadership was broadcast on TV for four hours. These men, who don’t want to (and don’t know how to) do away with the administrative-control style of government. The most impudent and primitive of them was the representative of the executive committee Danilyuk. Nevertheless, M.S. took him to Japan.

The city: old-style wooden houses. The streets have a provincial look... And plenty of goods in the stores! Moscow hasn’t dreamed of anything like this in a long time. They have three systems to distribute products: coupons, cooperatives, and commercial trade. There are no queues, no crowds in stores.

The facial features people have here—long or sharp noses—indicate they are the descendants of Ukrainian immigrants.

On Tuesday the 19th we flew to Tokyo... The first impression is the unnatural quality of their ultra-modern cities, as if they are somehow lifeless.

I did not go to a single reception or public meeting. I was only at the talks, which took up a solid twelve hours. At night or during breaks I prepared press releases and drafts for the next round. There were a total of seven.

It is impossible to convey the gist of the visit in the diary. It is in the records... Maybe for the future, for memoirs. There was a very uncomfortable feeling when the President of the superpower and the Japanese Prime Minister would argue for hours whether to use the verb-form

of a word or the noun.⁹ And this at a moment when everything is about to collapse! On the other hand, maybe it's good to "create an appearance" that the President is doing his job, no matter what?

We took a train to Kyoto, traveling at 250 km/h. M.S. had a banquet with the business world there. One of my classmates from Moscow State University was there as a translator, an unexpected meeting!

The flight to Nagasaki... the beauty of the bays. The road into the city at dusk was a fairy tale... The crowds in the streets were like Germany, America, Finland... Maybe a little smaller than in Italy! This was worth the visit (Dunaev did well by insisting that we stop here). It was especially "interesting" against this background that Yeltsin was shown the door in Strasbourg.

[We visited a] Russian cemetery from 1905. For some reason I am not moved in the depths of my soul by such things. I am not touched by it. I guess I am a deeply irreligious person, nontraditional. Metropolitan Pitirim, whom Gorbachev took in the delegation with him, is a beauty. Halleluiah in the chapel.

At night we flew to Jeju Island in South Korea. At the airport there was a scene because of Tamara and Dunaev. Security guards and the people with our protocol announced, "You are not expected!" I became exasperated and put them in my car. But the matter did not end there. When we got to the hotel, it turned out that they did not have rooms.¹⁰ I went into a rage and threw a loud scandal to the chief of security Plekhanov, and the chief of protocol Shevchenko, in the presence of their subordinates and the Koreans. However, they could not find a room. I put Dunaev in my room. And, "in protest" (against whom?) I did not go to the official evening reception given by President Roh Tae-Woo.

As soon as the reception was over, Gorbachev burst into my room. Dunaev barely had time to block with his broad shoulders the view of numerous empty little whiskey and gin bottles that Dunaev and I drank together with Tamara and Olga (Lanina, from the Secretariat of the President). Olga was lying on my bed. Tamara was bent over a typewriter, which stood on a chair—there was no other place to put it in my "apartment."

The scene, as Ostap Bender used to say, was worthy of the brush of Aivazovsky.¹¹ But M.S. immediately "assessed" the situation: "Aha! Now I see why Chernyaev did not show up at the reception. He is much cozier here than listening to those boring speeches, one of which he

⁹ Prime Minister Kaifu insisted that the communiqué contain the formula "stated in the Declaration" (Soviet-Japanese from 1956). Gorbachev resisted through "stylistics" ("it was declared..."). The point was that the Japanese cleverly wanted to "tie down" Gorbachev by mentioning the 1956 document, in which the islands were promised to them. Gorbachev eluded a reference to the document by changing the word into a verb. [Author's note]

¹⁰ Dunaev is a scholar of Japan and a journalist. He did a great deal to make me and Gorbachev pay attention to Japan, and to prepare this visit. So there was "no room!" for him and "no room!" for my assistant Tamara. [Author's note]

¹¹ Ivan Aivazovsky (1817-1900), a Russian-Armenian painter. [Translator's Note]

wrote himself!” We laughed about it. He said some niceties to the girls. Then he said that “tomorrow will be busy” and mischievously wished us a good night.

In the morning of the 20th Gorbachev and Roh Tae-Woo had one-on-one talks. Before the talks, M.S. asked me if he should state our agreement to accept South Korea to the UN. He mentioned it, as we agreed. Roh Tae-Woo shone with happiness.

They made an agreement about a loan (3 billion). The delegations will negotiate it. All about grand projects for oil and gas. It’s hard to believe.

Impressions while returning to the airport by car: it is not Japan, but still...

The flight back was eleven hours. I dictated to Tamara about the meetings on the island, for the TV and newspapers.

As always, M.S. invited people to his section of the plane. We all sat around him: Pitirim, Katushev, Ignatenko, Brutents, Rogachev, Gusenkov, and I...

It was difficult to follow the conversation because of the noise of the engines. I am used to these conversations; M.S. gets intimate every time on the way back from abroad. But this time was a little different because the Metropolitan was involved. And... he drank plenty of cognac with us. I wonder, what was his impression of the President, who opens up in moments like these?

By the end, Pitirim whispered in my ear an invitation to his diocese near Volokolamsk.

April 27, 1991, Saturday

It has been a real “Passion Week” since returning from Japan. The joint statement with Yeltsin was a breakthrough. Although yesterday M.S. said that B.N. [Boris Nikolayevich] is beginning to weaken. The West is adding fuel to the fire by presenting this “compromise” too much as M.S.’ victory. We’ll be in trouble if Yeltsin breaks off the “joint obligation” and puts the blame on M.S., which he easily could do.

Then—the Plenum. The Politburo took place the night before, on the 24th. When M.S. saw the draft resolution of the Plenum, he exploded: it talked about the General Secretary’s “anti-national policies.” He said to Sheinin, “This is your work.” But the same can be said for all of these “young” politicians—Girenko, Luchinsky, Semenova, Kuptsov, Stroev, Falin—whom he advanced to CC secretaries. The majority of them are from the provinces, and he nursed and took care of them, gave them a pass into big politics, and what do they do? This means that at heart they must also blame M.S. for everything? As if they could solve all issues by removing him, or threatening to remove him in chorus with the obkom [oblast committee] resolutions? In any case, it is clear that they’re party to these sentiments; it was not for nothing that they kept their mouths shut at the Plenum when others threw bursts of insults and slander at M.S., demanded his resignation, presented ultimatums about the state of emergency in the country—“or else!” It was disgraceful to see these bunnies [*zajchikov*]... And the whole Plenum in general. They were driving the General Secretary out, but when he got up and said “Fine, I’m

leaving!” they all pooped their pants and voted to “remove the issue from discussion.” What wording! Are they removing it until the next Plenum, or something?!

People like Vol’sky, Bakatin, not to mention Nazarbayev, were redeeming the honor of the CC. Though in general, I think M.S. should tell them all to go to hell... and the next day there would be nothing left of them. Truly, no one needs them, except the nomenclature. And without M.S. they would immediately find themselves on the sidelines and in the dumps. Actually, Vol’sky + Bakatin said so directly. And one worker came up to M.S. during a break and said, “They are suicidal idiots.”

Truly, they are pygmies. I was convinced that M.S. should have used the opportunity to resign as General Secretary before his concluding speech. I thought it would be a gesture to de-ideologize the highest state authority; it would have thrown off the final burden of Party membership, which everybody hates. And it would have given him some upsurge of, first of all, “everyman” sympathies, as well as compassion (like the effect Ryzhkov produced when he left)... Secondly, a significant part of the Communists would have to decide where they belong—with Polozkov or elsewhere. A “Gorbachev Party” would form... There would be a split in the CPSU, a much needed split... so individuals no longer cast away their Party membership (often for lousy reasons); instead, millions of Party members would leave the Party “out of principle”... And the rest would immediately turn out to be Polozkov-followers!!

But M.S. once again revealed his talent of an orator-politician (he can still do it when he flies into passion!). It will make the CC and the Party have some serious thoughts, at least for a while. The most important thing is that he clearly outlined his credo for all these Starovoitov’s and Stankevich’s, i.e. “democrats” who haven’t lost their common sense yet, have not exhausted their conscience in political games and fights! The former Gorbachev appeared before them and the West (like in Japan); the staunch and steadfast author of *perestroika*, grown wise from experience with its “destructive” nature!

Perhaps, this option will work better...

Last night he called me, saying: “Tolya, what should I do now?”

I was taken aback. I did not immediately know what to say. I told him, “The same thing you’ve been doing till now!”

We talked about the “pygmies” and “worthlessness” in the CC, around him... I advised him to take a week or two to rest, step into the shadows, let them bustle without him, and let the people think about where M.S. went, since right now he appears almost every day... I especially advised him not to go to the May 1st parade on Red Square... It will be a sea of people, tens if not hundreds of thousands of people cursing and insulting the President. It would smear the success achieved with the agreement of the nine republics (the Novo-Ogarevo process) and the outcomes of the Plenum. Plus, he really needs a rest, and should make use of such concentration of holidays between May 1st and 12th.

He did not respond... And he has a bunch of “events” planned during these days. In my line of work alone, he has a telephone conversation with Kohl, a reception for Mitterrand in Novo-Ogarevo, a group of significant Japanese [officials], the Bulgarian Lilov, the Vietnamese leader, etc.

Yesterday he made a speech at the Supreme Soviet on the outcomes of [the visits to] Japan and South Korea. He almost did not change the text I gave him. It’s a pity he threw out one “maneuver”—to say that he himself doesn’t know yet whether we will give up the islands or not... so as not to keep playing the fool. It would fit with his thesis of “let history do its job.” He did not have the courage.

What was I doing in the meantime? My job. By the way, I again got proof that the group of consultants that works with me has been giving me a semi-finished product... Which means that I am still necessary. That’s a nice feeling, though a load to bear. I wrote letters to Bush and Major—responses to their letters to M.S. Again, I had to re-write the drafts I got from the MFA. This was also the case for the response to Antall and a greeting to Walesa, who, by the way, is acting quite lousy, quite “Polish”—small-gentry and plebeian. But that’s ok... M.S. recently said that “we” did the right thing when we stopped paying attention to our former allies. Let them sort themselves out, whether they want to deal with us or not, whether they need it or not. We’ll be fine without them!

May 2, 1991, Thursday

Raisa Maksimovna wrote a book, with Pryakhin’s help. She called me about a translator... I recommended giving the manuscript to the American publishing house directly. For a long time, three times over, as only she can—as if she is speaking with a moron (although this time she wasn’t giving me “orders,” but “sharing” with me)—she told me, “I always avoided giving interviews or publishing articles, even though there were hundreds of requests. Now, when M.S. is being slandered and so much injustice is done to him, so many mean rumors and speculations spread about him—I can no longer keep quiet. I had to intervene... This book is my “biography” with him. I seem to be writing about myself, but in reality it is about him.”

I supported her wholeheartedly, and not just out of politeness. We have to talk about him “from the inside.” It is also my responsibility. To do that, I’d have to retire. But R.M. has plenty of time.

I only saw M.S. during these last few days during his phone conversation with Kohl. The same concerns, the latter wants to know, “Will you hold out?” And assures that he will “firmly support Mikhail” in everything, including... he is getting ready to go to Washington. But getting down to business—something is stalling the construction of apartments for the military. He asked that the contractors would be Germans!

M.S. was in a rush to get to the Security Council, so there was no chance to have a good talk.

On the 6th, I passed Mitterrand off to Zagladin, who has completely turned into a traveling (overseas) adviser. Sometimes he manages to get some interesting thoughts from [the foreigners]. By the way, these thoughts were useful for my idea to prepare an analysis and a view of the new (it's time!) stage of "new thinking policy." My team (Weber, Yermonsky, Malashenko) already wrote 40 pages based on my outline. But I "subjected" it [to editing], even though it was pretty good raw material. Still, there were no large, "strategic" thoughts. I presented a new broad outline to them. They seem to have gotten inspired... work for the holidays. As for me, in an hour I am going to visit Metropolitan Pitirim in Volokolamsk!

Out of the blue, M.S. gave me a present of a Japanese music system (radio, CD, and cassette player)... He sent it to my house while I was visiting friends, he found me. Joking, he says, "I made a special trip from the Kremlin to the CC (on the 30th, at 9p.m.) to give you a present. I've been meaning to do it for a long time, a memento."

I told him, "But you already gave me a memento. Remember, before some trip I couldn't find shaving lotion at the store, so you gave me your own. It was very touching. Now I think of you every morning."

"But that's not the same! With this one, you'll remember me every day."

It was very nice of him.

Yesterday he ended up going to the Red Square, standing on the Mausoleum, next to the Labor Union leader Shcherbakov and other "workers," who one after the other proceeded to criticize his policies in front of 30 thousand people. This meeting replaces the 73-year-old tradition of a mass demonstration. And when you see it, you somehow feel sad... After all, these May days are your biography. They may have been based on a big lie and the secret source of the country's ruin... There were no "personal" attacks like last May 1st and November 7th, when Gorbachev was insulted in print (on posters) and with shouts, and when he had to leave!... that didn't happen this time. Still, how he must have felt, standing there! Listening to what amounts to "people's" nonsense, total lack of understanding of his policies, his ideas. Their rejection, the heartrending facts! How bad things have become, how everything is "collapsing," and "caving in." And not one of them, including the Labor Union leaders, even hinted that there is no other way, that it is inevitable, that "his" policies are for the good of the country, for its salvation, no matter how disappointing his mistakes...

Yeltsin, who was also invited to the Mausoleum, preferred to remain in the Kuznetsk Basin. Popov did not show up, since his Party, the "Demorossy," did not advise him to go. This is also a politicking move—not to "smear" himself with Gorbachev's policies and not to share with him the rebukes and criticisms, and the appeals to assist in poverty and ruin. Meanwhile, M.S. honestly faces all of this... But from the point of view of the country's leader's prestige, he shouldn't have gone. I told him twice (he didn't respond). Because listening to these complaints and not doing anything (and you cannot do anything: you cannot raise salaries, return the old prices, provide funds and production links, etc.) means in the eyes of the public that you do not "heed" the people. It would have been better for the people if you, the President, showed with your absence that you know what you are doing and that shouts will not divert you from your

plans, because these cries are pointless, they are directed against the people themselves. Let them cry, so to say, while I will do what I planned... In general, he should “lay low” for a week or two, “Chapaev is thinking!” so to speak. Let the people get accustomed to the “inevitable.” It is impossible to explain anything to anybody right now. He made a truly deep speech on this subject at the award ceremony for outstanding workers (April 30th). But who is reading it? Who is listening? It’s all the same—beautiful words! They’ve had enough of them!

May 3, 1991, Early morning

Yesterday was a wonderful day. We visited the Volokolamsk Metropolitan Pitirim (his name is Konstantin Vladimirovich) and his “estate.” [We saw] Volokolamsk itself—the cathedrals, Dubrosekovo, [the site of] the fabricated story of the Panfilov division in 1941, though Pitirim is a patriot and doesn’t know the story is fabricated, so he “uses” this theme... the city and churches. Tea.

Kashino: “Ilyich’s lamp.” This time he knows that it’s a fabricated story and cheerfully says that it, the lamp, existed even before “that time,” at the estate of the landowner Chernyshev.

Yaropolets: estate of the mother of N.N. Pushkina-Goncharova, inherited after the exiled Hetman Doroshenko and from the Zagryazhskie...

Chernyshev’s estate: a unique church, falling apart. The “Russian Versailles,” a palace blown up during the war, also falling apart. By the way, the majority of skeleton-like churches that stand on those hills and in the valleys were also blown up by the Germans! Plus the filth of desolation. Pitirim plans to restore all of this and make it into a cultural belt with museums, hotels, camping, and tourism. He has already started.

The Iosif-Volokolamsky monastery is a wonder! The architecture is astonishing... Pitirim is hegumen there. Everywhere we went, he told us about his plans of economic recovery of the region and the economic expansion of his diocese into Staritsa, Ruza, and a part of the Tula “province”... He has a multitude of connections and uses all of his organizational and public relations talent for “worldly affairs.” More and more I felt that it would be inappropriate to talk to him about God. Still, over lunch and vodka I got the nerve up to do it. He turned out to be commonplace... in this subject. Or maybe he did not want to start a serious conversation. He perked up again when we started talking about joint ventures, investments, connections with various authorities and economic players, etc. He knows a great deal about agriculture, ecology, transportation (he graduated from Moscow State University of Communications).

May 10, 1991, After Victory Day

What happened this week?

M.S. received the Japanese Minister Watanabe & Co.; this is along Volsky’s line. Later I got from them as a souvenir a kilo of ham sausage and a big salmon-like fish. What have we come to! In the past, souvenirs like these were given to chauffeurs, not the President’s advisers. Though, it came in very handy. Yesterday we tried them with my wartime friend Kolya.

Zagladin “accompanied” M.S.’ talk with Mitterrand. I asked Zagladin to do it without notifying M.S. It would seem natural for Zagladin to do it. M.S. was at the top of his form in the subsequent press conference. On May 6th I “organized” for Matlock to meet with M.S. Once again, the subject was the Treaty on Conventional Weapons, following Bush’s verbal request. Again M.S. talked a great deal about the significance of this treaty and especially of Soviet-American relations, which we should protect, nurture, keep at a high level; but there are signs, he said, not only in words but in deeds, which show... etc. If this is how you feel, then do things properly yourself! Why did he get stuck on this naval infantry, why does he add fuel to the fire of suspicions?! Or are Yazov & Co. really pressuring him? But in any case, at this point they won’t “forgive” or agree!

He will send Moiseev (Chief of Staff) to Washington (this is Bush’s proposal)... But without a political solution his visit is pointless. He will again be repeating things that are unacceptable to anyone!

Also... despite the fact that I twice almost convinced him not to receive the Bulgarian Lilov, he nevertheless met with him (at Ivashko’s request) and spent almost an hour with him. For what?! I did not go, made Gusenkov go instead.

On the 8th I had Braithwaite and the NATO representative Alexander, then Blech (the German Ambassador). Then Edamura—Japanese.

The Brits are trying to cajole us not to object to NATO, its existence and activities, despite the dissolution of the WTO. They’re suggesting we might find NATO useful ourselves. I replied, “We don’t object. Just don’t be impudent about it; after all, we also have generals, who are not supposed to understand the new thinking.”

Blech is going to a meeting of Eastern European ambassadors to Weimar. He came to get enlightened. I spoke frankly about Yeltsin (that we do not see him as an “enemy,” but as a person who presents a danger on the political platform...); that here in Moscow we are seeing a difference in how Kohl and other European leaders are treating us on the one hand, and the U.S. Administration on the other. On the phone with Gorbachev, Kohl says something like this: “You are in a tight spot; I am thinking how to help you.” Bush (despite all his personal qualities) says: “You are in a tight spot, Michael, I will think how to best use your weakness in my ‘national’ interests.” This, in my view, is the meaning of the hidden criticism of the U.S. from M.S.’ side that was noted in my report on his meeting with Matlock. That’s what Blech wanted to know.

Edamura asked us not to publicly “explain” our rejection of the 1956 Declaration as a whole. I promised not to... Especially since it is in our best interest. If you dot the *i*’s, what was the use of the negotiations at all?

During the day yesterday, Kolya Varlamov and I had our traditional walk. We walked down the streets... I kept talking about the trip to Volokolamsk—to avoid talking about Gorbachev. In general, I succeeded. At first we drank at my house. He mentioned his loneliness (it’s his second year of retirement). I replied that women are our salvation. I was surprised by his sincere response, in the past he would indulge in male boasting. “I,” he said, “probably used up

my resource, because I have no desire for them anymore. I tried to count them up the other day, and lost count at around thirty...”

I sympathized with him (about feeling no desire). For I am saved by women, and I have not spent my resource.

Then we went to Varlamov’s on Bol’shaya Pirogovksaya Street. His two daughters are wonderful. His sons in law—Pavel (a doctor, nephrologist), and Volodya (an international businessman). It was impossible to avoid talking about Gorbachev. I got into a vehement and frank argument with the businessman: “You, Volodya,” I told him, “Should go work for Polozkov.” He insisted that before starting something, M.S. should have developed a theory and explained to the communists how to proceed. In a word, [he described] that very new model, which would be by force..._And this is coming from an intelligent person of European style! He is a banker, who worked for over ten years in London, Bangladesh, etc!

Doctor Pavel was wise, “nonpartisan,” and deftly egged on his relative by agreeing with me.

Right now I am going to the funeral of Ira Miretskaya (my brother’s wife)... She has been dead for four days now. And I keep thinking about our post-war youth in Maryina Roshcha, when she and Leva first got married. We had a good relationship...

May 17, 1991

The week was challenging and interesting. Because of the May holidays, it stretched on for 10 whole days. I was present at the talk between M.S. and the Vietnamese Nguyen Van Linh... it was curious...

I “gave away” the meeting with the Chinese to Ostroumov. He is the General Secretary’s adviser (I am the President’s). Plus, he is “Chinese” himself—he studied together with Nelya at the Department of Chinese studies at MGIMO. And, like the Chinese, he is for “socialist choice”... unlike me.

My idea to use my new group to put together a treatise on the new stage of new thinking is postponed. It turned out not to be so simple. I re-worked it twice. Now it is 65 pages and still seems to be all wrong. After reading it, one wonders: “So what?! What is all this for?! We could have done without it.” Instead, we have to make it so the writers themselves feel that something new, necessary, and inevitable has been done.

I started working on the Nobel speech. Neither Zagladin’s nor Yermonsky’s versions are acceptable in style, though they do contain some ideas and certain “approaches.”

Yesterday all of a sudden M.S. assigned me to meet with two professors from Harvard (Allison and Sachs) together with Yavlinsky. M.S. met with the latter himself and agreed that he and the Americans create an “avant-projet” [sic] for the G-7 and for M.S. This project is to become the foundation (if M.S. accepts it, and later Yeltsin and others) of ongoing economic

reform, starting off from the 15, 30, or even 150 billion dollars we will get from the World Bank, the IMF, etc. after the G-7's approval.

"Why me?" I asked Gorbachev (i.e. why wouldn't he meet with them himself?) "Because," he replied, "it is too early for me to meet with them." Grishka (that's what M.S. calls Yavlinsky) is going to the U.S. with the group, and on the 27th Primakov and Pavlov's deputy Shcherbakov will join them, although Yavlinsky is objecting to this. I also tried to persuade M.S. against it today, when I was telling him about my impressions of the meeting with Yavlinsky and the Americans. It seems like I made him waver a little... At the same time, he defended Pavlov (to me!), whom Yavlinsky and the Harvard professors consider to be the main obstacle on the path of economic reform. He enlightened me: "For now we need precisely the kind of person like Pavlov, who is willing to sacrifice himself, ready to leave at any moment; but at the same time, since he started the job, he sticks to it like a bulldog. You can't get anything done with our people otherwise!" I agreed. Alas, this is the case!

This project is turning out to be bigger than the "500 day program..." Tomorrow M.S. will present his idea at the Security Council.

There are two dangers here: that the G-7 will not accept it and that M.S. will again get scared (like in the fall). Yavlinsky told me that Yeltsin approved it and said so to Gorbachev on the phone.

"The guys," as Yavlinsky called them, liked me. I really tried to encourage them in various ways, "on behalf of the President." Primakov, whom M.S. sent to accompany me in receiving them, tried to "teach" them. They regarded him ironically. Allison has a better feel for our specific character; Sachs is a pessimist, but also attracted by the grand idea (to save the USSR in order to save themselves—the U.S. and the whole world!). Professor-style, Sachs gave a rendition of the average-American's narrow-minded view of us: "If you don't become like us, you won't get any dollars!"

Jiang Zemin, the Chinese General Secretary, must have thought that I would be at his meeting with M.S. instead of Ostroumov, so he gave me a gift, a two-cassette player...

I am again reading "Master and Margarita," in honor of Bulgakov's 100th anniversary. People are finally beginning to speak about him without mythology and breathlessness: he is a genius, but fundamentally not a hero.

May 18, 1991, Saturday

Today M.S. convened the Security Council. Formally, on the agenda was Pavlov's note on the USSR joining the IMF and the World Bank... Practically, this was Yavlinsky's (and the Harvard professors') "program," and whether Gorbachev should attend the G-7 in London. Although, he has not been invited yet, they are only "planning" on it.

The entire Security Council, except Kryuchkov, was "for" it... (M.S. later called such an approach jingoism, and primitive...)

Bakatin was surprised that he was not informed that our Premier is “so progressive and not a retrograde at all”...

M.S. said that there is no alternative; if we have a free market, it would be open to the world market... He imagined what he would say in London. In a word, he is for reform, for democracy... Pavlov added that the statement at the IMF would already confirm that we are for market reforms, etc.

When Bessmertnykh and I ran after M.S. to the Walnut Room (after the meeting was over), to insist that he resolve the naval infantry issue and the Conventional Weapons Agreement in Europe, he came down on me, saying that Shevardnadze already made 80 percent of concessions to the United States. He sided with Moiseev, who, according to an agreement between Gorbachev and Bush (over the phone), tomorrow will go to Washington and I'm afraid will knock out a 1.5 billion dollar credit for grain, and the invitation to the G-7... M.S. does not get it... “Emotions!” as he says. And if he is not “ruining” his “general line,” he is at least slowing it down or undermining it. Aleksandr Aleksandrovich (Bessmertnykh) and I (he was a little shy, I was more forward) told him our predictions of what would happen. Gorbachev, red in the face, turned around and went to his office.

When I got back to work after this scene and tried to continue composing the Nobel speech, my pen would no longer listen to me, and I went home... But A. and L. are not taking care of me; they are taking care of their gardens at the dachas!

May 22, 1991

Yesterday M.S. went to Sakharov's reading. Ignatenko and I convinced him to go. In the evening he told me on the phone that if Soares (President of Portugal) had not been sitting next to him, he would have gotten up and left. “This Bonner... she blames me for everything: Sumgait, Baku, Karabakh, Lithuania, blood, dictatorship, prisoner of the right-wing, prisoner of the nomenclature... Just to think that the country's leader entered the room and nobody blinked an eye. They barely showed it on TV last night... After Bonner, Orlov criticized all my policies. These people praise morals and ethics, appeal to Sakharov's image, and at the same time spew hatred, anger, provoke revenge... How can you deal with these people? Who do they think freed Sakharov? Etc.”

He was very upset.

On the other hand, when Ignatenko called, he was thrilled by what he saw there, at the Great Hall of the Conservatory. Anyway, [Gorbachev] had to go. If he hadn't gone, “the entire intellectual power of Russia and its environs” would have been covering his name in mud for a long time.

Rajiv Gandhi was killed... Could this also be the outcome of new thinking in the world? Like Saddam, like our situation. M.S. got teary-eyed remembering his friend Rajiv at a meeting with Andreotti. The latter politely smiled at this moment... Descendant of Jesuits and Machiavelli!

I got another assignment. On the 28th M.S. is going to Kazakhstan. He wants to devote ten pages of the speech he will give there to international affairs. Today he met with Andreotti... He was extremely frank, practically forcing an invitation to the G-7 in London. He even admitted that he's been preparing his speech. I was only at the one-on-one, the rest I "gave" to Zagladin.

Vattani (Andreotti's assistant) said that the President will not pardon Dimitrov (who is suspected of an assassination attempt on the Pope) if we don't release Gordievsky's family in return. It turns out that Andreotti conspired with Major... There is a moral for you! They are pressuring us, using the hopelessness of our situation. I'm afraid they won't let M.S. attend the G-7.

General Moiseev is in Washington. Briefings from the White House read, "He came empty-handed," "disappointing results"... They are already connecting this to the "non-invitation" to the G-7...

May 28, 1991, Tuesday Morning

Thatcher was here yesterday. She is no longer Prime Minister, but acts as if nothing happened. Braithwaite probably did not tell her who I am and what I did for Soviet-British relations, nor did he mention the fact that I "adore" her and my office is decorated with her portraits. In any case, she viewed me as a minor official, a note taker (the British and Americans have a special term for people who only record the leaders' conversations). And I am hurt, though I shouldn't care.

It looks like Moiseev had to move towards a "solution" on conventional weapons. Late yesterday Bush called M.S. and said that Bessmertnykh and Baker will work out the final details in Lisbon (they are meeting there because of Angola). Then Bush's visit in June would be possible.

Why did they drag this on for so long? Why did M.S. put himself in such an undignified position? Why provide another occasion of us cheating and not abiding by the documents we signed? There is a great deal of dilettantism (and obkom stubbornness). Yesterday M.S. himself admitted to Margaret [Thatcher] that he does not have enough time to grasp everything, not to mention to "transform" it into policy, and he "has to improvise." But in this case... it was probably something else.

My 70th anniversary passed. At noon, when everyone gathered in my office at the CC, M.S. called me to the Kremlin. He hugged me and presented me with a huge, 70-stem bouquet of roses and a set of china, and gave me a day off: Bush's experts on grain credit (1.5 billion) were coming and I was supposed to be there.

Tamara and the "girls" + Dunaev had set a table with appetizers in my office in the morning. When I rushed in from the Kremlin, my "room" was full—starting with Yakovlev, to my friends, to people I barely know... There must have been around a hundred people. I started getting drunk as I walked from person to person and clinked glasses. There were no toasts or speeches, none of that anniversary rubbish... The official "group" (Party committee, local

committee, etc.) met me in the hallway when I was running to the Kremlin, and right then and there I said goodbye to them.

Bovin was in his usual manner... Read some witty “sketches” about me and *perestroika*. But everybody was already quite drunk and didn’t really take it in, although there was a lot of laughter.

In the evening I was already writing the international section for M.S.’ speech in Kazakhstan. He is flying there today. He gave me back the draft with some corrections (which make it a little weaker)... I started working on the Nobel speech.

I got so many presents, it is embarrassing: a sound system, VCR, a bunch of different liquors, trinkets and albums, pajamas, a jogging suit, even bed linens. We never did finish all the vodka, neither at home or at work.

Gorbachev will be in Kazakhstan for three days. A little break for me. A little rest. Maybe... although much remains unfinished—Oslo and Stockholm are coming up. Analysis of the second stage of “new thinking” is not finished. Neiman (Israel) is coming, “Control Dale” [sic], etc.

May 29, 1991, Wednesday

I have so much reading to catch up on, so many things to absorb in order to be well-informed. Then there are so many things I need to discuss with the MFA, to prepare for M.S... for his decision and consent. Plus, Thatcher asked for a record of her conversation with M.S., but the interpreter (Berezhkov) did a terrible job of recording it. I had to work on it myself, to send it to her today in Leningrad.

I talked with Weber about assigning roles in my small group... He and the other “members” are still in their offices in the CC International Department. Now they receive information (ciphered telegrams, TASS [Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union], etc.) only from me, though it would seem that it should be the other way around. In general, they serve as speech writers and creators of semi-finished products for me... In a word, it’s a mess, just like everywhere else—XVIII century on the presidential level... Dark and illiterate typists-stenographers, and so on.

June 2, 1991, Sunday

M.S.—Kazakhstan. He picked a good time and place (after “9+1”) to consolidate the “shift” to agreement and calm, to patience and common sense, to rejection of political hysteria...

The next evening after his return (on Friday), M.S. called. He complained that he was sick. He got sick in Kazakhstan, from the water and unfamiliar food. He said he didn’t eat anything for 24 hours, and he was “at the limit... about to break down at any moment, tired.” R.M. said the same thing over the phone.

Yegorov (his new adviser “on culture”) is putting on airs. I gave him a rebuttal in front of M.S. He is a favorite, whom R.M. “on M.S.’ orders” for some reason asked to take to Oslo and Stockholm (on occasion of the Nobel Prize). I hate loafers who are favored by authorities for no reason...

Yeah... *Moskovskaya Pravda* recently published an article by “political scientist Mitrokhin”¹² (May 31, 1991) about Gorbachev and Yeltsin’s competing teams. It is mind boggling. Ozherel’ev—a rising star! He is a layman, who appeared on the scene through Medvedev’s connections. M.S. doesn’t even remember that Ozherel’ev is an advisor of his. When I suggested to M.S. to assign him to a meeting with some foreigners (Ozherel’ev is an economist), M.S. scornfully dismissed the idea! M.S. has never consulted with him. In general, he seems to do nothing at all... He asks me “what’s going on with the President”!

The other one, Golik, is aiming for the Supreme Soviet. For all intents and purposes, he is not part of the team; he does not participate in any closed meetings. So he can’t have any influence on M.S. or on policy.

Ignatenko is an interesting person... He’s a playboy, but with convictions, and a risk-taker. He is able to impose on M.S. gestures in favor of democrats and democracy... But M.S. does not involve him in forming policy... And he doesn’t invite him to meetings of the Security Council (like he does me and Shakhnazarov). Actually, when it comes to advisers, only Shakhnazarov and I, each with his portfolio (political process and international relations), mean something to M.S., he listens to us... And 9 times out of 10, he supports me if my opinion diverges from the Foreign Ministry’s. Not to mention the fact that I “form” the finished versions of his foreign policy speeches, the way they appear to the world. It was the same deal with Shevardnadze (who also tested his speeches on me, even though naturally I did not write them). It is still the case with Bessmertnykh, who consults with me on every step, move, and initiative, all foreign policy draft orders and resolutions. Together we work against the Generals and the military-industrial complex.

But political scientist Mitrokhin from *Moskovskaya Pravda* is not aware of this. To him, I am a “nomenclature cadre,” whom Gorbachev is planning to “replace with a star”... And the public eats this up!

Anyway, there is more and more nonsense in the news, now on international relations as well. Ignorance and incompetence no longer seem to be a problem... Even the people who can find out how things actually are, don’t bother about it: it’s easier to make up some dashing nonsense.

But I digress...

¹² The article reads: “Gorbachev realizes the need to replace titled nomenclature assistants with highly professional, energetic, competitive team members. So far, the President does not have a team. Only a few possible candidates can be named: V. Golik, V. Ignatenko, O. Ozherel’ev. A carefully selected team will undoubtedly contribute to the growth potential of M. Gorbachev.” [Author’s note]

Despite being sick yesterday, on Saturday, M.S. met with Kohl's messenger Köhler, and then with four bankers: Reler and Walter from Dresdner Bank and Krupp from Deutsche Bank, plus another one... Once again, he argued that if the West does not help us right now, it will later pay a higher price...

He gave a lecture to the bankers along the lines of his Kazakhstan lecture, from which it followed that his "socialist choice" was the "pure" capitalism of a free market. They had a good laugh.

Later I told him that if the bankers give us a loan, they will not give it on the guarantee of our entire all-Union state property, but on your guarantee. This time he laughed alone.

Last night I gave him the draft of the Nobel speech. It is a pity that he threw out my most powerful addition. He said he doesn't want them to think, or rather to have proof of, his "blackmailing" them with *perestroika*'s failure. The newspapers are already writing about it...

Yesterday I also prepared materials for talks with Brundtland and the text of the toast at the King's reception...

Today I worked on the toast at Carlsson's (Swedish Prime Minister) reception and material for negotiations in Stockholm. I sent it to M.S., he hasn't called back yet...

In the evening I decided to go for a walk. I ran into Tsukanov (Brezhnev's main and all-powerful adviser) by the Smolenskaya metro station. It is instructive how senile the majority of former powerful leaders become, how pathetic...

Mark Aldanov's *Samoubijstvo* [Suicide] was published in *Oktyabr* Nos. 3, 4, 5. His Lenin is as I always suspected he should be, when I read and studied him my entire life, sometimes even admiring him.

June 5, 1991, Wednesday

In half an hour I am going to Vnukovo, to fly to Oslo with M.S.—the Nobel speech.

There was a lot of fuss with preparations. And now, after rereading the text last night, I am not sure that we should have included the things that are in it now. M.S. threw out the main idea: that *perestroika* has given the world more than it has given our country, and if the West is civilized, it must repay the kindness when our country fell into such a crisis that could turn into a disaster for everyone. This idea is still implied, but I had finished that section on page 9 with the words: "I would like my warning to remain in the annals of the Nobel Committee"!!

Yesterday Dobrynin sent a message from Baker: Bush has made a final decision to invite M.S. to the G-7... Indeed, this event may be pivotal in the rejection of "socialist choice."

Primakov brought a letter from Bush to Gorbachev. It is one paragraph about nothing in particular, but it was written on a new computer, and the U.S. President boyishly decided to make this sign of friendship to "Michael"! After all they are quite ingenuous, these Americans.

The clever Andreotti, wise with a thousand years of culture, gave a similar condescending characteristic of them at a meeting with M.S.

I'm going to visit Ibsen¹³... Childhood, Maryina Roshcha...

June 11, 1991, Tuesday

Oslo on the 5th, Stockholm on the 6th.

The Nobel speech. An ovation. A walk around Oslo with Tamara Alekseyevna and Tamara Prokof'evna instead of the King's reception, as has become my established rule. The city. An amateur orchestra playing by the entrance to our hotel, "in our honor!" Very sweet.

I don't really want to record everything, because these days were filled with my "stories" about the events for the press, and in reports to M.S. I will come back at some later point to this trip to a wonderful country.

June 12, 1991, (day of RSFSR presidential elections)

Perhaps this is truly a historic day, and a new era will begin for Russia, a new national "paradigm."

In the end, M.S. was less far-sighted than Yeltsin and his animal instincts. M.S. was afraid that the Russian people would not forgive him for giving up the empire. It turned out the Russian people didn't give a damn (I had warned him about this two years ago). As the result, the non-Russian people turned away from M.S. and praise Yeltsin... And the latter promises that Russia will become a new center of gravity, a new "sun" of international greatness.

Russians don't know how to govern... And besides, the unity of Russia hinged on the autocracy of governors, i.e. on regionalism and the Cossacks. Both presented a purely Russian imperial beginning of the state's integrity, as well as the Russians' natural inclination and ability to merge with the local population. And of course, [Russia's unity also depended] on military supremacy and power in the center and the peripheries.

Yeltsin will probably immediately become President, though maybe they will have to have a second round, but with whom? It would be too bad if with Ryzhkov. It would be good with Bakatin. Out of the six contenders, he is the only one who is a decent person, sensible, smart, and informed. He does not seek victory at any cost; he is intelligent in his own right, not just through his team. And of course, he is progressive, a *perestroika*-man.

M.S. called me yesterday. "I spoke with Vadim (Bakatin). Cheered him up. I said that even if he doesn't win, his participation in the elections will be a plus for future work in the government."

¹³ The visit to Norway with Gorbachev "on Nobel business" is implied. [Author's note]

M.S.' messages to Kohl and Weizsäcker on the occasion of June 22, 1941. An exchange of public telegrams. I composed them yesterday, he signed them. It was a pretty tough job, to write them in the spirit of "reconciliation" as opposed to the "thunder of victory." To separate May 9th from June 22nd. I think I managed. He is also doing a TV appearance on this subject, but he assigned that to Shakhnazarov.

Yesterday M.S. told me over the phone: "Think about the idea that a new choice is before everybody—us and the world... There is a new choice because we have passed the first stage of the end of the Cold War. And overall, we passed it successfully, though not without some faults."

I will think about it... this will give me and Weber & Co. a chance to finish that treatise on the "new phase of new thinking" (it is 50 pages now). I persuaded M.S. to present this report to the group of advisers, and then to the Security Council.

On the 18th he is going to be in Kiev with Kohl. He is still being obscure about the venue... Materials need to be prepared again... a whole heap of them. Eighty percent of this work will go into the trash bin, because he conducts his conversation spontaneously, in his own way.

He has been invited to the G-7. Tomorrow Braithwaite will probably bring an invitation from Major. The formula of the invitation is important. Today I suggested to M.S. to use Andreotti's formula... and described it to Braithwaite.

R.M. "wrote" a book about M.S. Murdoch is publishing it in England. It is also published here. Palazhchenko is editing the translation. In general, he is a very sensible and well educated person. He will be my consultant. There is another candidate for my group... but I won't talk about him... I don't like very intellectual dumb people.

I voted for Bakatin for president of Russia and for Saikin and Kraiko for Moscow—this tandem is better than any other one, including Popov-Luzhkov. Kraiko is a politician, Saikon is a logistic manager.

Krymskaya Naberezhnaya with N.N. Numerous exhibitions and hundreds of paintings: "Russia today"... There is a great deal of talent. The main feeling is that you can look "beyond" the artist's soul, and find something interesting for you. As for the art itself, what can one say? It is the accumulation of all styles over the past 100 years, our own and Western. But the result is our own, and the impression is not imitation.

What should I do about Lyuda, who can tell me?

I am again reading Aldanov's *Samoubijstvo*, about Lenin and Russia from 1902-1917.

June 15, 1991, Saturday

What happened this week?

Yeltsin is the President of Russia. In general, he understood where the unseen forces unleashed by Gorbachev are taking the country, and he used them to his advantage. He was in the right place at the right time. The people who voted for him (I didn't) must be hoping that "with Yeltsin" we will have a recovery. And Gorbachev might try to assist [*sopospeshestvovat*], curbing his desire to do everything himself or else everything will fail (although this belief may not be groundless right now).

The "democratic press" and the West are euphoric. Now everybody is thinking about Russia, not the Soviet Union. Maybe something will come of Russia. If this were the case, I, too, would be applauding. As for the Union—forget about it, if only Russia could make it. In his heart, M.S. thinks so too, but he did not trust his "heart," he trusted his "public responsibility" and... lost.

Gradually, with dignity, he should recede into the pages of history, taking his great place there. It is the law of grand upheavals.

Today I gave him the 46-page "Analytic note" about the new phase of new thinking. I am curious how he will react, whether he will present it for discussion by the advisers or the Security Council.

Today he received Braithwaite (the day before, Sir Rodric was visiting me, and gave me a copy of the official invitation to the G-7). So M.S. was prepared and gave the same reply as I gave Braithwaite, "without prearranging it": it would be strange if the outcomes of the G-7 were presented to Gorbachev before they heard his speech.

The invitation to London was accepted with pleasure, and followed by an energetic 25-minute conversation (without an interpreter). At the same time, M.S. agreed to stay in London on a "working visit" for a day and a half.

Afterwards, he received Attali (Mitterrand's adviser). I asked Zagladin to cover it and did not stay. This promoted intellectual at the French President's side leaves me very skeptical: he is a swindler who is playing games with us with his financial projects, while he is sure that we will fail anyway and it will be easy to make excuses. In the meantime, he can show himself around M.S. and the G-7... and I'm not sure that the G-7 authorized him to speak to Gorbachev about it at all.

Yesterday I finished M.S.' TV speech on the occasion of the 50th anniversary since the beginning of the war. He only assigned me to compose the telegrams to Kohl and Weizsäcker, and a letter to Brandt. The TV speech was supposed to be Shakhnazarov's job. But when he brought it to me last night, it was such nonsense that I could not restrain myself from rewriting it. We'll see... Same as in the telegrams, we will try to aim it at reconciliation as opposed to self-congratulations and self-delusions about our victory.

It turned out very well that, without asking, I sent Brutents to Cooperation Council in Prague (Schmidt, Trudeau, Giscard, etc). M.S. couldn't be happier with the outcome. He ordered it to be published in *Pravda* and *Izvestiya*.

Ambassadors have started frequenting me. The day before yesterday I met with the new Canadian one. He asked me to tell him “how foreign policy is formed [in the USSR].” I gave him an hour and a half lecture.

Today I met with the French Ambassador. He brought a letter from Mitterrand, who expects to meet with M.S. separately in London, and preferably to find out beforehand what M.S. plans to bring there.

I am being “pushed out” of the CC building... Yesterday the typists refused to work for me, even though I’ve known some of them for 25 years.

The telephone rang. M.S. He asked me the question that always confounds me: “What’s new? ... Have you thought of anything? I’m hearing rumors that the Administration in Washington is discussing inviting Yeltsin to London (to the G-7).”

I reply, “Really? If this is the case, then friendship is one thing, but it goes without saying that dirty politics are dirty politics!”

Gorbachev: “This only proves that ‘they’ are financing Yeltsin’s campaigns and all the ‘Russian’ affairs...”

He is suspicious, it is provincial of him! He cannot come to terms with the fact that a powerful democratic trend has formed in society, which “summarizes” itself in Yeltsin.

He said he gave an interview on the meeting with Braithwaite and Attali, and on the meeting on privatization.

In response, I told him about Nadezhda Alekseyevna Shulyat’eva—the Chairwoman of the Union of Small and Medium Enterprises. She is one of our “new people” who are planning to create our new economy. In addition, she is good-looking, smart, and charming.

“Yes,” he reacted, “but how many more impenetrable people there are!”

He complained that the Central Control Committee [CCC] is holding Shevardnadze responsible before the Party for saying something about the new party (Polozkov’s)... But when the General Secretary is insulted from the party stands, neither the CC nor the CCC bother to do anything.

June 16, 1991, Sunday Morning

I just re-read the speech that my friends gave at my 70th anniversary; back at the CC... they say Yermonsky wrote it. At the time I was drunk, and did not really hear it. But now, I re-read it with pleasure. They captured the role that I have been “playing” so well for many years. But what does it mean to “play”? It means that I can sustain myself in this role; consequently I have some fundamental principles that allow me to be this person in my interactions...

On the same shelf I found an old diary with excerpts from Lenin I wrote in 1964. It turns out that I noted down the things you need to know for *perestroika*, to understand it. But what is even more interesting is that the modern vulgar people who are throwing Lenin down from every pedestal, they don't know the real Lenin, they did not read him outside of what they were taught to read.

Yes, history has disproved him: in the concrete, creative sense he turned out to be an idealist, though he left an indelible imprint on the historical process. But he was a great political thinker. And when at the Moscow conference in honor of Lenin's birthday Giuseppe Boffa said that we should write an intellectual biography of Lenin, he was right. Also, we have to make a strong distinction between the period before 1917, when he was analyzing objective processes, from the period after 1917, when he tried to "create" history itself and got carried away... like in the card game 21, he went too far.

In any case, it is too early to take him off the shelves for any self-respecting intellectual. Although he is not really necessary right now to the masses and the practical politicians like Yeltsin. They don't need him because they are themselves in the current that is creating the history that Lenin so smartly "wrote" in 1908-1910.

Yesterday, after a meeting on privatization, M.S. gave a big interview to Kravchenko (director of TV) (why does he rub elbows with the likes of this Kravchenko, this Sevruck, whom it looks like he appointed as editor of *Novosti*?! It is equivalent to Mitterrand appointing the editor of *Paris Match*). Still, he was at his best. Logical, clear... He deftly avoided a question about the omission of the word "socialist" (Republics) from the Union Treaty, even though in name we are still a Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. He admitted that the people voted for a single state, rather than for "socialist choice."

But that's not all of it. The interview slipped into the subject of Yeltsin and the Russian presidential elections. M.S. barely restrained himself from giving himself away because of his hatred for Yeltsin. He started reasoning that 25 million people did not vote, that Yeltsin was elected by only 40 million out of 103! I froze, listening, afraid that any moment now things will spiral into a scandal... But he switched the train of thought to say that this reflects the presence of various positions, attitudes, and views in society. So these elections emphasize that we need AGREEMENT.

June 17, 1991

M.S. did not like the speech for TV about June 22nd of 1941. He wanted to "politely" blame it on Shakhnazarov, but said that I did him a favor by adding my signature to it. But I told him that no, there were a number of my own thoughts in it... Right now I'll have to re-do it. Though it is not clear what he wants... He didn't say anything. He must yearn for the "thunder of victory."

June 20, 1991, Thursday Morning

I've been getting up early. Mosquitoes were biting all night long. I'm not getting enough sleep, dreaming wild dreams—something like a duel with Vysotsky...??

In politics: there is a new counter wave in response to the “rapprochement” between M.S. and Yeltsin (like in the past, in August-September). Moreover, Pavlov “himself” started it when he adopted Yeltsin and Ryzhkov’s tactics, saying that he would get things under control, if only he had the authority (i.e. if M.S. did not get in the way). There was only one sensible thought in his Supreme Soviet speech—that the President does not have to get involved in everything. This got them started: Kryuchkov said that back in 1979 Andropov wrote a note to the PB, warning that imperialism has introduced its agents into the “upper echelons” of power, and now “we” regularly inform the leadership about this, but he doesn’t pay attention to “us.” Pugo announced that he is prevented from creating an effective structure to combat crime. Yazov said that we turned into a second-rate power. And off they went: Alksnis, Umalatova, Kogan... encouraged by Lukyanov (“He is playing a clever game, he knows what he’s doing,” Ligachev said in his circle about the latter, adding, “Misha will fare badly”). Again they demanded the President’s resignation and wanted to hold him personally criminally responsible for the anti-alcohol campaign (we lost 200 billion rubles on it). Pavlov said this, and only two people objected—Garbuzov and Voronin. Not Ryzhkov or M.S.

The CC of the Russian Communist Party and the CPSU are in session day and night, and, like in April, they are preparing resolutions from the provinces for the General Secretary’s resignation. I heard that they are even putting together a personal file on him and his advisers (my name included).

And what about M.S.? He launched another Novo-Ogarevo process; moved the Union Treaty forward, now in concept it is very close to the Russian Constitution (draft). Yeltsin and all the others initialed it. Moreover, he called Yavlinsky to Novo-Ogarevo, where he presented his report on discussions with Harvard and Washington.

He thoroughly prepared for the meeting with Delors today. The G-7 will find out from Delors, not Attali, about what exactly M.S. will bring to London.

Gradually and very clearly (even to the thick-skulled), M.S. is moving things toward a “coupling” of *perestroika* and world politics and economics. There can be no other interpretation of the inclusion of the country into the “common process of civilization.”

Yeltsin in the U.S.—with reservations about M.S. in the past—openly seems to be moving things toward reconciliation with the “Union” (i.e. preserving it). He always put the word “Union” next to the word “Russia.” What will we do if the rapprochement takes place? With whom, and how? Maybe this is a new method to get rid of M.S.? That is why the counter-*perestroika* powers are becoming furious—because there will be no place for them “there,” in the “Yeltsin Union.”

Meanwhile, M.S. cannot let go of his old methods. He went to the Peasants’ Congress, the “generals of collectivization,” potbellied Black Hundredists [*okhotnoryadtsy*]. They threw him a tantrum. Pavlov (!) told them bluntly: it’s either the market, or State subsidies again (but

the treasury has no money!) and then farewell to the whole economic reform program. They nearly threw him off the rostrum. They declared that they will crawl to the Red Square to starve. (Ligachev made an appearance; they worship the ground he walks on). They called Gorbachev on the carpet. He came and started reconciling: again the conciliation commission, again we'll "see what can be done," etc.

But what "can be done"?! Pavlov is right in this case... Again we are stalling. And again it is a point in favor of Yeltsin-Silaev, who will not reckon with these "generals of agriculture."

There was trouble with "another version" of the Nobel speech, a forgery. I called Yegor Yakovlev:¹⁴ "Why did you get involved?" He fussed, mumbled, apologized. He sent me this forgery—there is not a single matching phrase to the authentic text of the speech. I told Yegor, "What happened to the editorial office? Couldn't someone have collated it? If some paragraphs did not match, some things were added or thrown out—that is one thing. It would provide ground for speculations and suspicions. But these texts are completely different! How could this happen?!" He promised to name the person who organized this forgery (recorded from the words of a Dutch reporter). But, of course, the reporter urgently departed.

One should take them to court, if it were not for the President's name—it wouldn't be good to bring it up in a negative context yet again. But how great it would be to collect something like 100 thousand from each one of them!

I'm going to go and prepare materials for Koivisto's visit. There is nothing to say. We are squandering our friendly relations with them because of our sickly economy.

The weather is awful: 32 degrees Celsius, 98 percent humidity. Good thing that we have air-conditioning at work!

June 21, 1991, Friday

Yesterday was a strange and possibly a fateful day. M.S. recorded a TV appearance for the 50th anniversary of June 22, 1941. We managed after all to keep it in the spirit of reconciliation, though "with tears in our eyes"... but without triumphal notes. Alright.

In the morning he received Delors. I got out of this assignment by sending Zagladin instead of me. But Gorbachev said quite a few things there... including that the Parliament started bristling as soon as they felt that the Supreme Soviet is losing power and society is starting to calm down and accepting the Gorbachev-Yeltsin agreement. Zagladin consulted with me whether to report this passage to the press. I said, "Of course!"

In the meantime, Matlock asked to see me; we met at 3:30 p.m. He had a proposal from Bush for M.S. to visit the residence of the U.S. Ambassador in London on July 17th between 3 p.m.-5 p.m., after M.S.' speech, so they could talk in private.

¹⁴ He published it in his *Moskovskie Novosti*. [Author's note]

At the same time Matlock asked me about what was going on. "Why is the Premier speaking at the Supreme Soviet against the President and Yavlinsky's program?"

I explained to him that Pavlov is a good financier and a man with character, and we need people like him right now. But he hasn't gotten experienced in politics yet, which explains yesterday's demand for more powers that was interpreted the wrong way. "Objectively" it appeared that Pavlov led the opposition and protests against M.S. This is another blunder on his part, an awkward situation. But everything will be fine.

I called M.S. and he immediately agreed to Bush's proposal, of which I informed Matlock.

Braithwaite called and said that on the 1st, a British sherpa will arrive on account of the G-7 in London, and that M.S. promised to meet with him. The Queen is inviting M.S. on the 17th from 5 p.m.-6 p.m.... etc.

Then, unexpectedly, at 8 p.m., I got another call from the U.S. embassy. Matlock requested an immediate audience with the President; he had a secret and urgent message from Bush.

M.S. called me right at the same time, and I told him about it. He said, "Let's do it!" I rushed to the Kremlin. I asked M.S., should I attend? "Absolutely," he said. Matlock hadn't come in yet when Pavlov called and started describing the disciplinary work he did with the chairmen of all the Republics. He invited Delors to the meeting of the Cabinet and the latter also gave them a lecture on how to manage finances if one wants a market system. And it was so harsh that their jaws dropped. Pavlov looked like a "liberal." M.S. laughed as he listened to this account, and before hanging up he threw an ironic remark at Pavlov: "this action was probably the most positive thing you've done in the last three days" (hint at Pavlov's Supreme Soviet speech!).

Matlock entered, pale as a sheet. As if we had agreed ahead of time, M.S. also started by saying all kinds of nice words to him (I had done the same when he visited me, with regrets that he is leaving). M.S. said that Matlock has done a good and honest job here, he was a real partner, and helped a great deal during this difficult period, that we value his work, etc.

Matlock stood and anxiously waited to deliver the message he came with. And this was his message:

"Mr. President, I just received a personal closed ciphered telegram from my President. He instructed me to meet with you immediately and convey the following message: the American secret service has information that tomorrow (i.e. today, on 06/21) there will be an attempt to remove you from power. The President considers it his duty to warn you."

M.S. started laughing (I did too!). Matlock became embarrassed, feeling like he brought such a silly idea to the very top. He started apologizing that he couldn't neglect to carry out an

order from his President, even though he told him (how?) that he doesn't have such information from Moscow and it was unlikely that was true.

M.S.: "This is 1000 percent unlikely. But I appreciate the fact that George warned me about his concern. If he received such information, it was his duty as a friend to warn me. Please reassure him. But I repeat, I see the confirmation of our real relationship in this message. It means that we have come very far indeed in our mutual trust. This is very important."

He spoke kindly, but with an internal irony, as if he was sure that all of this is nonsense. Then he got talkative. "You know, Mr. Ambassador," when Matlock entered, M.S. called him Comrade Ambassador, and he jokingly explained why he allowed himself such liberty, "Such talks are possible here. You see what's happening..." And he started telling him practically in the same words that I used a few hours before: in society, things are moving toward agreement and calm. We are moving toward a Union Agreement, participating in the G-7, i.e. we are moving toward a real economic emergence of the USSR to the outside world. This meets with approval. Yeltsin's election confirms this. Soon society will reject the confrontational approach, and the people behind it. But there are forces that do not like these developments. They exist in the Parliament, although not the entire "Union" faction is like this, there are some normal and sensible people. There are also the frenzied ones, who are ready to swallow the microphone—Alksnis, Kogan... They are backed by those who feel like they are losing their position in the echelons of power and privilege. And again they are rallying and plotting how to undermine the recovery process. It is not impossible that they engage in various discussions, including the kind that was overheard by your agent.

He told him about Delors... along the way characterizing Pavlov almost in exactly the same words as I used when Matlock visited me.

At home, Anya and Mitya packed their suitcases. I turned on Bach. At midnight there was a call from the reception room: Bush is asking to speak with M.S. on the phone. I told them to connect, if that was the case.

At 6 a.m. Anya and Mitya left. I walked them to the car. Then there was a call from the MFA.

I'll finish writing later... Right now I don't have time. Not to forget about Plekhanov's (Arbatov's deputy) "Shchit" [Shield]¹⁵

June 23, 1991, Sunday

Anyway, the fears continued. At night Bush called Gorbachev. The reception room asked me: what should we do? I told them to connect. But M.S. had been out for a walk with R.M. (it was around midnight). When he came back, he ordered to be connected to the White House. But Bush was already busy. And, it seems that Bush had lost hope of connecting with the other

¹⁵ Not to forget: before Matlock visited M.S. with his warnings, in the morning I got a call from Plekhanov—not to be confused with the Head of Security, General of the KGB, the future coup-participant... [Author's note]

“superpower” nearly at the turn of the XX century, and sent a telegram. It arrived early in the morning.

When I got a phone call at 6 a.m. from M.S.’ reception room with the same question, “What should we do with the telegram,” I replied indignantly, “Send it to the dacha!” “Should we wake him up?” “Don’t...” I decided that it is about the same thing as Matlock’s “warning” (though the MFA notified me that the telegram came after M.S.’ conversation with Matlock)...

Nevertheless... he got it only at 9 a.m., when he woke up.

I don’t know what was in the telegram. It did not reach me. But when M.S. got to work, he gave a dressing down to everybody who failed to secure a line with Bush at night: he put me, Kryuchkov, and Boldin on the selector. Kryuchkov made pathetic excuses, blaming it on the fact that there was no request on the hot line. M.S. cited from the telegram that initially they tried to use precisely the hot line. Kryuchkov bleated and promised to “investigate and punish.” Boldin received orders to immediately fire everyone in the reception room, without attempting to cover their tracks... “The lazy idiots... One of them still sometimes calls me Leonid Ilyich!” (I burst out laughing)...

He wanted to give me a piece of his mind as well, but I replied, “What do I have to do with it? They ‘consulted’ with me, and I told them to connect you.” “Fine,” he concluded, “if anything like this happens again, call me at home at any time of day or night.” He is embarrassed about our “technology” and our “services”...

Later he asked me, “Maybe I should call Bush myself?” “Of course,” I replied. “Alright, let’s do it at 5 p.m. What time would that be over there?” 9 a.m. They had a good talk.

Bush’s impressions from his meeting with Yeltsin were the main subject of conversation... with overtones to reconcile them even further. M.S. described how he just now subdued the Supreme Soviet. Bush already knew about it through his agents.

All the “fears” were immediately alleviated. M.S. showed that he was in charge. If he wanted to, he could dismiss all these babblers and provocateurs (and have another June 3rd Stolypin coup, when he dismissed the 3rd Duma!). He would have the support of the republics and of all of Russia, headed by Yeltsin. These idiots do not understand that the situation changed radically after the Novo-Ogarevo “1+9” and Yeltsin’s election as President. M.S. now has a home front, and he no longer will bow to these professional loudmouths. He gave them a serious punch in the jaw! There were probably only two or three such fierce, pivotal speeches during all of *perestroika*. And they submitted. They applauded. All of Moscow took a breath. Even the “enemies” spoke with admiration about his behavior, not to mention the West, which is just beating the drums, though it would seem that Gorbachev’s actions were not too democratic.

Now about the point I didn’t have time to record yesterday. In the morning, before Matlock visited Gorbachev, Plekhanov (Arbatov’s deputy at the Institute for U.S. and Canadian Studies) called me. “I have to inform you,” he said, “representatives of the Shchit [Shield] (an

officers' opposition organization) came by and said that suspicious military unit movements have been sighted near Moscow." I took the story with a grain of salt and did not tell M.S. about it.

After Matlock in a conversation with me [M.S.] praised Bush "for the good work" and, laughing about the American's naiveté, said, "You know, yesterday Primakov told me: Mikhail Sergeyevich, take note! You are too trusting with the KGB and your security services. Are you completely confident in them?"

M.S. said, "So that one is an alarmist too. I told him, 'Zhenya, calm down! At least you don't panic.'"

In any case, I think these signals and Matlock's visit warmed him up and pushed him to give a real dressing down to the Supreme Soviet (the newspapers "smoothed over" the most savory parts of his speech).

He called me after this speech at the Supreme Soviet and railed at these scumbags in foul language.

Finally, today is a truly free day. Yesterday I managed to finish the materials for talks with Koivisto (he is coming on Monday). After all the MFA drafts and after my consultants worked on it, I still had to re-write it. They do not get the "moment," they don't know how to write "for Gorbachev": the ideas are the same, we don't have any new ones, but they don't know how to frame them so they don't look like banalities.

I also prepared a list of questions for the telephone conversation with Kohl tomorrow morning.

Yesterday was June 22nd... I remembered everything that happened that day, hour by hour. And I didn't look much at the TV—I was at work. They say they showed the movie "Bud' proklyata voina" [War be Damned] with Sasha Bezymenskaya and me, yesterday... they left only 5-7 minutes of my 40 minute speech they initially recorded!

June 24, 1991, Monday

Yesterday was an exceptionally dull day. I did not go to Uspenka. I listened to the record player, which I first spent a long time fixing (i.e. messing it up). Leshchenko, Vysotsky, Vivaldi! With a bassoon. Then a visit to the Manezh with N.N. A certain Kazatin. 1000 similar paintings—mostly of the artist's wife and a rooster. The style... like if you go and splash paint with a big brush from a bucket on the canvas or paper. It's unexciting and confusing... but he is exhibited in 30 countries and is our highest hard-currency earning [*valyutnyj*] artist.

We walked down the streets. It was hot, tiresome, irritating—especially with the accompaniment of her smart and highly intellectual discussions on various truly important themes.

I got extremely tired, and then had to stand in line for hours to get some milk... When I was close to the end of the line, the saleswoman yelled that they were out of milk, and I had to go to another store, across from the American Embassy (alas!).

Today M.S. had a conversation with Kohl. They agreed to meet in Kiev on July 5th. *Der Spiegel* published a highly secret letter from M.S. to Kohl from this March (where he is asking for a new loan and a lump-sum agreement regarding military equipment).

Koivisto was here at 3 p.m. Ninety-five percent of the time M.S. talked about our [internal] affairs. I am hearing this for the umpteenth time. Koivisto was extremely tactful and quiet... Although you could see that he felt such an ultra-frank explanation of our affairs was unnecessarily excessive. And it is not done without the additional intent of making it clear to the Finn that he should not expect us to replay our loans and to encourage him to be lenient on new deals.

When the conversation turned to delegations, Koivisto became more talkative, as much as it is possible for a Finn. He suggested an idea that M.S. did not pay attention to. Perhaps it was not intended for that: he said that the trade agreement from 1947 was created in a different era, when we (Finland) had great economic dependence on you (the USSR)... Now, he said, we can do away with the previous agreements. (In essence this is undermining the main Agreement of 1948).

On the subject of European affairs, M.S. for some reason started talking about the inviolability of borders as the sacred principle of the Charter of Paris. This is after he explained that we will have to separate from the Balts! Koivisto kept quiet. This was wise, because debating would be pointless.

June 26, 1991, Wednesday

Today I “took time off” from the meeting between M.S. and Maxwell (I passed it on to Gusenkov). Maxwell was imposed on M.S. by Kryuchkov, they have some business going on! Every time he visits, he is “presented” to the top. He is impudent: Gusenkov told me that he was lecturing Gorbachev on how to live in London, how to use the President’s time). When I found out from Primakov the day before that Maxwell wants to see M.S., I objected and decided not to tell Gorbachev. But he asked me himself. I tried to convince him that he should not meet. And he agreed [with me], but in a couple hours called and without any explanation set the day and hour of the meeting, openly referring to Kryuchkov...

In the meantime, the world press (ours partially also) is buzzing about his, Kryuchkov’s, speech at the Supreme Soviet—again about the fact that imperialism has “infiltrated its agents” into the highest echelons of power and that he is reporting this, but nobody is listening.

Ignatenko asked M.S. what he, the press-service, should say in response to this at the briefings. “Do not get involved, who knows what’s in those newspapers!” M.S. replied. But we are talking about a speech at the Supreme Soviet, in a closed (!) session! I.e. about strictly “confidential” information...

This is a mystery to me... Maybe he really does not want to “quarrel” and destroy the support base “just in case”... for him, or for the State?!

Today (Gusenkov told me) M.S. casually mentioned to Maxwell, “What makes you think that I will run for another presidential term?” Even if he decided not to, he shouldn’t spill the news to the West: they will completely stop reckoning with him, they will transfer their attention to Yeltsin even more than now.

Shakhnazarov and I wrote him a protest about Pavlov’ order on the “new” customs duties on import goods (as a result, it is pure highway robbery at customs)... We argued that it topped the “presidential” 5 percent sales tax. He did not reject our arguments, but assigned Orlov (Minister of Finance) to work on this... Does that mean it was done without him again? Against him?!

I have to prepare everything at once:

- For the British sherpa’s visit (July 1)
- For the meeting with Kohl in Kiev (July 5)
- For the Mexican president’s visit (July 3)
- For the G-7...

By the way, so far he has not involved me or Shakhnazarov in the work with of the group headed by Medvedev in Volynskoe. Meanwhile, they are writing “God knows what” over there. Primakov visited them, read their drafts, and was horrified. For example, there is a whole section berating separatism and nationalism in the Baltics. You have to be an idiot and a provocateur to “suggest” something like this for London. In the meantime, Primakov and I (and Shakhnazarov, but a little less) are the people who really know the material in the context of the G-7 (except for the strictly economic program). And we are the ones who are not there at Volynskoe.

Yesterday M.S. met with Allison (from Harvard) and Yavlinsky, at my insistence. As a result, he is even more engaged, even though he said that he will be considering not just them but other projects and programs as well, including the ideas of Schmidt’s “Cooperation Council” that recently had a meeting in Prague (Brutents attended).

Yesterday the French Ambassador Dufour invited me, Primakov, and Medvedev (and Zagladin ended up there as well) to the embassy for dejeuner [sic]—to “question” us about how we (M.S.) are preparing for the G-7... He already came to me for this before. We drank good wine, and vied with each other in “explaining”...

In *Izvestiya* Bovin is scathing the critics of Gorbachev’s foreign policy. He wants to join the team. I am trying to arrange it. It would be useful for them to have a chat as “old acquaintances.”

June 29, 1991, Saturday

Yesterday morning M.S. objected when I reminded him that he has a meeting at 11 a.m. with the Jewish activist Rappaport. How could I compare that to what is going to happen at 11

a.m., he said! What is going to happen is a discussion of the CPSU draft program at the Program Committee.

I shut up, but still interjected, “This person came here to see you after he was told the day and hour of the meeting. Just last night I reminded you about this and you didn’t say anything about any program...”

Five minutes before the meeting he called me: “You should come to the discussion too.” I am not sure if this was supposed to be a “compensation” for the dressing down I got (which was underserved) or because I’ll be useful for further work on this paper.

I did not regret attending. M.S. started with an attack on *Sovetskaya Rossiya* [Soviet Russia] and similar press media who are pursuing an unbridled persecution [of him]. This is not a free discussion! This is a sign of degradation in the Party. If this goes on, this Party will be thrown out of political life.

One Gusev from the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party and another fellow tried to object. But Gorbachev “put them back in their seats,” and in the end told Gusev, “We’ll see if you remain in the Party.” In general, this gang that hangs around the CC corridors and the CC itself is embittered to the extreme... There can be no unity with these people, as Ivashko insists we should have. They say that this group got together before the Program Committee and were planning a caterwaul for today’s meeting. But Gorbachev anticipated it with his fierce attack.

Abalkin, the academician Pakhomov, Denisov, the Nizhniy Novgorod obkom secretary, and some others said a great deal of smart things. But the majority of it was primitive, ignorant, and reactionary aggressiveness. These were the people at whom M.S. directed his introductory speech, which he started with the words “Before you stands a bourgeois liberal, who is selling the country to the capitalists, and carries out Bush’s policy.” He read this quote from *Sovetskaya Rossiya* while pointing at Chikin, the editor in chief.

His concluding statement was a step forward (in his ideology). Probably for the first time he said to this “Party” public, as opposed to in our small circle, that—“We’ve had enough of this pagan worship of the founders. They were giants... for their time. If we do not liberate our thought from worshipping them, we will not find a theory to adequately deal with reality and with modern science.”

In fact, it is time for him to “do” a book—“*Perestroika-2*,” to explain it to the world, to our people, and to the Party after five years, and explain it before he hands over the reins.

I am immersed in preparations for a meeting with the Mexican President (July 3-4th)—a speech and negotiations materials, and an interview for their newspaper; meeting with Kohl (July 5th in Kiev); partial preparations for London. I don’t have time to read the newspapers, sometimes not even TASS and cables. On top of everything else, it is 32 degrees Celsius, and there are mosquitoes at night.

I don't want to read the policy papers (took them home with me!), but I must!

July 3, 1991, Wednesday

This day is a notable day because M.S. practically "approved" the emergence of a "movement"—the Yakovlev-Shevardnadze Party, and at the PB he succeeded in retiring Polozkov.

It turned out that Medvedev and his group, after spending two months in Volynskoe, created for the G-7 something that we cannot take there. And M.S. dumped this work on me... two days before he has to present it at the "9+1" meeting (to obtain the mandate).

I warned him that the Medvedev-Ozherel'ev team will produce something fit for the Party activists, not for the G-7 in London. Shakhnazarov also told him this.

In the meantime, "I" have the Mexican president tomorrow, Kohl in Kiev on the 5th, and Gonzalez on the 8-9th!

July 6, 1991, Saturday

Yesterday: Kiev, Kohl & Co.

The city itself... I haven't been there in 35 years. The "tour guide" chauffeur (Ignatenko and I were in the "Chaika" [car]). It feels like some large, Western-European (actually, more German) city of the XIX century, with green streets, tidy, clean, well maintained... And the chauffeur said there are generally enough goods in the stores. Compared to Moscow!

Maybe we are making a mistake when in the mass media we pretend to be poorer than we really are: saying that we are practically on the verge of starvation and total collapse... the State is still alive... and Ukraine can survive on its own, without us. But it wants to leave... the demonstrators' slogans are, "Kohl—Yes! Gorbachev—No!"

The country estate [we stayed at] used to be Shcherbitsky's dacha. Beauty of nature. Mosquitoes.

Negotiations... first "one-on-one," where they addressed each other informally. As for us, the entourage, it was much better than it used to be with Honecker's team, though they were good guys themselves. But this time we had closeness, understanding, trust, especially from us, from M.S. Kohl wants us to be successful at the G-7... But he is not sure that others will have the same outlook, especially Bush, Mulroney, Kaifu. He praised Major quite a bit, and scolded his "predecessor."

Later (when we were talking in a larger circle), Kohler (the "sherpa") kept trying to persuade us to submit to the IMF. M.S. said to him: "The USSR is not Costa Rica! 'Your' (the West's) behavior toward the USSR will affect the direction of history..."

In general, M.S.' arguments were the usual arguments he has been using with foreigners in the last few months. He did not read my version for the G-7. I kept trying to give him my copy... he used a little of the second part of the text, the cooperation program; but on the main range of problems with the "memorandum," he leafed through Primakov's text. Before the talk with Kohl I offered him my version, saying "Would you like it?" He responded, "It's alright, I have a copy... You sent it already." He said it in a way to let me know not to expect that he will take it as the main text. (Nevertheless, when we got back to Moscow, he called me to "Volynskoe-2" to "finish" the text for the G-7 before sending it to the heads of the republics. On the 8th he is convening the Federation Council to obtain a mandate for London... Will we manage to do it in one day? If he starts re-dictating Medvedev's version, it will be the end!)

M.S. and Kohl had a big discussion on Yugoslavia. They did not come to an agreement. Kohl was frowning, because M.S. pushed: non-interference in internal affairs, trouble if the CSCE becomes a tool for intervention, territorial integrity, inviolability of borders... overall our standard set with a view to the Baltics! Meanwhile, Kohl is proceeding from the fact that Yugoslavia no longer exists, and even tanks won't keep it intact.

Eastern Europe... M.S. pulled toward "cooperation"... and to get rid of the "super influence" complex: "They are sick of us. But we are sick of them, too!" he said to the Chancellor of the now-united Germany. "We had to have real self control to insist on the pause in relations with our former allies, to let time settle the new situation, to get used to dealing with them like with everybody else, and not have pretensions for 'special' relationships even in a new form."

When we were flying to Kiev, on the airplane M.S. said to Kvitsinsky and me: "Look at the hatred we stirred up with our "friendship" after the war. We freed them from the Nazis and then ruined everything!"

He argued with Kohl that bilateral treaties must have a paragraph on non-entry into "hostile alliances." Kohl, of course, shot back: where are these hostile alliances, Mikhail?" (Both Kohl and M.S. had one thing in mind—NATO!) "And in general, what are you afraid of? After all, Hungary in 2005 will become a member of the EU, and the EU will have close cooperation with the USSR!"

The joint press conference on the lawn was very successful. M.S. was in top form, very articulate...

In a word, the new friendship with the Germans got another big bucket of cement for its foundation. The refrain at the meeting for both of them was—if everything is alright with the Soviet-German relationship, it will determine the fate of Europe and world politics. Both of them are coming from this idea.

On the airplane on the way home, he told Kvitsinsky and me, "Kohl understands that he cannot have influence over us, the USSR. Moreover, without us, he cannot wield influence over Europe, and without us he cannot be free of the American influence. So he will do everything to

help us recover and stand together as a modern great power... As for Ukraine, of course he has his eye on Ukraine, but this is different from Hitler's Lebensraum."

By the way, yesterday Kohl met separately with Kravchuk, Fokin (Representative of the USSR Council of Ministers) and... Gurenko (First Secretary of the CC of the Communist Party of Ukraine)... During lunch he clearly was condescending with them... And this public (both the president and especially the premier) is a dull and haughty mediocrity! But it thinks very highly of itself!

Walks with M.S. and without him... while Kohl was with the Ukrainians.

Dinner: a very "straightforward" spread, very open-hearted. Drank quite a bit. Toasts!

Departure: Kohl waited in the plane for half an hour for his journalists... In front of the ladder (as usual, I did not stand in the crowd, but to the side)... Kohl stepped out of the group and to everybody's surprise approached me and shook my hand for a long time, patted me on the shoulder and said... I did not understand everything he said, but I got that he was praising me: "You do good work!" Someone from his people must have told him about me, someone with whom I associate: Blech, Teltschik, Kohler, and others. They must have understood that it is not Zagladin but Chernyaev who is the key figure in "these matters."

Who is going to prepare materials for Gonzalez?! He is coming tomorrow! One of M.S.'s pals.

July 7, 1991, Sunday

In Volynskoe... The people gathered: Pavlov, Shcherbakov, Minister of Finances Orlov, Academician Abalkin and the wise Yaremenko, a certain scandalous Yasin, director of IMEMO Martynov, of course Medvedev and Ozherel'ev... and for some reason Van'ka Frolov.

Turns out they already had a draft for London. But it was in the form of a letter from M.S. to the heads of the seven states. Nineteen pages long. So my draft was completely out of place.

Gorbachev arrived. They read the draft. He suggested to use it as the basis and to go page by page. I objected, saying that I have a comment of a general nature: the numbers and data embedded in the text create a sense that our economy is failing completely... and that we are uncertain whether we will be able to repay the loans. Why should we do this? Would this really encourage "them" to deal with us, if we admit our powerlessness to deal with our economy ourselves?

Abalkin, then Medvedev said that we should show the situation openly, otherwise they won't believe us.

I objected that they know the situation better than we do. It is a question of psychology and tactics. The heads of G-7 are interested in helping us politically and we should not put them in a situation where every "sherpa" can cite our own "stripping" to raise doubts... After the

political decision is made, it will be too late. Experts and financiers will calculate together with us, what to do with us.

Later, when M.S. and I happened to be one on one, I told him: “We should work on the wording. I did it with my draft, but this is a different text...”

M.S.: “We don’t have the time...”

I: “But it is impossible! For example, it says ‘we conducted work on...’ Sounds like a report for the CC Plenum!” He laughed. But during group discussion he spurned all my attempts to make a comment, correction, or to suggest alternative phrases and formulas. The same thing is happening: in front of high-level people he demonstrates his contempt for his advisers (not just me)—so they would not think that he “listens to them”...

In a word, the text is still so-so. There was a large debate whether to reveal our external debt figures and the national debt in general (240 billion). Abalkin was for it, to “move them to pity” and blackmail them a bit with the threat of a catastrophe. Shcherbakov was against it, out of the consideration that the next day [after seeing these figures] they will close the loans still available to us. So far we have not reached a consensus. I supported the idea to remove numbers from the letter in general—this is not a text for the “sherpas” but for the heads of state. There will be a live discussion and M.S. should have in his pocket all the data available... Yes, honest data... but only “upon request,” not as a striptease.

“Simultaneously,” the head of the Albanian parliamentary delegation was brought to see M.S. in Volynskoe. He is a handsome man, has a PhD in physics (graduated from the University of Paris, etc). They spoke as if the 30 years of hostility never happened... Normal people. Though M.S. did go a little overboard with the “kinship in the socialist idea.” The latter politely agreed and kept trying to explain the situation in Albania. M.S.’ growing overconfidence was telling: he does not read even one-page references before meetings. Sometimes he does not know the names of the people he is speaking to.

Later in the day, I got a call: Matlock was eager to see M.S. with an urgent letter from Bush. M.S. said he should come to Volynskoe. He arrived. The three of us sat down. The Ambassador, glancing at the English text, summarized the main point: Michael, if you still believe that we will manage to conclude the START Treaty, send Bessmertnykh and Moiseev to Washington on July 2nd, but with full plenary powers (!).

M.S. promised to respond within two days.

I sent the text to Bessmertnykh. M.S. called him and Yazov and ordered them to “get to work.”

I said to him, “Mikhail Sergeyevich, why are we dragging this on? The story with the Conventional Weapons Agreement is being repeated. Our behavior contradicts basic common sense. After all, if there will be no war, if we believe this... if you are really going to London to

“integrate,” then what meaning can this stupid telemetry have, or how many warheads on a missile, or the length of the first stage?! These are the games of bygone days!”

In a word, I got carried away.

He replied, “You are impatient, you have a temper like Eduard [Shevardnadze], he also kept rushing and rushing... But these are negotiations,” he pushed me mischievously, “they have their own laws.”

I: “What laws, when we are counting days, and you and Bush are meeting in a week in London? What will you say to him? Why these mannerisms like a general?”

M.S.: “Alright!”... The all-explaining and all-concluding “alright.” By the way, I objected to the comparison of me and Shevardnadze—we might have similar temperaments, but the substance is different.

By the way, M.S. railed against Shevardnadze (on the plane from Kiev, with Ignatenko present). He said that Shevardnadze finally has shown his cards, he is eager for power, wants to become president, his ambition is devouring him!

Today from early in the morning I rewrote Gorbachev’s speech for the dinner with Gonzalez. Brutents & Co. had made a draft based on the MFA version while I was in Kiev... But it is not quite right... I don’t understand why people can’t prepare such essentially simple things “in the spirit of M.S.” After all, his style is well known, texts of his speeches, toasts, and interviews are available... All his mannerisms and his train of thought are known!

I sent it to be printed. Then I started working on materials for negotiations. I finished around 4 p.m.

July 9, 1991

Yesterday at Novo Ogarevo M.S. got approval from “9+1” for his “vision” for London. He won again. I had doubts that he would. I thought they would start chewing the fat, finding fault with the fact that they were not given a written text and that it was not done in advance.

This means that something is happening along the lines of settling down. Yesterday he agreed to Bessmertnykh and Moiseev’s trip to Washington, following Bush’s letter that Matlock brought to Volynskoe-2 on Saturday. I asked him, “Is there a real chance of a resolution on START?” “Yes,” he said. “Maybe a similar one as last time?” I asked. He looked at me askance.

Why are all the trump cards in Moiseev’s hands? He came out as the “savior” of the Conventional Arms Treaty, though he was the one who sabotaged it to the limit. And until he went to Washington, there was no progress. And now the same thing?! This is how “we” work.

Yesterday Gonzalez [was here]. They were mutually open to the extreme; to the point that M.S. told him that on the June [sic] 25th CC Plenum he will have to split the Party, it can no longer be maintained as it is. Gonzalez is the smartest of the world leaders I know “personally.”

He represents a true symbiosis of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza! He is a realist who doesn't suffer either from conservatism or radicalism. His strength is in his real common sense. I tried to embellish the press report about their meeting, hinting at some things that cannot be said openly.

Yesterday, after dinner with Gonzalez, M.S. wanted me to be present at the meeting with the Spanish businessman and philanthropist Konoe. They were imposed upon him by Yegorov + R.M. I did not go... Yegorov himself was already at his dacha. Sometime I'm going to have to tell Gorbachev that my age and position prevent me from being the "boy on call." Especially at the whim of Raisa Maksimovna. He got another favorite to replace Frolov—now it is the slacker Yegorov, and once again "through Raisa." Ugh!

July 11, 1991, Thursday

Yesterday at 10 a.m., while at work, I watched Yeltsin's coronation on TV. This is not just new power, not even a new government structure. It is a new system... The speech by the actor and deputy Basiashaili, written by Yeltsin's lieutenants, had something of Holy Vladimir the Baptizer, as well as Sergius of Radonezh, Peter the Great and Catherine II—the creators of the Russian state, the kind that fits modern Russia the most... There is something in the speech of the "events (!) of 1917"... There is no Great Patriotic War. After the October Revolution everything is black... it all deserves only to be trampled and cursed.

In his aggressive, vindictive farewell speech, Patriarch Alexy II blessed precisely this approach to the past... and the future. They assigned him this address "from all confessions," while they stood in the front row—from the Buddhist, to the Jew in his hat.

M.S. decided to speak after the anthem ("Glory to Our Russian Tsar"), the church bells, and Yeltsin's closing speech. It was a poor speech (written by Shakhnazarov and re-dictated by Gorbachev). It did not live up to the solemnity of the occasion, whatever it may mean, but it reflected a powerful (for how long?) current of Russian tendencies, the "rebirth of the Russian idea"... After all, without Russia there would be nothing. There would be no Union... and realistically Russia is the only support the President has... what else? Not Turkmenia and Nazarbayev! After all, he, President Gorbachev, resides in Moscow, which is now again the capital of Russia... The speech was political and would be more fitting for a Congress of People's Deputies, and a routine one at that! What a miss! He could not overcome the personal aspect (his inner surprise that someone like Yeltsin could get so high) and the Party-apparatus aspect—his inability to reject the "socialist choice," even in the past...

Against the background of this very symbolic performance (!), Gorbachev is concerned by the draft Party Program, which he will present at the CC Plenum on July 25th. I think it is a historic mistake for him to identify with a civic idea on a Union scale. It can be explained by the origin on his political thinking. He probably still believes that the Party can exist as a unifying support for the Union. Even as a support of "his cause."

He does not want to see (even though he does see it!) that all these Politburos, these Secretariats—nobody needs them, they have no power even over the Communists anymore. Unlike in the very recent past, their commotion and threats no longer scare anybody.

He asked me to “work a little” on the draft of the Program. Yesterday I spent some time on it... Cleaned it up even further of all the Communist and “socialist choice,” to the point that there’s practically none left. In the evening he called me: “How is it?”

I replied: “This is the best option to keep a sensible nucleus, the *perestroika* nucleus of the Party members... Everything else throws the CPSU into the camp of enemies of society, ‘enemy of the people’—a new people that formed over the last six years.”

M.S. was hesitant, “Georgiy (Shakhnazarov) told me it was a very good draft...”

In any case, against the background of Yeltsin’s inauguration and the “Russian current,” the Union Treaty and the London G-7, the very fact that he deals with this nostalgic Party nonsense only puts Gorbachev farther on the sidelines of pivotal events.

He told me that he talked with Yavlinsky for two hours. He said it was interesting and informative. But... Yavlinsky refused to go to London as a member of the Presidential team: he reserves his option for criticism in case Gorbachev’s plan to emerge from the crisis does not work (i.e. he is preparing a maneuver that he & Co. did when the “500 days” program failed). I said to Gorbachev, “This shows his character in a bad light. He is painfully ambitious... to the level of dishonesty, even though he appears to be honesty personified.”

Instead of him, M.S. included Kravchenko in the trip to London! One more proof that M.S. is afraid to find himself without “old and trusty levers.” He knows that everybody hates Kravchenko from left to right and all around, and that Kravchenko tarnishes Gorbachev’s image. Nevertheless... it’s the same as with the KGB, the Interior Ministry, and the Party...

Today he is receiving an envoy from Kaifu (Prime Minister of Japan). But he refused to see the Israeli Minister of Agriculture. He pushed the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh on Yanaev. With scorn he refused to meet with the “impudent” Colonel Ochirov, even though he promised to do so in front of everybody in the lobby of the Supreme Soviet. He is a “democrat” from the army, and his army superiors hate his guts!

July 12, 1991, Early Friday Morning

Yesterday the Japanese Ambassador Edamura came together with the special envoy from Kaifu. The Japanese are very strict about their protocol: these meetings for us are no big deal, and whether we decide to receive them or not depends on Gorbachev’s mood, on “me” (the adviser), on chance... But for them, it is the development or decline of state relations!

It is clear that the Japanese don’t want to lag behind the world in relations with us. Kaifu is reacting to the fact that the press started to contrast him to everyone, even Bush, not to mention the Europeans, in the question of inviting M.S. to the G-7.

In the Hasidim affair (the transfer of the Lubavitcher manuscripts) M.S. won’t budge! He listened to Yegorov, who got involved without knowing the essence of the matter, and repeated Gubenko’s position, as opposed to... mine, and I’m the one who “studied” this issue. We will

lose quite a bit on these “trifles.” Bush, Andreotti, Major, and the Western Jewish lobby are already behind the Hasidim!

M.S. spoke tenderly about Frolov. I suggested: *Pravda* is working against you. He replied, “It is reflecting the situation in the Party.” I said that was no excuse. He replied, “Ivan is probably tired, and doesn’t want to deal with it. He is either in the hospital, or abroad.” This is how he treats his favorites!

July 14, 1991, Evening

About to leave for Uspenka (dacha).

M.S. called, shared his thoughts about what he will say at the G-7. We are not the only ones in a transition period—the entire world is, he said. They also moved away from one system, but haven’t developed a new one. Meanwhile, all the mechanisms were created for a [new] “Cold War.” Yugoslavia showed us that we are not ready to meet new challenges. (He is referring to the fact that gathering in London will be heads of state, not ministers of finance).

I told him: maybe we made a mistake when we said in the “concept” that we sent to members of the G-7 about consolidation of debts. Back in Volynskoe, Shcherbakov and I loudly objected to including this. But he listened to Abalkin and Medvedev. And now he got worked up, because he knows it was wrong, because Bush wrote him (before receiving our “concept”) and advised against doing this, as did Mitterrand after receiving our “concept,” and Andreotti long before receiving it. There is a certain psychology of bankers...

M.S. started to argue that we have to be entirely honest and truthful... That we cannot avoid this (i.e. the situation with debts).

I objected, “The whole world knows about this situation, but when we acknowledge ourselves to be bankrupt, it means something to the creditors!” He tried to convince me for a long time that I do not understand anything.

I went for a walk in Uspenka... went around Novo-Dar’yino. I made a circle in the woods and lost my way: I entered the same village from which I left, only from the other end, imagining that I was somewhere far away.

In the morning (before M.S.’ phone call) I prepared materials for the meeting with Bush in London. I suggested to make it analogous to the meeting in Helsinki (on Saddam Hussein), and also to make a joint statement on Yugoslavia to mark the “presence” of the two superpowers in the conflict. This would show the flag and give a warning to the Yugoslavs and the Western Europeans.

I remember Gonzalez told Gorbachev: “Maybe we will have to call Uncle Sam to save Europe because of the Yugoslavs...” So it would be better for us to present ourselves as the saviors together with “the Uncle.”

July 16, 1991, Tuesday

Today we are leaving for London. Most likely I again won't get to see anything or go anywhere in this city I've grown to love.

Yesterday I finished preparing material for talks (with Bush, Mitterrand, Kaifu, Andreotti, Mulroney, possibly Kohl, Lubbers, Kinnock, Thatcher... and of course for the visit to "England itself"—Major and Elizabeth II).

Primakov called (and it is clear from the TASS): the press is building up the negative vibes in relation to the G-7's ability to help Russia. There are leaks about the G-7's "negative" attitude (at least from four members) toward M.S.' "concept" that was sent to the members.

Rutskoi announced that he is creating his own party: "Communists for Democracy," and leaving the CPSU... M.S. is late with his Program (for the CC Plenum on July 25th). Well, no, not late... he just cannot let go of the umbilical cord. Shakhnazarov told me yesterday that M.S. again tried to inculcate into the draft a "return to Lenin, NEP," etc. My god!

But, actually, it is time for me to decide too. He asked me the other day, jokingly: "Have you left the Party yet?" But for the last five years at least, the extent of my Party membership was paying the dues, though I was even a member of the CC... The only thing that keeps me there is Gorbachev. It's like in "Chapaev": "Who are you for, Vasiliy Ivanovich, the Bolsheviks of the Communists?"

"Who is Lenin for? That's who I'm for," Chapaev told the orderly.

July 20, 1991, Saturday, 5 a.m.!

We were in London from July 16-19th. It was a historic event. It feels as though a country hostile to the President does not want any of this. As soon as we saw our newspapers on the flight home, things turned upside down: a photo in *Moskovsky Komsomolets*, was captioned "7+1" and showed the seven leaders facing forward, and Gorbachev in profile and with his back turned... Everybody, right up to Khasbulatov, had a reserved reaction to the President's visit to London. From tabloids to statesmen, nobody hides the fact that he went to get billions, so to speak, but did not get them! Thus, Gorbachev continues his revolution of "leading the country into the world," while the country reacts with suspicion and hostility.

Meeting with Kaifu, all smiles. Only later will the Japanese Prime Minister tell Andreotti (who in turn told M.S.) that he believed in Gorbachev only after the London meeting.

Zagladin was present at M.S.' meeting with Mitterrand.

Bush. Breakfast at the U.S. Embassy (more on that later). After breakfast, the two presidents retreated into an adjoining room, where they finally resolved the "details" impeding progress on the START Treaty. Again we dragged it out until the last moment, we resisted, but Gorbachev's "world-historical method" did not yield any results.

The G-7 itself at Lancaster House. We, the entourage (except for Primakov), sat “behind the scenes” in a luxurious private room... Four hours non-stop, who knows for what. Instead, I could have been walking around my “favorite city.”

The results: I never doubted that Gorbachev would be invited. It would have been impossible to deny “him.” To think otherwise is equivalent to being influenced by stereotypes about “socialist morality” on the one hand, and “capitalism” on the other.

But it is surprising... that all of them, with the possible exception of Mitterrand, de facto recognize his “greater” significance than their own. Even though he no longer represents a superpower that is “obedient” to him, he is a historical figure, while they are merely elected officials, and will remain in history as statesmen of the “Gorbachev era.”

Bush did not come to visit “Michael” at our embassy, but invited him to the U.S. Embassy. He sincerely and “in a comradely way” believed that Gorbachev would understand it “correctly”: you Michael, so to say, can understand me, but my public opinion at home, the Americans, will never understand if I visit you. Plus, they agreed [on these arrangements] through Matlock back in Moscow, and Bush didn’t know that in Paris there would be a “pilgrimage” to Gorbachev (except for Mitterrand, on account of his age...).

Thus, M.S. appeared in London as the center of attention, symbolizing the meaning of the event: without him, the “seven” would become routine fodder for journalists for 2-3 days, if not less.

The reception on Downing Street. The chattering club, the elite. Major’s speech was worthy of the event, with high and “historic” praises of Gorbachev... I was mistaken in Moscow: Gorbachev’s speech sounded grander than Major’s (and was twice as short!), but I did not think it would be appropriate to mention “my favorite” Thatcher, I thought our host would not like it. But Major mentioned her himself. M.S., who spoke after him, also acknowledged her in the course of his speech. However, our newspapers did not have time to include this addition in the text (which they received ahead of time). It’s a good thing Thatcher doesn’t read *Pravda*, although other people will read it and report to her and to the whole world! I asked Kravchenko to include the change in the TV report. Alas! I have such an “apparatus” that while I was tied up with the scheduled events, I did not have an opportunity to “give orders” to TASS in time, and our stupid rules make it impossible to add changes to the TV program otherwise.

My neighbors at the table (at the reception): the Minister of Transportation, a nice, lively Scotsman. One can appreciate the British tact: despite my terrible English, he had a vigorous conversation with me about “this and that,” as if it was no big deal. And I got used to it pretty quickly, my linguistic shyness dissipated and we had a good chat.

The same thing happened with the lady on the left, though she sometimes switched to very bad French and, this way, we were quite satisfied with each other. She is the wife of some high official.

When we came to Major's office on 10 Downing Street, I got confused during greetings and said "Goodbye"[instead of "hello"]! Awful!

In the evening, M.S. threw a celebration party at his residence for his "close" circle. There were around 20 people! A "reminiscence" ... of how he and Raisa came to "this" ... Geneva, Reykjavik, childhood, youth, and so on. Zamyatin (the Ambassador) said a toast for the author of a new book (R.M.) with a "great feeling"!

In the morning of the 18th, before the meeting with Major, Andreotti visited. His conversation with M.S. was one between two close, trusting friends. As I expected, as they were finishing up he again brought up the Lubavitcher Manuscripts. Oh, we are going to lose big time with those... All the renowned rabbis are here to meet with M.S. Bush brought up the Manuscripts. Andreotti begged: "It would make it much easier for me to work to your benefit with the Jewish lobby in the U.S...." Mulroney whispered about it... But no! "There is a problem," M.S. replied to everybody, using the words of Yegorov-Gubenko!

Now, of course, there will be a noisy and vicious newspaper campaign.

Meeting with Mulroney. At first "our sources" reported that he had turned on us and supposedly objected to Gorbachev's invitation to the G-7. But it turned out that he firmly defended this idea before Bush. This conversation was also extremely friendly, open, and to the point: "I will do everything I can to help you."

I did not go to Major's reception in the Covent Garden and the Admiralty. In the evening, after finishing up my work, I took a quick trip to Soho...

In the morning M.S. had breakfast with Kinnock. I haven't seen him in a long time. He is quite grown up. Nothing is left of his playboy mannerisms: he is serious, smart, aphoristic, and statesmanlike. He is preparing for the Prime Minister's position in January.

During M.S. and Thatcher's meeting, I spent time with her former adviser Powell, my colleague. He is a true Brit. A great guy, smart... We had a meaningful, interesting conversation. I was very open (about *perestroika*, Gorbachev, Shevardnadze). He called my analysis "profound."

Around 11 a.m. we left for Heathrow.

On the plane, Zagladin and I wrote up the results of the meetings, and then joined the drinking in the President's section. But I took a "modest" seat at the second table and did not hear anything over the roar of the IL-62, except maybe for toasts.

July 22, 1991, Monday

In an hour Mitsotakis will be here... The whole week was spent on preparations for Bush's visit to Moscow. I'm exhausted. Not to mention how much Gorbachev has on his plate: tomorrow there is Novo-Ogarevo—the Union Treaty; on the 25th he has the Plenum, which could turn out to be "historic"...

I finished reading Aldanov's *Samoubijstvo*—terrific insight into *perestroika* from the experience of 1917-18. One to one. Bunin knew what he was doing when he tried to nominate him for a Nobel Prize.

July 23, 1991, Tuesday

Yesterday, during the conversation with Mitsotakis, Gorbachev opened up again. "You know," he said, "I put up a question for the referendum—should there be a Union or not. And I decided for myself, if it's a "no," I am leaving. You are the first person I am telling this. Even my adviser," he pointed to me, "doesn't know this..." I did, by the way!

After Mitsotakis, I stepped into [Gorbachev's] lounge near the Kamerger Hall. He said to the waiter, "Leave us alone." Then he said to me, "You know, I received some information. After my breakfast with Bush in London, he said to his team: 'Gorbachev is tired, he is nervous, does not control the situation, he is not confident... that is why he suspects that I am unfaithful and seeks more support. We need to switch our attention to Yeltsin.'"

I responded: "I don't believe this, Mikhail Sergeevich. Bush cannot be so shallow. This contradicts the entire logic of his recent behavior, and the meaning of the G-7... I think this 'information' is similar to the one you received about Mulroney, when you heard those negative things about him before coming to London. It turned out to be false. Why are they feeding you this?!"

But to myself, I thought: Bush got this feeling not because somebody "tossed" (to use M.S.' expression) him the idea. This feeling came about as the result of the conversation in the U.S. Embassy at lunch, before the G-7 meeting.

Afterwards, Gorbachev was proud (and mentioned it more than once) of how he asked Bush an "uncomfortable" question, which made Bush embarrassed. It turned out that the question had quite a different effect.

The question was as follows:

"Based on the information I have," M.S. said, "I know that the U.S. President is a solid man, that his decisions are the decisions of a serious politician, as opposed to improvisation. Based on these decisions we have already moved toward great perspectives in our dialogue, in the sphere of security.

At the same time, one gets the impression that my friend the U.S. President has not yet come to a final decision on the main question—how the United States would like to see the Soviet Union. Until we have a final answer to this question, we will continue to stumble on various questions in our relations. Meanwhile, time is slipping away.

In this context, the G-7 meeting is a good setting for an important conversation. The main issue is the organic integration of the Soviet Union into the world economy. Of course, a great deal here depends on us.

So I ask you: what is George Bush waiting for? If after this lunch, at the G-7 my colleagues will mostly tell me that they like what we're doing, that they support it, but that in essence we have to boil in our own pot, I will tell them that everybody eats the soup!

This is what perplexes me: you found 100 billion dollars to deal with one regional conflict (meaning the Persian Gulf); money is available for other programs, too. But here we are talking about such a project—to change the Soviet Union, to allow it to reach a new state, to become an organic part of the world economy and world community not as an opposing force or a possible threat. This is an unprecedented task.” (I later checked my notes of this with the interpreter's. They matched).

At this lunch I was sitting next to Gorbachev, i.e. almost across from Bush. As M.S. was presenting this lengthy question, Bush turned crimson before my eyes, his eyes darkened, he did not look at Gorbachev but at me or Primakov, or he would turn around and look at his people—Baker, Scowcroft—as if bewildered. He stopped eating but kept chewing with his lips, or rather, working his jaws.

I felt uneasy. I remember well the thoughts going through my mind at the moment: “What do you want from the American?! You asked him this question three times already. After all, there was Malta; there was your visit to Washington and Camp David, where you rode around the lawns together in golf carts, taking turns at the wheel; there was Helsinki (because of Hussein). Do you need more proof of what the current American President is willing and able (in his circumstances) to do for us?! Once again, if it wasn't for Bush, you would not be here at the G-7. Why are you being so mindlessly tactless?”

The question was posed in the context of Gorbachev's long speech—he was explaining the situation in the country, etc. But after this question, nobody was interested in the rest of the speech. The Americans were eating and whispering among themselves.

Gorbachev finished. There was a pause. Bush started speaking with restraint, suppressing his agitation, in a measured tone: “It appears I have not laid out my policies convincingly enough, if doubts arise regarding how we would like to see the Soviet Union. I could understand if there was a question about what the United States could do to help the Soviet Union. But if we are again discussing the question of how the United States would like to see the Soviet Union, I will try to answer one more time.

We would like the Soviet Union to be a democratic country with a market economy, dynamically integrated into the Western economy.

Finally, I don't want to appear to be meddling in your internal affairs, but I am speaking in terms of economics—[we would like to see] a Soviet Union that successfully resolves the problems between the Center and republics. This is fundamentally important for the inflow of private investment.

So: firstly—democracy, secondly—market, thirdly—federation.”

I think at the time, Gorbachev did not understand that he had been “rebuffed” (to use Soviet terminology).

Time was running out. Lunch was over. Taking only the interpreters, the two presidents stepped into the adjoining room for a minute, which I already mentioned. The Americans walked us down to the cars.

So, when I reacted to the “information” M.S. conveyed to me, I knew what was going on. At that lunch, M.S. created an impression of a man who tries to hide with verbal aggressiveness his uncertainty and confusion in the face of the situation in his country. The Americans understood this.

Gorbachev switched the conversation to... Mitsotakis. Then he said he will receive General Powell tomorrow at 10.15 a.m. In the evening he called and assigned me to write him a text for a speech before the obkom secretaries and members of the CC—on the outcomes of the G-7.

Tomorrow he will try to “convince” them. Three quarters of them probably hate him, in the spirit of today’s appeal to fellow citizens, published in *Sovetskaia Rossiia*. A hysterical cry with the message to drive out Gorbachev & Co. before they ruin Russia completely. It was signed by Bondarev, Varennikov, Gromov, Zykina, Rasputin, Zyuganov, Prokhanov, Klykov (a sculptor), and some other people. Once again, the majority of them are people he praised and indulged, and promoted. One more example of betrayal. Does he see this? He does. But why then does he not retire at least two deputy ministers of defense, Generals Varennikov and Gromov? No, he will not do that.

Mit’ka (my grandson) writes in a letter from Copenhagen to grandma and Misha Medvedev: it is better to live in hungry Moscow than in well-fed Copenhagen. Denmark is the most boring nook of heaven. He is reading *War and Peace*. His impressions—“Lev Nikolayevich [Tolstoy] is the greatest...” Etc. These are his selected thoughts.

July 25, 1991, Morning

The Plenum is today... As I was leaving the entrance to my apartment building, I ran into Shaposhnikov, my former colleague from the CC International Department, also Ponomarev’s deputy. He was carrying cognac and some cans in his hands. He asked me, “What’s going to happen to the Party?” “It’ll probably fall apart,” I replied. “Isn’t that something!”

After a telephone conversation with Kohl (about Konigsberg), M.S. kept me in his office. He connected Prokofiev (secretary of the Moscow City Committee) to the selector. They discussed Yeltsin’s decree (de-partisation of enterprises and institutions). Prokofiev said, “This means we are switching to a territorial principle of Party work.”

M.S. said, “I already received 100 telegrams. Obkom secretaries are demanding that we issue a decree to nullify Yeltsin’s decree.”

I interjected: “Don’t do that... Such a decree would not work, but the Novo-Ogarevo trend would be disrupted. Your prestige would decline again.”

But I could see that without my help, he already made the decision not to meddle. He discussed with Prokofiev why Yeltsin did this right now. It seems he had good intentions: we need to work right now, we need calm conditions, while the Communists are stirring unrest at enterprises and in collectives! And how would he, the President, look if he interfered with Yeltsin’s attempts to restore order?!

Prokofiev did not press the issue...

But the Plenum! “It will be a merry affair,” he said that day when receiving Barón Crespo (President of the European Parliament).

He told Prokofiev how Yeltsin fidgeted at Novo-Ogarevo, how he kept asking everybody present about their reaction to his decree. People kept quiet. He asked Gorbachev: “What are you going to do at the Plenum?” Gorbachev replied, “We will discuss the Party Program.” “What Program, who needs it?” B.N. reacted with irritation. Gorbachev repeated with emphasis, “We will discuss the Program!”

It seems M.S. decided to topple the Party. He even told Barón, “whoever is not for it (i.e. the new Program], can leave, either to the left or the right!”

Prokofiev objected to “voluntary Party dues.” M.S. urged him to resolutely replace Polozkov, otherwise, he said, “another party” might arise; a party within the party. It already exists, I said “as an aside.”

July 28, 1991, Sunday Morning

Yesterday I slaved away at materials for the M.S.-Bush meetings. I went through piles of departmental materials, though even I could not read them from beginning to end. Palazhchenko turned out to be my most helpful consultant, though his main job is to translate for Gorbachev. He has a fantastic knowledge of the English language and is widely educated. I put him on the staff of my group from the MFA. My “old men” and Kuvaldin... they are losing their form, and Kuvaldin especially seems to be doing everything reluctantly and is looking for greener pastures... same as Malashenko, who already ran off to Ignatenko.

M.S. is happy with the Plenum. Shakhnazarov prepared a brilliant report for him... It was a threshold that M.S. finally stepped over—into a de-ideologized period... *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* ran a caustic headline: “Gorbachev defeated Marxism-Leninism.” The orthodox and vulgar members of the Plenum did not dare overthrow him... Especially in the face of Yeltsin’s decree on de-partisation. They grumbled self-indulgently... in resentment and hatred.

In the *perestroika* sense, the Plenum is yet another belated “overcoming,” carried out personally by Gorbachev. But right now we do not need a “renewal” of the Party. Rather, we need a new party to be created, a road already taken by Rutskoi and others.

Speeches for Bush. M.S. corrected them over the phone yesterday, toning down the zest and making it more “balanced” from the perspective of compliments to his friend George. Too bad! He is stingy with praise and gratitude... It would not hurt, especially where it’s deserved.

August 1, 1991, Thursday

Today Bush goes to Kiev, and then leaves for home. Yesterday we were in Novo-Ogarevo. My main observation: the historic significance of this visit is not in the START Treaty—this matter will proceed regardless, because nuclear weapons ceased to be a political element, now it is about economics, psychology, and the social sphere. The global observation is this: the U.S. and USSR have practically begun following the same policies in the world (Iraq, the Middle East, Europe, Yugoslavia)... But this happened when the U.S. became convinced that we are not a threat to them.

The contact between them was closer than back in the day with our “friends” from socialist countries. There is no hypocrisy, self-righteousness, no paternalism, pats on the back and obedience.

During lunch at Novo-Ogarevo, M.S. suddenly raised a toast to me... and Scowcroft. But in general, Bush and Baker are indifferent to me. Maybe somewhere deep inside they have a sense that I play some role... But there is no contact and recognition because, alas, I “have no language” (compared to Dobrynin and the rest!).

I really do not want to go to the Crimea with M.S. It will be hard labor in a hot and sweet setting. Plus, it seems like they will downgrade our comforts: [hotel] “Yuzhnyi” costs 4000 rubles per person!

To come back to the visit: the toasts written by Palazhchenko and me were stronger than Bush’s. We are not so bad as speechwriters! I wonder, who will replace me in this?

August 3, 1991, Saturday

Tomorrow I am leaving with M.S. for the Crimea. Again.

Yesterday, after the conversation with the Yugoslavs (which by the way smacked of the former “friendship” that we had with our Warsaw Pact Allies... except this time, it was sincere comradeship, complete openness and some kind of closeness) he sat down on the edge of his chair, and said: “There you go, Tolya, I am tired like hell! Tomorrow I still have to hold a meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers—harvest, transportation, debt, industrial communications, no money, the market... Pavlov said, “if you don’t come (to the meeting), nothing will work out. Everyone pulls in a different direction, and it is all ‘give give give!’ Everywhere things are in a bad shape.” He remembered Yeltsin and Nazarbayev, how he was drinking with them till 3 a.m. in Novo-Ogarevo and discussing the Union Treaty and the next elections. “Oh, Tolya. What shallow, vulgar, and provincial people. Both of them! You look at them and think, with whom am I doing this work, and for whom? I wish I could just abandon it all. But I would have to leave

it to them. I am tired.” Nevertheless, yesterday he gave an interview about the Union Treaty and said everything... he practically committed to a free confederation.

If you think deeper... it is not Yeltsin who is using Gorbachev (in the historical-*perestroika* sense), but Gorbachev who is using Yeltsin as a bulldozer to clear the field for his ideas. After all, neither Yeltsin nor his team have come up with a single major idea that wasn't already conceived by Gorbachev (I would know) or publicly said by him. The smarter ones among his enemies and opponents understand this. And they make do for themselves... at his expense, his nerves, his mind and tactical skill...

August 4, 1991, Morning, before leaving for the Crimea with M.S.

Ignatenko came over yesterday, we “made up.” He brought three bottles of wine, “for the road.” We talked about the uselessness of the presidential apparatus, about Boldin, who absolutely does not fit. Ignatenko told me about his conversation with Sununu and Scowcroft at a Spaso House reception. They asked him, “Why is Chernyaev not here?” He made an excuse that I was working on the results of Novo-Ogarevo and in general had many things to take care of before the vacation with M.S. The Americans replied that they recognize three figures close to the President: Ignatenko, Chernyaev, and Revenko. “What about Shakhnazarov?” Vitaliy asked... “Well, he too, but he seems to be too sickly and very old. We don't know him as well...” (They are crafty, because Matlock visited Shakhnazarov pretty often, and journalists visit him all the time).

I think their opinion comes from Baker and Matlock; the latter has been visiting me often lately, and he might be “repaying” the compliments M.S. and I paid him.

We talked about Yakovlev, who is “resigning” as the President's adviser and going to... the Moscow Duma?! M.S. said the following about him recently: “I don't understand... he is a [political] figure with a name. There is varied public opinion about him, both good and bad. For what it's worth, he is number two among the initiators of *perestroika*. He could become a scholar or retire and remain in history in this position. Instead, he fusses, goes as a henchman to Gavrila Popov. Together with Shevardnadze, he started working on a new party, some kind of movement for democratic reform... Both of them appear at all the opposition meetings, including Rutskoï's. He gives interviews to opposition newspapers practically every day... In short, vanity rules over common sense and even respect for what was really achieved by Yakovlev and Shevardnadze to transform the state. Amazing!”

A.G. Kovalev has an ulcer, he is in Barvikha. I talked him out of transferring to a hospital. He agreed, mainly so he wouldn't be absent from the MFA for months... Already they don't take his opinion much into consideration. And, regrettably, his absence is not really noticeable. “His game is finished,” as M.S. said about Abalkin, when I recently suggested him for the role of the Soviet “sherpa.”

Brutents visited. He still has his hangups. It is probably because I don't really need him... more and more I've been sending him on “independent” trips: Prague, Rome, Kuala Lumpur. And I don't want to make him the head of my consultants, because as a boss he becomes rude

and exploits people... He is no longer used to writing himself... But I need people to write, even semi-finished products, instead of just “expressing their opinion” of how people should write.

He keeps asking to be named assistant to the President, as opposed to deputy adviser to the President! Oh-ho-ho! It is time for him to start thinking about his eternal soul, but people keep fussing... except for me. Because I know that the deep meaning of life is in its feminine beginning! And... my constant contact with it.

It's time to go. Oh, how I don't want to... I'll have to live in [hotel] Tesseli this time, not in [hotel] “Yuzhnyi.”

Three Days in Foros

Soon after I got back to Moscow, I related what I saw and heard while I was with M.S. in Foros¹⁶ from August 18-19th, 1991, in interviews to Sasha Bezymenskaya for *Der Spiegel*, A. Lyubimov for the TV program “Vzglyad” [The View], as well as the newspaper *Izvestia* and the American magazine *Time*. Here I will try to bring everything together.

A few preliminary explanations. I should decipher some names before I begin. Olga—Olga Vasilievna Lanina, an assistant in the President’s Secretariat. Tamara or Toma—Tamara Alekseyevna Aleksandrova, my assistant as the President’s adviser. Shakh—Georgy Khosroevich Shakhnazarov, who was also the President’s adviser at the time. The initials M.S. and R.M. do not require explanation. “Yuzhnyi” is a sanatorium, 12km from “Zarya,” where Olga, Tamara and I spent the nights and where we also went during the day for lunch. We worked in an office around 50 meters away from Gorbachev’s house.

While I made entries into my diary, I would turn on “Mayak” (a continuous information radio program) every half an hour. In between new broadcasts, “Mayak” played symphonies and music from Tchaikovsky’s ballet *Swan Lake*, which became sickening in that atmosphere. For millions of listeners afterwards, this music became forever associated with the coup. The information I heard on “Mayak” I immediately recorded in my diary; I reproduce these entries here in a different font, even though they interrupt the text.

Thus, to the diary.

August 21, 1991, Crimea, Dacha “Zarya”

Looks like it is time to start recording the events. If I don’t do it, nobody else will. And I happened to witness a turning point in history.

On the 18th, Sunday, after lunch at “Yuzhnyi,” Olga and I came back to work. Tamara asked to stay at the hotel, since it was Sunday. We really did not have any urgent work to do. The two of us would have managed without a problem. The speech for the occasion of signing the Union Treaty was ready. Gorbachev altered it a couple times, kept asking Shakhnazarov and me to “increase the scope” of it, and from me he wanted more “style,” too. G.Kh. is on vacation in “Yuzhnyi” here, he did not join us in our work at Gorbachev’s dacha, though he was in contact with M.S. over the phone.

So, around 4 p.m., Olga and I entered the dacha grounds.

At the entrance, as usual, there were two police cars and a spike strip on the ground,¹⁷ which was moved away for us.

¹⁶ After the coup, “Foros” became the proper noun [associated with the events]. In reality, it is a beach town located 5-6 kilometers (along the coast) from the Presidential dacha, which is called “Zarya.” [Author’s note]

¹⁷ By the way, this spike strip was there from the moment of the President’s arrival in the Crimea (though it hadn’t been there in the two previous years), not from the start of the coup. [Author’s note]

Around 5 p.m., Olga ran into my office, saying, “Anatoly Sergeevich, what’s going on? Boldin is here, together with Baklanov and Shenin, and another general, tall and in glasses, I don’t know him.” (Later we found out it was Varennikov). I looked out my door... there was a congregation of cars at the entrance to our building, all of them with antennas, some with emergency lights... and a crowd of drivers and security personnel. I looked out the window facing M.S.’ house and saw a gloomy Plekhanov walking down the path. From a distance, I could see Boldin on the balcony.

Olga said, “Anatoly Sergeevich, something is going on here... You know that communication lines have been disconnected?” I picked up the receiver... the first, second, third, including the secure line¹⁸—silence. We started guessing. Aloud, I brainstormed that there might be some new power plant accident (because Baklanov was among those present), recently there was a report of some failures at the Tiraspol power plants, and on one of the Chernobyl blocks...

But it turned out to be much worse!

Four people were with M.S.

Plekhanov, Generalov (his deputy), and Medvedev were sitting on the stairs under my window... They glanced when I approached the window. I turned on the transistor radio: it played normal programming. Then it was reported that M.S. greeted some conference, that he conveyed a message to Najibullah on the occasion of “their” holiday (I made the drafts)...

In about an hour, the four departed. Plekhanov also left, taking Medvedev with him. Medvedev was the President’s personal guard; on all the official photographs and on the TV screen he stood at his back and never left him anywhere. This time he went to Moscow, abandoning and betraying “his President.” This already was a sign. Even when I was telling Olga about the power plant, I understood that this was actually about Gorbachev.

The phone lines were disconnected completely.

Earlier, when we were on the way to the office, Olga asked to be released early, around 5 p.m., so she could go for a swim, etc. Now, the car did not arrive to get her. I told the driver to pick me up at 6:30, but he did not come for me, either. I asked the security guard on duty to get whoever was in charge to explain to me what was going on.

About 10 minutes later, Vyacheslav Vladimirovich Generalov showed up. We became well acquainted during Gorbachev’s trips abroad, where he usually was in charge of security. He is very polite. He asked Olga to leave us alone and took a seat. “Anatoly Sergeevich, don’t get me wrong. They left me in charge here. I have orders not to let anyone out. Even if I allowed you to leave the premises, you would be immediately detained by the border guards: there is a triple semi-circle [of guards] from one sea shore to the other. The road to Sevastopol-Yalta is closed off around here. You can see, there are three ships already at sea...”

¹⁸ A government communications point, located in Mukhalatka, 20 km from “Zarya” in the direction of Yalta. There was a connection through the telephone operators working in the KGB. [Author’s note]

I asked him an innocent question: “What about signing the Union Treaty tomorrow?”

He replied: “It will not be signed. The plane that came for M.S. was sent back to Moscow. The garages with his cars are sealed, and they guarded not by my people, but gunmen who were sent over here. I cannot even allow the extended service staff (local people— gardeners, cooks, cleaning ladies) to go home. I don’t know where I’m going to house them.”

I again asked a naïve question: “But how can this be—my things are in “Yuzhnyi,” and finally, it is time for dinner! Tamara Alekseyevna is there, she is probably worried and doesn’t know what’s going on.” I understood what a terrible position she was in when we did not return to the sanatorium in the evening. Later she told me how worried she was, and how she tried to contact us. But phone lines were cut off there as well. And she was refused a car.

He said: “There is nothing I can do. Please understand me, Anatoly Sergeyeovich. I am a military man. I have my orders... nobody is to leave the premises! And no calling.”

He left. Olga came back. She is lively, sharp, and smart (recently married, has a 1.5 year old child, and her husband Kolya is here, he is a driver for one of the presidential cars). She started to rail against Boldin, who was her boss a long time ago. She cannot stand him: “Why did he show up here? To show that he’s already kissing ... off his bosses?” And more along those lines. Time was passing by stupidly.

It was getting dark when handsome Boris, Gorbachev’s new guard (replacing Medvedev), told me that M.S. is asking me to come outside. He was nearby, Boris said, taking a walk around the dacha.

I quickly got dressed. As I walked out, I was thinking: in what state will he be when I see him? How is he?

(10 a.m.¹⁹ “Mayak” is broadcasting the message from the commandant of Moscow. The first clashes took place at night; attacks on the armored vehicles and patrols on Smolenskaya Square (by the way, near the building where I live in Moscow. What my family must feel!) and by the building of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet and the hotel. There are some killed and wounded. This means first blood. The Commandant is blaming everything on “disorderly elements” and criminals...).

(12 p.m. on “Mayak”: Ivashko said in an address to Yanaev: the PB and the CC Secretariat cannot make a judgment about the events until they meet with the General Secretary of the CC CPSU, Gorbachev! This is something! Especially after the spilled blood).

To continue: M.S., R.M., their daughter Ira and her husband Tolya were standing by the entrance to the dacha. We joked—some people are cold, some hot: M.S. was wearing a warm sweater, because two days ago his back acted up again, old sciatica came back. When he was

¹⁹ This is the morning of August 21st. As I mentioned earlier, I started recording the events in my diary on the 21st, and every now and then I interrupt the narrative to record what I heard on radio “Mayak.” [Author’s note]

young he swam in an ice-hole and was a winter-swimmer, from which he got this ailment. M.S. mentioned that “doctors told him to take care of himself.” In general he is afraid of drafts.

He was calm, even-tempered, and smiling. “Do you know what happened?” he asked.

“No, how would I know! I only watched from my window. I saw Plekhanov, Boldin. I heard there was another one, some general, tall and in glasses... and Baklanov.”

“The general was Varennikov. He was the most active of the group. Listen, I want you to know what happened.”

R.M. said, “They walked in without asking, without warning. Plekhanov was leading them and the guards stepped out of his way. It was completely unexpected. I was sitting in an armchair, they walked by me and only Baklanov said hello. Not Boldin! We were on the best of terms for 15 years! He was like a relative to us, we trusted him with everything, even the most intimate things!!!”

M.S. stopped her, and said to me, “Listen. They sat down, I asked them ‘What have you come to me with?’ Baklanov started speaking, but Varennikov talked the most. Shenin was quiet. Boldin tried to say something once—‘Mikhail Sergeevich, don’t you understand what kind of the situation this is!!’ I told him, ‘You’re a scumbag [*mudak*] and better keep your mouth shut. You came here to give me a lecture on the situation in the country.’” (He said the word scumbag [*mudak*] in front of the ladies. Ira laughed and interpreted it as “mutant” [*mutant*], which was very fitting. She is very smart and educated in general).

M.S. continued, “In a word, they offered me two options: either transfer my powers to Yanaev and agree to a state of emergency, or renounce the presidency. They tried to blackmail me,” he did not explain how, “I told them, ‘You could have guessed that I would not agree to either option. You are trying to arrange a coup d’état. What you want to do with this Committee and such—it is unconstitutional and illegal. It is a gamble that will lead to blood and a civil war.’ The general started to argue that they will ‘ensure’ that it does not come to that. I said, ‘Excuse me, Cde. Varennikov, but I don’t remember your full name...’

He replied, ‘Valentin Ivanovich.’

‘So, Valentin Ivanovich—society is not a battalion. No ‘Left and march step,’ for you. Your undertaking will resound with a terrible tragedy, all the things that started coming together now, they will be broken. Let’s suppose you put everyone down, you disband the government, you install troops everywhere... and then what? You caught me as I was working on an article.’”²⁰

²⁰Judging by the article, he foresaw the possible scenarios, including the “emergency” option. It contained an extensive, detailed analysis of our economic, social, and political situation. There was also an understanding of the deep dissatisfaction and tension in society, as well as the danger that this tension would spill out. Gorbachev analyzed which methods of emerging from the crisis were acceptable, which should be chosen, and which should be rejected immediately, despite the severity of the situation. The process of agreement through the “9+1”

Gorbachev continued relating the details of how he rebutted the unwelcome guests. “‘Well,’ I said, ‘In the article I consider the course you are pursuing now—the emergency situation. I thought through everything. I am convinced that this is a disastrous path; it could turn into a bloody path... And it would lead not just to nowhere; it would lead right back to pre-*perestroika* times.’ With that they left.”

Everybody wanted to know what would happen next.

M.S.: “Tomorrow they are supposed to disclose their plan. How will they explain ‘my situation’?”

We talked about the people who came. I did not fail to throw in: “These are all ‘your’ people, M.S., you nurtured them, raised them, trusted them... Take even Boldin.” “Well, Plekhanov,” M.S. said, stepping around Boldin, “it goes without question, he is not a good person! Is he thinking about his motherland when he betrays me?! No, about his own skin!”

M.S. started to think aloud about the other “members” of this operation: the visitors named some members of the State Emergency Committee to him. He could not reconcile with the fact that Yazov was among them. He did not want to believe it: “Maybe they wrote in his name, without asking him?” I shared his doubts of the old marshal’s involvement. But with regard to Kryuchkov, I “assuaged” his hesitations: “He is quite capable of something like this...

formula was underway; we were on the verge of signing the Union Treaty that would change the situation in the country radically. It would become the turning point in the development of the state and society; a point when new structures could be created, and the decisions could be implemented more quickly. The most important thing at the moment, Gorbachev thought, was to secure this process of agreement, to keep it from “going off the rails,” as he said.

He saw that the forces resisting *perestroika* took into account that the country approached the point of no return, which is why they decided to undertake this venture. These forces had long made themselves felt at the CC CPSU Plenums, the USSR People’s Deputies congresses, and at the Supreme Soviet. They had been asking for an emergency situation at meetings and in print for a long time.

In the article, Gorbachev examines in detail what the outcomes of each course of action would be. Since society had changed and “the people grew used to the air of freedom” (he has that expression in there), people would never agree to turn back, and they would never agree to a dictatorial regime. Perhaps they could achieve some success in certain areas—after all, the people are at the breaking point and there are some sentiments along the lines of—to hell with it, with the dictatorship, with the junta, let it be anyone, as long as there is immediate relief from the daily troubles and improvement in life. The Russian people have a tendency to look for a savior in the supreme power that would come, bring justice and improve everything. These sentiments are dangerous. And yet, the people as a whole, the country would not want to go back and lose the atmosphere of freedom created by *perestroika*. This was M.S.’ reasoning.

That is why a state of emergency, in his estimation, would be a step towards civil war with countless victims across the country. After all, there were some democratic institutions already in place, and they would rise up against the dictatorship. But the most important factor would be the spontaneous resistance of many thousands of people.

In a draft of the article, Gorbachev described some of the powers that would be likely to act according to the “emergency scenario,” naming Party structures that carry a great reactionary charge—the military-industrial complex, which is heavily tied to the old regime and wants to regain its former status and privileges. He referred to other reactionary categories of society. Specific names were not named, of course. [Author’s note]

Plus, it would be unthinkable to contrive such a plan without the KGB chairman's involvement, not to mention acting upon it!"

"What about Yanaev?" M.S. was outraged. "Two hours before these guys' arrival I talked with him on the phone. He went all out, telling me how they are waiting for me in Moscow, how he will come to meet me in Vnukovo tomorrow!"

We walked around like for this about 15 more minutes.

I got back to my room, and started worrying about Tamara. She was over in "Yuzhnyi"... in a panic, probably running between Primakov and Shakhnazarov, Shakhnazarov and Krasin,²¹ begging them to find out at least something.

The next day I asked Generalov to come to my office. He showed up, though I did not expect him to. I told him it is wrong to torture a woman like this, and asked him to help her get a ticket to Moscow. He replied that it is impossible to get a ticket right now (? – impossible for him!) But after some thought, he suddenly asked:

- How ready is she to leave?
- How should I know? Why?
- A military plane is going to Moscow today. It is taking some communications equipment and signalers, and one sick man from the security guards.²²
- Take Tamara with you then!
- Alright. I will send a car for her right now.
- Tell her to pack my suitcase as well and have it delivered here. I don't even have anything to shave with here...

I got my suitcase late at night. The next day I found out that Tamara got a seat on that plane.

What was the level of our isolation in "Zarya"? This was a question I got often from journalists and friends after we got back to Moscow.

The people Generalov brought, "his" men, were not very many. Some of them he put by the garages, which contained the presidential cars with autonomous communication systems. Some men were stationed by the gates, and they also had guns. The border towers on the beach

²¹ Yu.A. Krasin was the Head of the former Institute of Social Sciences, we've known each other for a long time. He was vacationing in "Yuzhnyi." [Author's note]

²² I guessed immediately what "communications" he was talking about. Generalov had said too much. He was talking about what in popular language is called "the nuclear button"... Later this was confirmed. The officers who constantly accompany the famous "suitcase," were returned to Moscow on Moiseev's orders, he was the Chief of Defense. [Author's note]

were already there—at both ends of the semicircle of the dacha’s territory. Border guards were on duty there. But two or three days before the coup, their numbers increased along the highway. Only later, Olga and I recalled that we did not attach any importance to it at the time. Also, people in unusual uniforms appeared along the highway—in sailor’s striped vests, with trousers worn over high boots, and wearing shoes instead of boots. They looked like the riot police. Later we figured out what this meant. It was enough to step out from our office and look at the edge of the cliffs along the Sevastopol-Yalta road to see that border guards stood every 50-100 meters along the road, some of them had dogs.

We were closely monitored. Below are some episodes to prove this.

On the 19th during the day I went to visit Gorbachev. The guard in the booth on the way to the dacha stopped me.

“Who are you?”

“I’m an adviser.”

“Where are you going?”

“It’s easy to guess,” I said, pointing at the presidential dacha.

“It is not allowed.”

I lost my temper and started cursing at him. Suddenly, Oleg (one of the bodyguards) jumped out from behind me and told him: “You—get back in your booth! And never get in his way again (pointing at me). Go ahead, Anatoly Sergeevich.”

I will digress, because this is an important point. This helped to maintain an atmosphere of some minimal reliability. At least the hope that they will not be able to take us with their bare hands. And if they try, it will be costly. “The public” usually looks at the bodyguards with contempt. But these guys proved to be real knights. When their superiors, Plekhanov and Medvedev, betrayed the President, they betrayed these boys, too. But they did not falter. Day and night they changed shifts. They were calm, intense, strong guys, with guns and walkie-talkies, some of them picked up machine guns... They were in all the “vital” points around the dacha, sometimes hidden in the bushes. They were ready to fight to the death: because it is their job and their duty, but more than anything because they are good people and noble in spirit. There were only five of them.

The second episode. On the morning of the 20th, Olya told me, “A.S., why do you sit in your office all the time. Let’s go for a swim. The boys (i.e. the security guards she knows through her husband) are forbidden from going to the water. But it is unlikely that they will stop you, though they won’t let us go without you.”

“Where would we go?”

“Behind the house, where the cafeteria and garages are located, and where most of the guys live, there is a path down to the water. It is steep and rocky; one could slip and fall. But people go there.”

I agreed. Nikolai Fedosievich²³ brought something on a plate from the cafeteria. I ate. Olya came by with Larisa (nurse) and Tatiana—a big and good woman, she’s a masseuse.

We went. The first guard we passed looked at us suspiciously. He did not stop us, but immediately reported on his walkie-talkie: “Chernyaev is going somewhere.” When we passed by the staff housing, the security guard we are friends with ran over to us, with a ball (there is a sports court nearby). I asked him, “Having fun?” “What else is there to do, A.S.? They won’t let us go anywhere. It’s hot. It’s awful!”

We made it to the path and to the sharp descent down some makeshift stairs. The descent was around 100 meters. Halfway down, Olga said, “Look behind us!” I turned around and saw that a man was following us. We descended to the beach. In between large boulders there was access to the water and a small open area with three wooden mats. Larisa lay down to sunbathe, the rest of us went into the water—you could break a leg before getting to a spot deep enough to swim. I made a few strokes and then turned on my back. The man who was following us was on the phone. Larisa later told us that he said, “Chernyaev is here. I’m at the post.” (The security guards swim on this beach, so there is a telephone in a booth here, for emergencies.)

To the right of us was a border guard tower. Two soldiers fixed their telescopes and binoculars on us. In front of us there was a patrol boat and a speed-boat... they started their engines. About a hundred meters away loomed a frigate.

Why was the security guard necessary then? To catch me, if I try to swim to Turkey? He wouldn’t be able to: I swim too well (compared to him, he was a chubby guy). It was clear that they wanted us to know that we have no control, we are being watched everywhere, we are half-prisoners. Psychological pressure.

After 30 minutes, we got out of the water. The security guard turned away. As we went up, we heard him say behind us on the phone: “Chernyaev is going up!”

The girls persuaded me to go swimming again the following day. We went, but I told them: “It is disgusting; I don’t really feel like going.” Tanya responded: “Same here, I would not go, but I want to annoy those bastards.”

It was the same “procedure” as the first time: a different security guard followed us down. Before we had time to take our clothes off, he loudly said over the phone: “The object under observation is here. I am staying...” But this time, an additional border patrol guard with a dog showed up at the top of the path.

As we swam, we could see the dacha’s balcony, and Ira and Tolya watching us from there. Below them, closer to the “presidential” beach, there was Generalov and about five more

²³ N.F. Pokutnij, the President’s second personal doctor. [Author’s note]

people, all lined up and watching us through binoculars. Later, Generalov “found it necessary” to bring to Olga’s attention that he saw how we swam.

After the second day, M.S. told me not to go far from the house, or at least not without his knowledge. What did he mean? Maybe he was only “showing concern”...

At 3 p.m. on August 21st, news on TV: Yeltsin made a statement in the Russian parliament that Gorbachev is in isolation in the Crimea. They made a decision to send Rutskoi, Silaev and other deputies here. Bakatin made a speech. The announcer excitedly gave a detailed account of this speech: This is a coup d’état. At least as of Sunday, Gorbachev was perfectly healthy, save for some sciatica (he must have found out from Primakov). This is lawlessness. We should invite the USSR Supreme Soviet deputies to the Russian parliament; they are currently being heavily influenced.

The parliament held a minute of silence for the people who died during the night “next to the building.”

Mikhail Sergeyevich, this is where people are tested: Bakatin, whom you pushed away, fearing all those Lukyanovs and Yanaevs, and the rest!

[Following is a record of] my communication with M.S. during these days.

On the morning of the 19th, as soon as I heard about the emergency situation over “Mayak,” I started thinking how to act toward M.S.—to wait for summons? That is, follow the same chain of command? No, that will not do: he must be convinced of my loyalty. I went to him. I wandered around the house for a long time, until his granddaughter saw me and took me upstairs to her grandfather. He was lying in bed after a routine procedure for his sciatica.

“You know, Anatoly,” he said right away, “when I spoke with them, I did not flinch. I was completely calm. Even now, I am calm. I am certain that I am right. I am certain that this is a gamble, and God forbid there will be blood...”

He was quiet for a while. Then, “They will not be able to restore order, nor to harvest, nor get the economy going... They will not succeed! It is a criminal gamble! Think about what we should do, and come by after lunch.”

I came over as we agreed. We went to the beach with the whole family. It was impossible to talk in the house anymore, because it was bugged everywhere, as Raisa Maksimovna kept constantly warning us in a panic.

A memorable moment: when we were going down to the beach, M.S.’ youngest granddaughter clung to me and took me by the hand, saying, “I have some cards.” She held a deck in her small hands, “This is a king, this is a queen... no, a Jack, and this... oh! I forgot...” (it was a ten). I said, “That’s fine. But what suit is it?” (I did not expect her to know this word).

“It is wormy!”²⁴ This child’s mistake struck close to the heart, reminding me of the situation that even this little girl was a part of.

R.M. took M.S. and me into a small pavilion and sent everyone else to the sea. Feverishly, she ripped a couple clean pages from a notebook and handed them to me, then for a long time she searched in her purse for a pen. Finally she found a pencil and gave it to me. “I will leave you,” she said. “Yes, yes,” M.S. said impatiently (which is unusual for him when talking to her), “we have to work.” She smiled pitifully and waved to me.

M.S.: “Tolya! We have to do something. I will pressure this scoundrel,” (he was talking about General Generalov). “I will make demands every day, and I will increase them.”

I: “Yes M.S., I agree. I doubt that the gang in Moscow will react to it, but you cannot let them think that you’ve resigned to this situation.”

M.S.: “Write this down. Firstly, I demand the immediate restoration of government communications. Secondly, I demand an immediate dispatch of the presidential plane, so I can get back to work. If they don’t respond, tomorrow I will insist that they send journalists, both Soviet and foreign.”

I wrote it down. He said, “Watch out that they don’t confiscate this from you on the way back!”

“They won’t,” I said confidently.

On the 20th, I went to see M.S. immediately after the swim I described earlier. Again I walked around the house for a while until the cook told me that he was in the office. He walked out to meet me, and at the same time Raisa Maksimovna did too, from another room. She immediately dragged us to the balcony, pointing to the lamps, the ceiling, the furniture, indicating that they’re bugged. We stood for a while, leaning on the railing. I said, “R.M., you see that cliff with the border patrol tower. Beyond it, after a turn is Tesseli (which is a subsidiary of the “Foros” sanatorium, it contains a dacha in which Maxim Gorky lived in the Crimea in the 1930s). Before “Zarya” was built, there was a wild, deserted “beach” here. In reality, it wasn’t much of a beach, just some large rocks and it was difficult to get in the water. So... I vacationed in Tesseli several times. And I swam here from that cliff. I would lie here, and then swim back.

R.M. listened absentmindedly. She was startled when I went on, “You probably know that I am a very good swimmer? It would be no problem for me to swim 5 km, and probably even 10 km. Perhaps we should risk it?”

I smiled as I said this. But she became alert. She looked directly at me for a long time, seriously thinking that such an “option” was possible. Before this, she was rapidly whispering to me about how at 3 a.m. they hid in an internal room in the house and took pictures of M.S.’ statement with Tolya’s camera. “We’ll cut it from the film,” she said (but she concealed the fact

²⁴ In the Russian, the suit of hearts is called “chervi,” which is literally translated as “worms.” The granddaughter calls the suit “chervivaya”--wormy. [Translator’s note]

that they made two copies, plus also took pictures of the doctor Igor Anatol'ievich's statement). "So, I will package the film into a small bundle and will give it to you in the evening. But, for God's sake, please do not keep it on you. You could be searched. And don't hide it in your office." M.S. interjected here and suggested to hide it in my swimming trunks. I dry them on the balcony near Olya and Toma's room, where their typewriters and other office supplies are kept.

M.S. was skeptical of the idea that I should swim to Tesseli, Foros, or even "Yuzhnyi": "Even if they don't fish you out of the water, when you come out you'll be practically naked. And then what? They will send you to the nearest police station, and the film will be lost." But they discussed it in earnest, though the idea was clearly absurd. And I suggested it as a joke, to somehow relieve their nervous tension.

R.M. gave me the film later. In the meantime, M.S. asked her to look after the children. We went to a different balcony, stood by the railing and immediately saw how the telescopes from watchtowers turned toward us, and the border patrol on the nearest cliff caught us in his binoculars. At the same time, we heard from the booth below the house: "The object under observation is out on the balcony, second from the left." M.S. and I looked at each other, I laughed and cursed at them... He gave me a look: I had not allowed myself to curse in front of him before. (I regretted it, afraid that he would think that now I can allow myself to do this!)

We sat at a table; he put a notebook in front on him. He offered me to sit across from him, with my back to the sun and in the sun. I said, "Would it be alright if I sat next to you? I don't like the sun, unlike you and Bush... Remember how in Novo-Ogarevo he changed seats to where I had been sitting, when the sun came from around the wall and I moved to sit near you in the shade?"

M.S. smiled, probably remembering the meeting with Bush as an episode of ancient history, though it took place only three weeks ago.

He began to dictate a statement—an address to the nation and the international community. We talked. Discussed and formulated every point. I went back to my office, where Olya typed it on the special thick stationery intended for presidential notes. In the evening I asked him to sign it and add the date and place. At the top he added a note, requesting anyone who finds this statement to make it public through any means possible. When I was leaving, R.M. again gave me strict instructions to hide it well and manage to hold on to it if I am searched on the way. I think these fears are the fruit of nervous strain. Ever since the war, my sense of physical danger has atrophied somewhat.

The day before she gave me her book, "Ya nadeus'" [I hope], it was an advance copy that she got on the 17th. She asked me to read it overnight... I did, and praised it highly. Mikhail Sergeevich was very happy about this, his eyes even watered. I assured them that the book will be in demand all over the world... and at home, as well. "They will not be able to keep it quiet, no matter what happens," I said confidently. In general, with my entire appearance and behavior I tried to convey to them that things will be alright.

He met me with some kind of heightened hope that I might bring some good news. They asked me what I heard on “Mayak” (I caught a signal through some antediluvian radio we found in Olga and Tamara’s room), what I think about what I heard, and in general what are my thoughts on what will happen tomorrow, the day after, or in a week. In a manner that is usual for me, I answered cheerfully and confidently. The entire time, R.M. was extremely tense; she did not smile even once. Her daughter Ira, on the other hand, was full of determination, fearless, sharp... and ruthless in her words and “epithets” about “what was done to them.” We exchanged words on “abstract” literary themes... which would seem out of place. And her husband Tolya—a surgeon in city hospital No.1—is also smart, confident, a real man, a support.

In any case, I did not bring them any news. All our discussions centered on the consequences of the arrival of Boldin & Co. We discussed the possible reactions of the world community. We guessed what Kohl might be thinking, or Bush. Gorbachev believed unequivocally that there would be no support for the junta. All the credits would be withdrawn in a moment. And our banks would immediately go bankrupt. Without these credits, which were given practically under the security of his name, our light industry would be emaciated. Everything will come to a halt. He called the conspirators mouse brained, because they could not calculate basic things.

We discussed the republics’ possible reactions. Gorbachev believed that the coup members’ actions would lead to a rapid disintegration of the Union. Because the republics could take the following position: you, Russians, are fighting in Moscow, while our business is on the side. We will separate and do our own thing. This is what happened, actually. Some even wanted to support the junta, but only in order to leave Moscow to deal with its own problems.

The Gorbachevs’ mood changed depending on the news from the radio. For example, when some guys from the personal security unit turned on the TV with the help of some wires, we saw Yanaev & Co.’s press conference and heard them say that Gorbachev is gravely ill. This made a terrible impression. Everybody became guarded. The common opinion was that if “those people” allow themselves to utter such wild lies for all the world to hear, that means they’ve closed off any way back and will go through to the end; they burned all bridges. I told M.S. that Yanaev is looking for an alibi in case “something” happens to Gorbachev. He added: “Now they will make reality fit the lie they told publicly.”

But when the BBC reported on the events around the White House, the Russian parliament, that the people are protesting in defense of Gorbachev, and that Yeltsin took the lead in organizing the resistance, naturally the mood sharply improved. Actually, even on the 19th, before we knew any of this, M.S. told me that Yeltsin will not give in and nothing will break him down. Russia and Moscow will not allow the coup members to emerge victorious. I remembered his words, “I am certain that Boris Nikolayevich will show his character to the full extent.”

Below, I include excerpts from my interview to Sasha Bezymenskaya on Gorbachev’s moods and assumptions from those days. This was the first interview after I got back to Moscow, while the memory was fresh. The interview also reflects my own naiveté about what would happen with Gorbachev, and with all of us.

Sasha asked me: How did Gorbachev feel about Yeltsin coming to his defense?

“That is simply not how the question stood,” I responded. “We were talking about the fate of the State, the fate of the country. There could be no personal accounts here. If a person is ready to do whatever it takes to fight for democracy, for the rule of law, and to save everything that Gorbachev did over the course of six years, then “extraneous” motives do not mean anything. I think you are asking a question that could not have arisen in Gorbachev’s mind.”

“Gorbachev was sure that Yeltsin...” the journalist insisted.

“He was absolutely sure that Yeltsin would not back down.”

“Did he really feel from the very beginning that in these five years people have changed, and that they would not swallow or accept the junta? Was there confidence about this?”

“I spoke with him for the first time when Boldin & Co. had just left. Both then and in the morning, Gorbachev reasoned completely calmly. He said that the worst thing that could happen is if the coup d’état would gain momentum and receive support from some people. Then there would be a civil war with major losses—the thing that Gorbachev has been trying to avoid all these years. When the conspirators abolished glasnost, when they silenced the newspapers, he understood that on the international arena, the junta would lose. By the way, he never doubted the position of the world community. That was clear from the very beginning.

We got our bits of information from the small Sony radio transistor²⁵ that Tolya had on him. We sat in a circle: M.S. and I on the couch, Tolya squatting, Ira sitting right on the floor, and Raisa Maksimovna across from us on a chair. With our heads close together, we tried to make out the voices. The transistor was very bad and the batteries nearly dead. Tolya moved it around to try to catch a signal. This is where I heard the BBC. It is also where I found out that Tamara Alekseyevna was taken away, but it was not clear where.

R.M. carried a small silk purse on her the entire time. It must have contained the most private things that would be confiscated after all the others. She was very afraid of a humiliating search. She was afraid for M.S., who would be shaken to the core by this. The entire time, R.M. was in a state of nervous tension. In this condition, she gave me the bundle with film, wrapped in paper and taped with scotch tape.

“We’ve given similar [bundles] to others. I better not tell you whom, though. This one is for you. Well, no, not for you...”

“Why not me? I keep pushing for my rights as a people’s deputy, that I want to be present at the Supreme Soviet session on the 26th, that Lukyanov announced.”

²⁵ Afterwards, in Moscow, I was asked more than once how it happened that at this entire magnificent presidential dacha, there was nothing better than this “matchbox”?! That’s just it—there was nothing else! Because all the electronic equipment installed in the rooms was turned off the moment the “gang of four” arrived. The same went for the TV antenna, which serviced the entire “prison camp.” [Author’s note]

M.S.: “Is that so?!”

I: “Of course. But even these cretins will know that I, as a witness of your terminal illness and incapacity, cannot be allowed to take the podium...”

R.M.: “Anatoly Sergeyeovich! This should be delivered through Olya. She has a child, her parents are sick, you said... Would she agree? This is very dangerous...”

I: “She will agree. She is a desperate woman and hates these people, all the more so because they separated her from her beloved Vasya...”

R.M.: “But you should warn her very thoroughly. Let her hide it... in some intimate spot—maybe her bra or panties. And right now, when you go to your lodgings, where are you going to keep the film? Don’t put it in your pocket, carry it in your hand and hide it. But not in the safe. Somewhere in the hallway, under the rug.”

I put it in my pocket, and only told Olga about it in the evening. She was sitting in an armchair, subdued. “Mayak” was playing classical music, enough to drive you mad! But silence was even worse. I turned it on only to hear the news, though often the news was about sports or cultural events. Yesterday, there was one piece about the Bolivian President’s wife’s visit to Peru, where she did either charity work, or attended a festival... The pinnacle of idiocy! At the moment I thought, or rather keenly felt, that the gang is returning us to an information environment of the worst stagnation years.

Four thirty p.m. Again breaking news. The “Mayak” broadcast started with the announcer’s anxious voice: “We, the employees of TV and Radio, refuse to carry out orders and submit to the so-called Committee on the State of Emergency. We have been deprived of the opportunity to report objective and complete information, and we demand that the totally discredited leadership of TV and Radio be removed from their posts. If we manage to go on air again, we will honestly fulfill our professional duties.”

Bakatin and Primakov (good job Zhenya, he made it to Moscow!) as members of the Security Council, declared that the State Emergency Committee is illegal and unconstitutional. And all its decrees are as well. Gorbachev is healthy and being held against his will. It is necessary to immediately ensure his return to Moscow or give him an opportunity to meet with the press.

Nishanov and Laptev—chairmen of Supreme Soviet Chambers—held an emergency meeting of the Committees. Lukyanov flew to the Crimea to meet with Gorbachev. And the best thing: the Ministry of Defense, upon analyzing the situation resulting from the introduction of the state of emergency in some areas, decided to immediately withdraw troops from those areas (i.e. not just the armored vehicles, but troops as a whole, meaning the paratroopers and all the others).

Who is left with Yanaev, Pugo and their General Kalinin, the commander of Moscow, to face the people?!

At 6 p.m., the “Orbita” channel announced that it will broadcast the full session of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet!

It was around 11 p.m. on August 20th when I turned on the TV at full volume and took a seat near Olga... by her knees.

“Olya! A serious matter has come up. Are you ready to hear me out? But it is very serious. You can say no right now, before I say anything.”

“What are you talking about, Anatoly Sergeevich! As if you don’t know me. Please speak.”

I told her about the film and Gorbachev’s statement, which she herself typed up, and about the plan to get them “to freedom.”

“Alright,” she said, “let’s suppose I get to Moscow. What’s the next step? I will probably be followed.”

“Yes, of course. We discussed this with M.S and R.M. We decided that it would be quite natural if you visit my wife. I will write her a letter... the kind people probably write from prison: everything is alright, don’t worry, I’ll be back soon, the circumstances... etc. Just in case they search you on the plane, or at the airport. You will have to hide the bundle with the film in some truly “private” place. The next step, if you manage to get it to Moscow, is to go to Vesnina Street to my apartment. Give my wife the letter and the bundle. Tell her to call Lena—Bovin’s wife. They know each other. She will come. Just her, not Bovin, he is too notable of a figure, plus he is under suspicion after the question he asked at Yanaev & Co.’s press-conference. My wife will give this thing to Lena, who will give it to Sasha [Bovin]. And he will immediately know what to do with it.”

Olga put the bundle in her jeans after all. There, the bundle constantly protruded. I chuckled at it sometimes, pointing my finger at the place...²⁶

Now it was my job to get Generalov to let her go to Moscow. I started pressuring him beforehand, on the 19th: is he not ashamed of himself, he—an officer—allowing such mockery of a young mother. She has a sick little son. Her parents don’t know what happened to her. We will not be sitting here forever, I tried to scare him. He will have to answer for such behavior towards a woman, who is worried sick because she cannot find out about her son. And more of the same.

But he kept repeating: he only has one-way communication with Moscow, they can call him, and his superiors have called. But he cannot call Moscow. He lied, of course.

After discussing the “plan” with Olga, I decided to pressure him once again. By the way, my earlier attempts to push for my rights by pointing out that I’m a USSR People’s Deputy and he, Generalov, is breaking the Constitution and violating my parliamentary immunity by holding

²⁶ She ended up bringing the bundle to Moscow in this manner, when we all “escaped” together. She gave it back to me, and I to Gorbachev, who demonstrated it at the press-conference. [Author’s note]

me de facto under house arrest, were futile. I invited him again. And again he dared to come. I began to shame him about Olga. But he... outwitted me. He offered to take her to Mukhalatka, which is a government communications point about 20 kilometers from "Zarya" in the direction of Yalta, so she could call home to Moscow.

The following thing happened. A little while after Generalov offered this "option," which undermined all our plans to transfer information about Gorbachev, the driver "Volodya" came to my office. I put his name in quotation marks because it is difficult to say what his name really is, he is from the KGB. But it's the same guy who drove Olga, Tamara and me between "Zarya" and "Yuzhnyi" two-three times a day until August 18th.

He did not say hello. "Where is Lanina? I was told to drive her to the telephone." I got up, offered my hand to him... He hesitated and listlessly shook my hand. I noticed a change in him even when he was sent for my suitcase. For him, I was already a criminal, a prisoner. When Olga got back she had the same impression. She said that in the car, he moved away from her as if she was a leper. Another KGB agent accompanied her—a communications guy. He sat opposite from her when she was on the phone with Moscow, ready to disconnect her any second if she said too much. "I started crying," she said, "my brother was yelling into the phone—are you alright? And I was crying, choking on my tears. Overall it was just distressing. They did not let me call your wife." (I had asked her to call).

In general, they let us know once again who we were to them.

It is worthwhile to note that the State Emergency Committee member Lukyanov, when he emerged from the "Matrosskaya Tishina" detention facility, said in one of his numerous television interviews that "it was all Gorbachev's lies that they were isolated and had no communication lines. Two feet away from Chernyaev's office, in the next room there was a telephone from which he could have called anywhere he wanted." If this was the case, then why did they have to drive Olga over 20 kilometers to make a call, with security, and forbid her even from saying two words to my wife?!

By the way, about our isolation. When Olga returned, I asked her about what she saw on the way. "The road is blocked off to all traffic," she replied. "There are no cars except military vehicles. Border patrols are at every step. From above (the road is about 20-25 meters above the "Zarya" territory) you can see better that there are not two frigates in the harbor as there were before the 18th, I counted at least 16 various ships. In the haze it was hard to tell, maybe there were more."

This is how our imprisonment ended.

Around 5 p.m. on the 21st, all three women burst into my office: Olga, Larisa and Tatyana, extremely excited. "Anatoly Sergeyevich, look, look what's happening!" We rushed out on the balcony... Several cars were coming from the ramps at the entrance of the dacha's territory. Two boys from security came out to meet them, with Kalashnikovs at the ready. "Stop!" they called out. The cars stopped. "Stop!" more security guys came out from the bushes. A driver and somebody else came out from the first car... They said something. The security's

response was “Don’t move!” and one of the guys ran toward Gorbachev’s dacha. Soon he returned, and the cars moved to the left, behind the service building where my office is located.

I stepped out from my office, which is on the second floor. There is a stairway that goes directly from my door to the main entrance to the house. I was standing there in a rumpled undershirt and worn-out sports pants. A thought flashed through my mind—I look like an inmate in a prison camp!

Lukyanov, Ivashko, Baklanov, Yazov, Kryuchkov filed into the door downstairs. They looked beaten, their faces gloomy. Each one bowed to me!! I understood what was going on—they came to plead guilty. I stood there, stony faced, boiling over with anger. Even before they disappeared in the room on the left, I turned around and showed my back to them. Olga was standing next to me, all red, devilish triumph playing in her eyes.

Larisa and big Tatyana ran into the office. Tatyana is usually so dignified, strong and calm—suddenly she wrapped her arms around me and started sobbing. Then there was nervous laughter, various unmemorable exclamations... In a word, it was a feeling that our imprisonment was over. The scam failed with their schemes.

I got dressed and ran over to M.S. I have to admit, I was afraid that he would receive them... Which must not be done, because we saw on TV that a delegation from the Russian parliament was on their way here. Gorbachev was sitting in his office and giving orders over the phone. He paused for a second to tell me: “I gave them an ultimatum: if they don’t connect the phone lines, I will not speak with them. And now I won’t speak with them anyway.”

While I was present he ordered the commandant of the Kremlin to take the entire Kremlin under his protection and not to allow any of the coup-members in under any circumstances. He got the commander of the Kremlin regiment on the phone, and ordered him to follow orders only from the commandant of the Kremlin. Then he summoned the chief of government communications and the Minister of Communications to the phone, and ordered them to turn off all the coup-members’ communications. Judging by their reaction, they were standing at attention on the other end of the line. I pointed out that the cars that brought the State Emergency Committee members had autonomous communications... He summoned Boris (one of the bodyguards) and ordered him to “disconnect the passengers” from the cars.

Then he spoke with George Bush. It was a joyful conversation. M.S. thanked him for his support and solidarity. Bush welcomed Gorbachev’s release and return to work...

M.S. also had a conversation with V.I. Shcherbakov (First Deputy Premier) and somebody else... I didn’t understand who. The gist of the conversation was—I’ll come and we’ll figure it out. Before I came in he spoke with Yeltsin, Nazarbayev, and Kravchuk. He told me about this.

He dispelled my fears immediately: “What are you talking about! How could you think something like that. I had no intention of receiving them. I might only speak with Lukyanov and Ivashko.”

Boris reported that the Russian delegation entered the territory of the dacha.

“Invite them in,” M.S. said, “let them go to the cafeteria.” A couple minutes later we joined them there. The scene that followed I will remember for the rest of my life. Silaev and Rutskoi rushed to embrace Gorbachev. There were exclamations and some big words. They interrupted each other in a rush. Bakatin and Primakov, the deputies, were there as well. I looked at them. Some of them had railed against Gorbachev in the parliament and in the press more than once; they had argued with him, and indignantly protested against him. But now, the misfortune instantly brought to light that they are a part of a whole, and that the country needs exactly this whole. I even said, while watching this collective joy and embraces, “Thus finally the Center and Russia have united, without any Union Treaty...” [Here and below I reproduce my diary entries made immediately after arriving in Moscow].

We sat down at a table. We vied with each other in telling what’s been happening in Moscow and here. It turned out—for some reason I was surprised by this—that they did not even know who came to the President with an ultimatum, or what kind of an ultimatum it was.

Silaev and Rutskoi were against Gorbachev receiving Kryuchkov & Co., who were in essence sitting under guard in the service house below my office. M.S. replied that he will most likely receive only Lukyanov and Ivashko, who seem to have come separately.

It was a long conversation. It was already nearing 10 p.m. when Rutskoi took initiative. He is a strong and handsome man; it’s a pleasure to observe him. “Mikhail Sergeevich,” he said, “it is time to discuss what the next step will be. We will not let you go on the (presidential) airplane on which those types (!) got here. We shall take my airplane. It is at the same airport, but far from yours. It is securely guarded. I brought 40 lieutenant-colonels with me, they are all armed. We’ll make it.

I should say a word about these lieutenant-colonels. According to Rutskoi’s plan, M.S. was supposed to make a false exit from his car near the presidential plane. He did this, and then quickly got back in the car, which rushed toward Rutskoi’s plane, standing 3-5 km away. When M.S., in his wool sweater that people saw on TV when he appeared at Vnukovo, came toward Rutskoi’s plane, these officers stood with guns in the open until he was inside the plane. Looking at this scene, I thought: there is still genuine officer’s honor in our army. There is a high intelligence in the army, too. One only has to talk to someone like Colonel N.S. Stolyarov, who came with the group of deputies to rescue his President. We drove to the airport in one car.

Then there was the flight. Rutskoi was in charge of the flight, he kept summoning the pilots [to discuss the details]. M.S. and his family settled in a small bay of the plane, and called me over. There was so little space that the little granddaughters lay down on the floor and quickly fell asleep.

When I came in, he cheerfully asked me, “So, who are you now?” I replied, “I am a simple Soviet prisoner, but an ex-prisoner.” Everybody laughed excitedly. Silaev, Rutskoi, Primakov and Bakatin came over, the doctor Igor’ Anatol’evich Borisov was also there. R.M. was telling us what happened to her when they heard that the coup-members are coming over to

ascertain the condition of Mikhail Sergeevich's health... now she was feeling better, but still had poor command of her arm. There was an animated conversation about people, and how they are tested in such circumstances, about immorality, which is the source of all crimes and misfortunes. There were toasts to continuing life... For the first time then, M.S. said the words: "We are flying to a new country."

Many magazines printed the photograph of Ira coming down the ladder from the airplane (in Vnukovo airport), carrying her daughter wrapped in a blanket. She walked past the crowd surrounding the President. I noticed there were people who were sincerely happy to see him, as well as those for whom it would have been better if things worked out "otherwise." So, Ira took her daughter to the car, near which I was standing, away from the people crowding around M.S. She lunged for the car seat and started shaking with sobs. I leaned over and tried to say something. Her husband was near her, hugging her and stroking her hair, trying to calm her, but it was no use. This final episode at the airport came to symbolize for me the tragedy that happened not only at the dacha in the Crimea, but with the whole country. Irina, a young Russian woman, who was totally energetic, composed, and ready for anything in the face of danger, broke down in tears of joy and despair when "it" was over. It was a release. But then... everyday life resumes and you have to do your job. Alas! Things did not go as we had hoped at the time.

September 14, 1991, Saturday

It's time to resume my diary. After the 3-day confinement in "Zarya," after the coup, after the Soviet Union ceased to exist and the CPSU was liquidated, after the monstrous, all-encompassing and yet not unexpected betrayal... and after Gorbachev finally became what he should have become two years ago, and what he wanted to be for a long time, for 3-4 years, but did not dare... And now he "became" this, but he lost his power and authority.

I should have kept a daily journal after getting back from the Crimea. This is truly history in the making. But the workload was unbelievable.

Now it is too late... I will note down some things as we go along... In the meantime, I will describe today's events.

There was a meeting with Revenko on re-organizing the presidential apparatus. We fantasized... while it would be better to be more modest but actually to help Gorbachev to make it somehow, since he is so set... since he wants this "at any cost."

[After a while] only the three of us remained—Revenko, Shakhnazarov, and I. Revenko told us some things, for example that Kryuchkov and Boldin listened in on all of us, including the President. Right now Russian investigators are deciphering the tapes and looking through the transcribed materials. Well, I am even pleased: at least they will see how I was at odds with the generals, how I argued with M.S., and how Shevardnadze sometimes looked less than progressive with me, etc.

Revenko said that the entire Kremlin is bugged, and that it would take a month to extract all of them! The same deal as with the American Embassy in Moscow. The U.S. Congress is

right when they say that it is impossible to neutralize this, the whole building has to be destroyed. We underestimated our scientific-technological capabilities in this regard.

I will describe at some later point my epic expulsion from the CC building on August 27th. Only three days ago was Tamara able to transfer to [my new office in] the Kremlin my papers from the old office, including the entire “New Thinking” as recorded in M.S.’ conversations with foreign statesmen. I am planning to write a history based on these records of the year between September 1990-September 1991—through M.S.’ thoughts and assessments. About how the coup became possible... (Only now I am getting around to this).

Also, I am planning to put together a book about the two weeks from August 23-September 12, with M.S.’ “own” analysis of the events. Again, it would be based on records of dozens of M.S.’ meetings with foreign statesmen over these weeks.

Yesterday I received the Spanish Ambassador. He reported that Gonzalez wants to come to Moscow as a friendly gesture. M.S. agreed for October 1st.

The Cuban Ambassador in connection with M.S.’ statement in a talk with Baker about our decision to withdraw our [brigade] from Cuba... (he got confused and said 11,000 people, while there are only 3,000). The Cubans are protesting pitifully. Yet another symbol of the collapse of an era.

M.S. took pity on Dubinin (our ambassador in France, who behaved disgracefully during the emergency situation and confused Mitterrand). He did not remove him. I “stood up” for him; but privately, I gave him a piece of my mind. I told him his excuses were at the level of a petty official while he is a political figure representing the State and the President (not the government), even though our ambassadors do not swear an oath. Moreover, he knows about M.S.’ personal relations with Mitterrand and Dumas! Why couldn’t he come to them and “consult” on what to do, saying that a message from the junta came in, but he did not believe it. But, instead of helping Mitterrand to figure out what’s going on, he practically pushed him to take an anti-Gorbachev position at first. And more of the same. It is pathetic... and theoretically, these are the “new thinking” diplomats... But their selfishness and the habit of a comfortable life, as well as the fear of losing it—these traits played a cruel joke with these elite characters. They include Zamyatin, Loginov, Slyusar (Greece), and Uspensky (Norway), toward whom M.S. showed particular care. However, the behavior of each one of the people named above, as well as many others, does not surprise me. Perhaps with the exception of Bessmertnykh. He really found himself in a difficult situation.

Two days ago I had a bad cardiogram. But I feel nothing.

I’ve gotten more worn out in these post-coup days than during the actual coup. At the time, my special trait, which I got to know so well in myself during the war, kicked in: during moments of real danger I am extremely calm and composed, and there is not a shadow of fear—whatever will be, will be. So, in front of M.S. and R.M., I did a good job playing a cheerful fellow who has a gut feeling that everything will turn out alright, thereby encouraging the presence of mind in others.

I wrote a beautiful speech for Gorbachev for the CSCE international conference on the humanitarian dimension (September 9-11, in the Hall of Columns). This was probably his first public speech not only “without,” but even in contrast to the “socialist choice” that hindered him so much in the last two years.

September 15, 1991

I exhausted myself repairing the commode. Read a bunch of newspapers. There will be no Union. I think the Supreme Soviet will not meet either, the republics don't need it. Gavrila Popov is right (his article “Doubts” was in the newspaper today): not everyone should sit at the round table of the State Council, but only the people who accept the minimum of democratic rules.

I went to the Crimean embankment. Thousands of people stood in line to see Roman Afonin's porno-exhibition. I decided not to. Nearby, under the open sky, the “sculptures of a totalitarian era”—the toppled statues of Dzerzhinsky, Sverdlov, Kalinin, Stalin... People are climbing on them, taking pictures, sitting on Dzerzhinsky's face, giggling, yelling at pedestrians who interrupt the picture-taking... It is disgusting, this necrophilia. “The people” are monstrously dark and immoral, and the worst part is that they do not realize this, unlike the people of 1917, who realized it and “knew their place.” It is terrible!

September 19, 1991

Yesterday was a month since the day we got imprisoned in “Zarya.” By the way, on the 16th there was a vile TV program, set against a background of a dummy of Nixon at the time of his impeachment, that went on for 1.5 hours. Ol'shansky, Bukovsky, and Ryzhkov + two more milksop bastards were arguing that M.S. was the head of the coup. And in the morning there was an article by Obcharenko in *Pravda*, about the same thing.

In general, a week ago there arose a new wave of Gorbachev-trampling... But Ignatenko organized a “round table,” where they tried to restore his image by being overly familiar with him... It is pretty unpleasant to watch how Yegor Yakovlev, Len Karpinsky, Potapov (editor of *Trud*) and others, whom in the early stages of *perestroika* M.S. rescued and promoted, now easily bring him down to the level of an “ordinary citizen.”

However, Ignatenko told me that afterwards, behind the scenes (i.e. without TV), they had a 1.5 hour-long close get-together, which left M.S. “inspired.”

Today he received Brady (U.S. Secretary of the Treasury). Brady rather arrogantly stated the conditions for their assistance. M.S. kept speaking abstractly that it is the “historical task to help a great country, this will change the whole world,” etc.

In the evening he received an envoy from King Fahd of Saudi Arabia... He brought 1.5 billion... without any of the American-West European antics and concealed humiliation of the receiving party.

Today I finished “The August Coup” book (cause and effect), which is compiled from M.S.’ conversations. He is hesitant about it... It seems that he does not want to release it. But it should be released, to state his position and to safeguard him against a new wave of trampling, politically intended to remove the symbol of the Union (the President)—the last, weak symbol, but there is no other left...

Or maybe they just want to kick him while he’s down... This is our new, *perestroika*-era intelligentsia.

September 20, 1991, Friday

I gave M.S. the 80-page “August Coup” book. In the West, it would sell like hotcakes.

I recommended that he give it to the newspaper in installments, and publish it as a book at the same time. Plus, he should include the August essay, which was already called on TV “the instruction manual for the State of Emergency”... Why, then, is he hiding it, they ask.

I talked with him on the phone three times today; he did not say a word about the book. As if he did not receive it, even though I know that it was placed on his desk on top of the other papers. But such is his manner.

The U.S. charge d’affaires Collins visited. He brought a memorandum about creating a joint working group to explore the issues of qualitatively new Soviet-American relations. I gave it to M.S. and urged him not to put it off.

I offered him to go to Kiev for the 50th anniversary of Babi Yar... I told him about it back in “Zarya,” before the coup... No word from him.

A week ago, the Korean Ambassador in the name of Roh Tae-Woo asked M.S. not to receive the leader of the opposition. The entire Moscow Korean lobby has been pressuring me for days, insisting that he should receive him. But I did not even report this to Gorbachev. Roh Tae-Woo is more important to us right now than this “Jung,” though he may become president next year.

Dzasokhov has been pestering me. It turns out that he is still acting as chairman of the International Committee of the Supreme Soviet, as if nothing has happened. He is preparing the ratification of agreements on conventional weapons and START!!! So much for a recent secretary of the CC CPSU, an editor of CC letters to the provinces, demanding that they support the State Emergency Committee!

Today, investigators brought me a record of my testimony and the transcript. For two hours I watched and listened to myself, checking it against the text. I “liked” myself better than in the TV show with Olga and Tamara. In general, I appear to be detached and somehow stronger and more confident than I feel in real life.

On the way home in the metro I read in *Izvestia* a conversation with M.S. over a cup of tea. This is after the “round table” organized by Ignatenko. In his humanness, M.S. is returning

to what he was like at the beginning of *perestroika*, casting off his self-confidence, which arose from international fame and the corrupting nature of power.

I want to get out of the city. Tamara is inviting me to go to Snegiri, where Dunaev is trading dachas with her... But I want to go with Lyuda, or at least with Irochka, or N.N.? No, I am not confused. It's just that my body wants to live to the fullest before giving out... I guess it will become old soon. Vera Valer'evna (my doctor) explained to me that something in my heart has been irreversibly damaged, since the professor started talking about surgery...

Ozherel'ev came to visit. He is pitiful; he found himself on the sidelines. He says that Medvedev is in a similar position, they are not needed. I "advised" him (as his senior!) not to fuss... saying that we exaggerate the place we occupy in the "life and work" of the President: he remembers about us only when he needs us. I did not say it, but I thought to myself—he does not even remember that I was with him during the three days in Foros... though back then he sought my support and relied on my "certainty"... He willingly talks about what happened there, but he speaks with emotion only about his family...

Yes... also at the "round table" in *Izvestia* two days ago, and even over a cup of tea later in the close circle, not for the TV cameras, the conversation touched upon the "closest circle" more than once. But nobody remembered about me—neither he nor anyone in the company! But if someone other than I had been in this position, the "new thinking" and Gorbachev himself, its initiator, would not have the image he attained in the eyes of the world. For here, more than anywhere else, form is meaningful. Plus the supporting ideas to the major ones, which were, of course, his own.

September 21, 1991, Saturday

This really turned out to be a "day of rest" from the everyday, the burdensome, the nerve-racking, the uncertain, the tiresome—from politics and service.

I stopped by work... there were cables. M.S.'s responses to my notes: he agreed to go to the 50th anniversary of Babi Yar, asked me to prepare a speech (without publicity). He agreed to have Yakovlev patronize our part of the joint group with U.S. on strategic thinking—on how to build a new world order... Today Yakovlev stopped by [to say] he does not want Martynov or Kokoshin, whom I suggested for the group as a "working" manager... The Americans are assigning Ross, Baker's adviser.

Yakovlev asked me: "Do you find Arbatov completely unacceptable?" "Yes... ever since he started to look for a new boss to stay afloat. From Gorbachev to Yeltsin, the turncoat. He's got a good nose."

"I will think about this," Yakovlev said.

"Do that."

M.S. agreed to a treaty with Czechoslovakia without Kvitsinsky's demand "not to enter into hostile alliances."

Nezavisimaya [*Independent* newspaper] is quite in a rage today. Tretyakov himself is railing against the nomenclature of the “fourth power” (the press) at M.S.’ “round table” meetings.

And I am sorry to say that I thought about yesterday’s *Izvestiya* publication of the close-circle conversation over a cup of tea: “we are all friends,” he complains to them. He looks like a poor guy: I lost everything, so to say, but I am still a good person, feel sorry for me.

Then N.N. and I strolled on the Crimean embankment. They are flaunting Afonin, the German Shermush, his women... There are plenty of sculptures... In general we have a great deal of various kinds of art. This is not normal, if one compares it with simple work that provides people a normal life. We went on our way: N.N. to the 42nd²⁷, and I to the Kremlin.

September 24, 1991, Tuesday

Today M.S. told me that it was discovered that his “secret” conversation in Novo-Ogarevo with Yeltsin and Nazarbayev, their work on “it” before 9+1 until 2 a.m., was “recorded” by Plekhanov... [During this conversation], they had assigned all the positions, and the Kryuchkovs, Baklanovs, and Boldins were not allocated a spot. This was the last straw... Apparently, it was then that they made up their minds.

I prepared an agreement to publish M.S.’ book on the August coup, in English and in German, with Murdoch (his representative Bell will come) and Bertelsmann (Teltschik). The Novosti publishing house (with Pushkov) will publish it here. M.S. again corrected the draft...

I decided to publish my “diary” of the three days in Foros. I made an agreement with Golembiovsky (*Izvestia*). I also want to offer it to *Stern* or *Time*.

At midnight, a courier brought from M.S. the “August Coup” book with final corrections (?). He kept that article in. It means things are moving along! It is too bad he removed some of the juiciest parts.

Today he offered me to become a State Adviser on international and foreign economic issues... In line with Yakovlev and some others. I refused—citing my age and the fact that “in general” I am tired. I’ve built up momentum to keep doing what I’ve been doing. But I cannot take up a job which mainly deals with organizational matters. I won’t manage, it will only discredit the reputation I’ve built up over the years in the role of the foreign policy adviser (I also thought to myself that my ECG is getting worse every day, and the degree of my freedom is decreasing). But in my heart I was hurt. I would be placed alongside people who have served less than I have. And he was happy I refused!

“You know,” he said, “I was thinking along the same lines. This would only be one more burden on your shoulders, and you are so conscientious... It would be best if we stay together, work as we’ve been working this whole time, travel together (is this supposed to be a

²⁷ 42nd km is a stop of the commuter train on the Kazan railroad, where my friends lived at their dachas. [Author’s note]

reward?!)... We're used to it. And there is not a great difference in salary... I will appoint Primakov as the adviser on international and foreign economic issues." I approved the idea, and praised Zhenya [Primakov]. And I thought to myself: "M.S., you are happy that I refused because you are torn—it would seem I should be rewarded somehow, but who is going to do the work that Chernyaev does every day!" So that was decided, and we were both pleased with ourselves...

Today M.S. received Waigel and Koehler (German Minister of Finance and the "sherpa"). Like everybody else, they are repeating the same thing: "With whom should we deal when providing assistance? We were in Ukraine, they clearly want to separate. How are you going to exist?" But M.S. is an optimist. He keeps talking about the effectiveness of new Union bodies. He believes in the economic agreement and even assured them that there will be a Union Treaty!

September 27, 1991, Thursday

Yesterday the BBC filmed me (it turns out Masha Slonim is Litvinov's granddaughter) for a TV series called "The Second Russian Revolution" (they had interviewed me for it before, for the second episode. This is the seventh episode—about the coup and Gorbachev's circle). For two hours they asked broad questions about *perestroika*, about Gorbachev. Some of the questions were about our imprisonment in the Crimea. They are very tactful people... and they really want to know the truth. They are also putting together the materials very well.

In the evening, Braithwaite (the Ambassador) invited us to the magnificent Shekhtel mansion. We watched the sixth episode of the series, which ends with a stopframe from an amateur recording of Gorbachev in "Zarya" on the evening of August 19th. A striking, doomed face!

Yakovlev, Laptev, Shakhnazarov, and various Englishmen were there. It was a wonderful evening, followed by a dinner with fancy silverware... Intelligent company... Everything revolved around the coup. And, it turned out, they found me interesting. The filmmakers were very sorry that they had not reached me sooner, though they tried. Masha called me at 7 a.m. She is a smart, chiseled Jewish woman, though she knows how to work hard and earn an honest living. I was sitting next to her, discussing different topics, showing off like a peacock. But I could feel that in her mind she was only selecting the things that will be useful for her work at the BBC (she has been a British citizen for a long time).

It was a good evening.

Today, I sent Yavlinsky on his way to meet with Major and Kohl. I wrote messages for him (from M.S.) to give to the Prime Minister and the Chancellor, as well as to Bush...

Alongside that, I was editing the material that M.S. assigned the day before yesterday for his meeting with Mubarak.

Alongside that, I was writing M.S.' message for the gathering at Babi Yar, where he after all does not want to go himself, but is sending Yakovlev.

I met with a journalist from *Time*, we discussed the publication of my diary about Foros. I will also give it to *Izvestiya* at the same time. It came out to 23 pages.

I'm jittery and stressed. I stopped by the clinic: my ECG is worse than the time before last, but better than last time. My blood pressure is 110, this never happened before! I'm going to croak...

M.S. and I were sitting in his office. He told me how he and R.M. watched [a theater performance of] "The Ides of March" on their 38th wedding anniversary. He isolated the relevant bits: the murder of a dictator, poetry, etc.

He signed the letters to Major, Kohl, and Bush... and the preface for the "August Coup" book. Tomorrow Bell is coming on behalf of Murdoch Books.

Bovin and I finally made plans to go to a pub together (the one in Maryina Roshcha, on Oktyabr'skaya Street). But I was late (because of M.S.) and he did not wait for me. I did not find him even in that Armenian pub, though theoretically people know him there. He must have gotten offended after he called me and looked for me.

I recommended General Batenin to Gorbachev as an adviser on defense, Petrakov to replace Voronin in the EU, and V.I. Shcherbakov as an adviser on international economic relations. M.S. replied that he will not get approved because he got "smeared" with the State Emergency Committee.

Primakov gladly accepted the position of head of the Soviet "CIA," which is being branched off from Bakatin. A.I. Yakovlev, in the meantime, keeps frequenting the rallies, and does not go a day without giving an interview!! I suspected him to have inordinate vanity, but I thought it would be checked by intelligence. Turns out, vanity is stronger than all his other qualities and trumps everything.

In the morning Collins called me: Bush wants to talk to M.S. But he was assigned to first inform M.S. what the conversation would be about. I called M.S., at 11 a.m. he had a meeting with Mubarak. At 10:30 a.m. he received Collins, who outlined "Bush's initiative" that will be unveiled today: a universal reduction of nuclear weapons, even the Tomahawks, which the U.S. never agreed to before... Advantageous... Well done... Especially since they are ahead of us in conventional weapons.

But this is not the point. M.S. tried to call Marshal Shaposhnikov to assign him to prepare a "position" for the talk with Bush at 4 p.m. But alas! He could not reach him. M.S. went to his meeting with Mubarak, and assigned me to gather the generals + Karpov and tell them to formulate our response.

Lobov + some general + Karpov came over. For an hour and a half they discussed it... From the outset, they started digging: what, why, and how much... like the years of nonsense in Geneva and Vienna: a dead-end, and lucrative for the negotiators.

I told them: do you think that this initiative was made only to “beat” us, to deceive and humiliate us, and to show that we are no longer a superpower? Let’s disarm completely, so to say? There is no beginning of a new U.S. policy here, new relations with us, the outcomes of new thinking—you do not see any of this? How will our President look when the entire world will be astonished by this initiative, but all M.S. will have to say to Bush is that they have more of this, and we still need to discuss that? After Bush straightforwardly says that he will disarm unilaterally, and calls on us to follow his example?

They changed their tune and tried to show that “of course, they understand.” But they are so outdated... Again M.S. found a Chief of General Staff who, with God’s help, is fit to command a division... We do not have politician-generals, like Bush has...

They left. I dictated to Tamara a “cheat-sheet” for talking with Bush: a major initiative, a match for Reykjavik, which you, the Americans, did not accept at the time. Support. Let’s start, and figure out the details as we go along: where we will meet you, where we will work in parallel, and what will be figured out through negotiations.

Though I have to say that by 3 p.m. Shaposhnikov (he is smarter, more modern, and more politically aware than the previous group I met with) brought over a concept of the conversation similar to my own.

They gathered in M.S.’ office... Lobov, who came late, tried to “push” that it is unprofitable to us, that they will deceive us, that he does not see any unilateral action, etc. Despite the fact that M.S. kept pointing at Bush’s text and proving the opposite. He kept the generals in his office when he spoke to Bush on the phone. It was a pretty good move. He said things along the lines of “it is a historic step, I welcome it, in principle we see this positively, we will discuss the rest and agree on how best to do it”...

They also agreed on what M.S.’ public reaction to it would be; he already filmed his TV appearance.

Earlier I mentioned that Gorbachev and R.M. watched Thornton Wilder’s “The Ides of March” in Vakhtangov’s theater. Suddenly, he started telling the generals about his impressions, and analogies!! He took from the shelf a volume of the encyclopedia and started reading about Caesar: a mixture of innocence and a clever play at having confidence in his new generals! Shaposhnikov appreciated the references, but I believe Lobov completely missed it.

In the morning I sent *Izvestiya* my “Diary of the President’s Adviser.” On Monday they will run a page of it. A correspondent of *Time* came over with a photographer, a young woman. She took many pictures of me—against the background of Gorbachev’s portrait, then with Ivan the Terrible in the background, then she made me sit on the windowsill with my notepad (i.e. the

original diary) in my hands... The correspondent noted that Hollywood would pay big bucks to get that notepad...

At 5 p.m. I met with Bell, from Murdoch. We agreed to publish Gorbachev's book ("August Coup") over the course of four weeks: with a \$100,000 advance, and \$500,000 when they publish, the first part of the fee. They are really snatching up this sensation... They will make good money off of it.

I re-wrote the address for Babi Yar... M.S. is not going, after all, but sending Yakovlev. I wrote straightforwardly about anti-Semitism, and about the exodus of talented citizens, and a great people, and the fact that we have to learn lessons from our own anti-Semitism, not just the Nazi version. I am not sure whether Gorbachev will accept all of this. Yakovlev told me: if he takes it out, I will add it from myself.

Today in the TV show "Vzglyad," Yavlinsky revealed that we have 240 tons of gold reserves left. In letters to Major and Kohl, M.S. did not write down the number, he only allowed Yavlinsky to convey it verbally and confidentially. In any case, Kohl will find out the number from our TV show rather than from the President's closed letter. This is how we do things.

But the figure is appalling... We were operating on the brink... It turns out we sold off as much as 400-500 tons per year. The U.S. has 4,200 tons, and we have 240!

September 28, 1991, Saturday

I wrote down the date to start the diary, but got a call from M.S.: "Send a telegram to Yavlinsky to London or Bonn, tell him to be here for the meeting at 10 a.m. on Monday."

He told me that he is editing the "August Coup" book... I said, "How is that possible? The text is already in London, if not America!"

"So what," he responded, "That's how it always works, you edit as you go..."

"Are there a lot of changes?"

"A fair amount. For now..."

I went through the books on my bookshelf. My God! How much I have not read! And how much I did not read at the right time... And I'm talking about me, who actually managed to read some things outside the obligatory minimum for the regular Soviet intellectual... What about others?! The intellectual process was perverted, stifled, until all that was left was a small, barely passable channel... How could one expect culture from society that lost its connection to history for half a century at least?!

October 1, 1991, Tuesday

It has been hot for days.

Yesterday *Izvestiya* published my “essay”—the diary of the assistant to the President during three days in August. Today everyone is talking about it... some people are emphasizing the political significance, some the journalistic “success,” some the literary talent “buried in the ground,” some the human aspect of the blockade... etc.

French and German newspapers and journals asked for permission to reprint.

But M.S. did not like it. He pretended that he did not read it. “I hear you published some diary of yours in *Izvestiya*?!” Andrei Grachev was there, and he started to praise it... but M.S. changed the subject. This means R.M. didn’t like it... It’s true that I am not too “polite” to her in the diary...

On Sunday I went to 42nd... N.N. and I took a short walk to the Ramenskoe railway station. While we were eating, Kira uttered a striking thought: something else might have happened and a coup wouldn’t be necessary. Gorbachev could have had a heart attack and died suddenly, or he could have drowned or choked, etc. Then what? Who would we be left with? Yanaev, Yazov, Kryuchkov and Co. It would have been quite legal, and not immediately with tanks. And then the tanks—legally and lawfully... In reality, what kind of successors did he pick for himself... to continue *perestroika*!

Conversation with M.S. in the presence of Grachev, immediately after he met with Christophersen (EC): whom should he take as the State adviser on international economic issues? Maybe Adamishin? Andrei and I praised Adamishin...

Then I said: “There is Obminsky (Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs). He was just present at the meeting with Christophersen, he is an ace at what he does (i.e. foreign economic affairs).”

M.S.: “But he is only an economist, I need a politician-foreign affairs specialist... Of course, one who knows about economics.”

I: “So take both of them, Adamishin and Obminsky, and I will ‘coordinate’ them...” (I said this as a joke, of course).

M.S.: “No. You and I will keep working as we have been.”

What does this mean? Either he is tired of me, or he wants to change the image of his circle, or he truly only needs me to write his speeches, these kinds of pamphlets, various letters to leaders, greetings, responses, and congratulations.

Most likely it is a mix of the first, second, and third. And a general “disregard for the individual.” You can’t make him respect you until you show him your teeth... Maybe it’s time. The more so because I am suffocating in these texts: materials for talks, notes and responses after the talks, materials for a phone call to Bonn, London, where else... a draft order, drafts for an opinion, and endless greetings and addresses. Only today I had to write something for the first anniversary of German unification and for a telephone conversation with Kohl. And I clean up texts again and again after his edits. My meeting with the new U.S. Ambassador Straus, for

example: I have to write a report on it to Gorbachev, as well as suggestions, including on a joint Soviet-American group on strategic security.

By the way, Collins, who brought “Bush’s initiative” on Friday, had an edema of one lung. He nearly died. But he was saved at Granovsky. Straus said that in America, Collins would not have made it. Bush sent his thanks and asked M.S. to thank the doctors.

In general, the meeting with Straus was nothing special. It looks like he came to make sure that he can work with me. Many people are drawn to me right now, because of the MFA’s dropping prestige. In their eyes, I appear to be much more important than I really am.

For example, Braithwaite wanted to meet again, Bell (from Canada), Nikolaenko (Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, just got back from Cuba). Zemtsov (Israel) and Velikhov got around me and met directly with M.S. They tempted him with practically free billions of credit... Though there are rumors that the money actually comes from the arms trade.

I managed to convince M.S. to meet with the New York Rabbi Scheier and Madame Karden—the chairwoman of the American organization for Soviet Jews. He agreed to meet with them to compensate for not going to Babi Yar.

Yavlinsky stopped by yesterday. He is in despair: the fall of 1990 is repeating... M.S. is again beginning to steer from the course... He said that there won’t be an economic agreement until there is a Union Treaty.

I: “Is he mad? Just in September he told all the foreigners that we will have an economic agreement soon, while the Union Treaty will happen at some point in the future, when it becomes possible. Two days later, at the press-conference following the meeting with Mubarak he said the same thing... And now what? Why?”

Yavlinsky: “I don’t know. It’s as if he made an agreement with Yeltsin. Silaev and Rutskoï were present at their conversation. Rutskoï echoed him, while Silaev was quiet. This would be another failure. I told him that I will leave again if things go this way. I will go to Alma-Ata with to work on a draft agreement with the premiers of the republics. And if he moves away from it... I will leave.”

I: “This would be a failure in the eyes of the West, as well. A failure all around. There won’t be a Union Treaty! Does he not see that ‘Russia’ is provoking him, so everyone will run away and it will be left in ‘splendid isolation,’ and later will dictate its conditions to the others, ‘save’ them while bypassing Gorbachev, who will be completely useless!”

Yavlinsky: “Probably he does not see it. But I will act like a professional and a citizen. I don’t need anything else. If there is no economic agreement, there is no point in dragging my feet... because there will be neither a market economy, nor integration with the West.”

I: “But how do you like M.S.! Does he not understand how symbolic this will be for everyone that he recruited Yavlinsky for the second time, and for the second time turned away from him! Who will he be left with?”

In addition, Yavlinsky told me what he “informed” Major about—namely, that the 240 tons of gold is not the end of the story. (He said he was recorded for “Vesti” before leaving for London, so our people would find out before the foreigners do. According to their customs, if the world finds out about something like this before people at home, the Prime Minister would have to resign the next day).

But the gold, Yavlinsky said, is for the layman. The fact that all our assets are empty—that is truly catastrophic. This means that the Vneshekonombank [Bank for Foreign Economic Affairs] does not have a penny. Ryzhkov and Pavlov have spent everything... We are completely bankrupt. And I told Major about this. Major’s reaction was—if England found out something like this about itself, there would be a revolution the next day!

In the meantime, today at a meeting with Christophersen, M.S. was extremely self-confident (like in that anecdote): “No need to dramatize... If we’re talking about revolution, then it is impossible to have complete order, take us for who we are, so to say. We will pay off the debts. We don’t need handouts and such.” He made an impression on Christophersen, who will go to London with that impression. This is Nozdrevshcina²⁸ already. Or maybe the only thing left to do is hope for the best.

October 2, 1991, Morning, Before Work

I was thinking about the “Assistant’s Diary.” I was a little cunning in some things there, but not so much as to put a fly in the ointment. The *Time* correspondent was right when he said that the notepad, captured on film by the girl accompanying him, could be sold for thousands of dollars.

I tried to reproduce exactly what was written there, exactly how it was written there, with 95 percent accuracy.

October 2, 1991, Evening

Gorbachev met with Shoshanna Karden. She is a rather elderly Americanized Jewish woman; maybe she was even beautiful in her day. She is smart and businesslike, but within the limits of “diplomacy.”

He started by saying that *perestroika* was intended to benefit all people, including the Jews. She tactfully tried the entire time to insist that the Jews are a “special case” after all. During the conversation she asked him directly, why the “Soviet leadership” has not in the process of democratization officially condemned anti-Semitism. He evaded the question (as he has done with others), saying: “I have decisively condemned all versions of chauvinism and nationalism in my official speeches. But to single out anti-Semitism... You know that we have 120 nationalities in the Union. To single out one would mean to give preference. Nationalistic manifestations are not directed just at the Jews.” Nevertheless, Karden smiled and asked

²⁸ A reference to the character Nozdrev from Nikolai Gogol’s *Dead Souls*. Nozdrev symbolizes unruly, violent behavior and impudence. [Translator’s Note]

Gorbachev to find an opportunity and a convenient moment to “once again” publicly condemn anti-Semitism.

M.S. assured her that “the atmosphere has improved greatly in the recent years,” and in general “we don’t have this anymore,” though one cannot deny...

Karden reminded him about the anti-Semitic newspapers that have been appearing, and about the everyday manifestations of anti-Semitism. M.S. responded “with understanding”: our inter-ethnic situation is difficult, but not hopeless. To solve these problems we need further democratization and an elevation of the “cultural identity of the people.”

The American raised the issue of “refuseniks;” there are still a significant number of them left, even though “You, Mr. Gorbachev, have done a great deal to remove the problem of leaving the country.” M.S. said that he is against people leaving, but now it is a matter of voluntary choice. He tied the “refuseniks” to state secrets. Shoshanna made an ironic remark: “maybe if you look at them, it will turn out these aren’t secrets at all? Why do all Western countries have a limit of 5 years on their secrets, and you have 10? Do you have some special secrets from the world community?” M.S. promised to think everything over.

I could see that he was most concerned about how to use the “gratitude of the Jews” that Karden kept bringing up, to encourage the U.S. Jewish community to contribute investments into our economy.

Karden reminded him that the World Jewish Congress and “Jews in general” sharply condemned the State Emergency Committee from the outset. M.S. thanked her and said that the outflow of Jews from the USSR has increased because of the coup.

How would I rate this meeting? M.S. had met with prominent Jewish figures before (Rappaport, Reichman, Israeli ministers) but the subject matter was always “business,” economic ties, although the public did not overlook the fact that he “did not disdain” to meet with them... This time he met with a woman who officially represented a Jewish organization and spoke in the name of all Jews and about the “Jewish question.”

Probably this meeting and Gorbachev’s message for the “memorial prayer” at Babi Yar, can put an end to Soviet state anti-Semitism.²⁹

And still, still I am upset that M.S. did not go to Babi Yar himself, even though the President of Israel invited him to go... thereby hoping to give this action a political tone. Gorbachev did not follow the example of Willy Brandt, who stood on his knees in Warsaw to ask forgiveness of a nation so terribly wronged by his people, despite the fact that he, Brandt, personally had nothing to do with it.

²⁹ This “end” was solidified by Gorbachev’s meeting with the Prime Minister of Israel Yitzhak Shamir in Madrid on October 30th, 1991. It was a truly friendly and sincere meeting, as if both of them (and everyone present) breathed a breath of relief and said to themselves and to each other—finally! We are done with the absurd hostility that Stalin raised to State level and that was continued and expanded during the Brezhnev era. [Author’s note]

October 6, 1991, Sunday

Yesterday M.S. met with Camdessus. They formalized the “USSR’s” entry into the IMF (all the time now in official tests and especially in public addresses I feel like avoiding the name of the country. Damn it! There was probably no other case in history when the state remained, but was stripped of its name. Anyway...) Both Camdessus and M.S. called it a “historic event.” In terms of symbolism, this is probably the case. They exchanged letters, and at their request I “witnessed” that the exchange took place...

Camdessus was very polite, talkative, and uncharacteristically for a businessman—full of enthusiasm and optimism for us. He said that on behalf of the G-7, his people have been studying us and “constantly monitoring the course of events” since last fall, and he is sure that if we “get” (i.e. create with the help of the IMF and the G-7) the technology and incentives, the USSR would become an economic superpower not just someday, but within a few years. I wrote this in the press report of the meeting... but who publishes anymore this “genre” I created?! My reports about M.S.’ meetings do not appear on the TV or in the newspapers.

Prior to this, for two days Weber, Yermovsky and I prepared the text for M.S.’ televised response to Bush’s initiative... Also working on this was the group M.S. created, headed by Silaev (Shaposhnikov, Petrovsky, Ryzhkov, Bakatin, Yakovlev, generals and Karpov from the MFA). Yesterday we put it together: my political text (assessments) and their “counter-offers.” Quite strong. But they decided against liquidating our nuclear bombers—a part of the strategic nuclear arms triad (Shaposhnikov, who is an aviator, objected to it). Though Shaposhnikov + Ryzhkov “informed” us that our TU-160 are flying coffins (like the TB-3 at the beginning of the war! I remember them). If, God willing, they manage to get to the coast of the United States or Canada, it would be only to drop the bombs. Getting back—that’s another question! They constitute only 3 percent of our strategic nuclear forces... but each bomber costs 50 million and carries only 8 missiles, while the American B-2 carries 48 missiles, not to mention the electronics, speed, etc.!

Nevertheless (even though they almost agreed to it), this point was removed. If they had accepted it, it would liquidate one leg of the triad of strategic nuclear weapons.

M.S. talked with Yeltsin, who agreed to the statement in general. M.S. promised to send Obukhov + a general to Yeltsin in Kislovodsk, to “acquaint him with all the details”... But it seems he forgot about this later. He did not find it necessary to inform the other heads of “our” states: “They can go to hell... some presidents they are!”

He spoke with Bush. Pankin gave our response in writing to Bartholomew (U.S. Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs), who arrived in Moscow. That is why we rushed M.S. to appear on TV yesterday, so it does not look like we acted at the Americans’ bidding.

On Thursday we “saw off” Primakov to “our CIA”... The people gathered in his office: Bakatin, Yakovlev, Revenko, and I. M.S. also came by. We had a good deal to drink... Talked about loyalty to each other... shared “information” about the betrayals. Yakovlev was particularly verbose. I looked at him and thought: I, for one, do not like your petty-vain activity

in public. Our offices are close by in the Kremlin, and every day near his office I see crowds of TV crews and journalists... Every day he makes an appearance somewhere, speaking about morality. Whether it be at an opening of a Fund (Krasin and Shakhnazarov created a Fund in the former Lenin School), or at the presentation of his book (yet another collection of the same articles and new interviews).

By the way, last week, in the course of a conversation with Shoshanna Karden (chairwoman of the American Confederation of Soviet Jews) M.S. for the first time made a straightforward statement on the Jewish question. It was sincere and good. I think he must have used the text of the 50th anniversary of Babi Yar address (the ceremony took place yesterday in Kiev), which was supposed to be delivered by Yakovlev, whom M.S. sent there. I don't know how much he changed the text before giving it to Yakovlev. And will it be published? Nowadays nobody publishes the President's speeches, they only comment on them...

On Friday, October 3rd, Horst Teltschik visited (he is Kohl's former adviser and my friend). He is now in the leadership of the global publishing house Bertelsmann. He is undertaking to publish M.S.' book in German-speaking countries.

Evening. R.M. called me. "Did you read *Pravda* from yesterday?" "No," I replied. "Read it, it talks about the diary you published." And off she went: "How could you have said such things about me! As though I called Boldin 'family' [*rodnoi*] and shared intimate family secrets with him. I have never called anyone 'family' besides M.S., my daughters and granddaughters. How could you deliver such a blow to me, and to Mikhail Sergeevich? I knew that your diary would be used to harm us. You didn't risk anything (?!), for you it is an event, but for my husband, children, and grandchildren it was a question of life and death. You should have thought before writing something like this... I did not say these things, and Ira and Tolya (son in law) are my witnesses. M.S. also confirms this," etc. And, in her usual didactic manner, she repeated it several times. This lasted for about half an hour. And M.S. was present [on the other end of the line]. It became completely obvious when she lost steam and asked, "Do you have any questions for Mikhail Sergeevich?" I did not.

I thought to myself: what the hell do I need this for? And why should she... or any other woman who takes advantage of the fact that she is speaking to a "gentleman" who will not be able to tell her to go to... why should she be allowed to say such things to me? I told her that I could no longer be silent when from all sides people were "arguing" that there was no blockade, arrest, and disconnecting of the telephone lines... And that it was practically Gorbachev himself who thought this up and got it going. I could not allow myself to publish "the appropriate version" and still call it my diary. Perhaps she did not say those exact words about Boldin, but the gist of her reaction to Boldin at the time, in the evening of August 18th in "Zarya," was precisely as I described it. That was my impression and that is how I portrayed it.

I find it really unpleasant that Yakovlev and Shevardnadze can say whatever they want about M.S., even suspect him of organizing a conspiracy (as E.A. has said publicly), and it's no big deal! But when Chernyaev steps out of the shadow and asserts "his individuality," she doesn't like it. She could have taken into account the fact that I have given these six years to his cause... devotedly and selflessly. As for the idea that "I didn't risk anything"... She and M.S.

can't come to terms with the fact that I didn't piss my pants. This is why I was "cheerful" in front of the "Vesti" TV camera. It turns out not only R.M. noticed this, but various people watching the program, including Mark Zakharov, who appeared on TV the next day.

I don't care! But it's time to leave. It's time! And I don't need to explain anything...

October 7, 1991

Met with old friends from various academic institutes at 42nd... Sitting on the terrace, talking. About the same old thing: what's going to happen to us... I assure everybody that there will be a Great Russia, and who cares about everything else...

We gossiped about R.M.'s interview from yesterday, where she mentioned me: "It's fiction," she said (about my diary in *Izvestiya*), "I don't know for what purpose"...

I drank wine and talked... about R.M., too. Why people find her disagreeable, and why I, too, echoed this in my "diary." I talked about the "Ides of March," having remembered that M.S. saw the production, and about Shakespeare and Ibsen, about Julius Caesar... Recently I glanced at an old book about him by Utchenko, a university professor whom I knew in my day.

Kravchuk. They are showing him on TV. He is trying to appropriate the nuclear missiles, the Donetsk Basin, and the Crimea... the idiot... Does he think that Sevastopol' belongs to him, too?! Not so fast... This is when the "democrat," if he is Russian, will protest... and what a protest it will be!... It won't be a matter of taking Sevastopol' from Kravchuk. No, it will be a matter of "let him try and take it!"³⁰

October 12, 1991, Saturday Morning

Things evaporate from my memory very quickly with all these fleeting events and "circumstances." I will try to reproduce the basic outline from memory.

I did not go to the meeting between M.S. and Riesman & Co. (representing 120 "sharks" of U.S. pension funds—400 billion dollars). I did not go to the meeting between M.S. and the President of the Italian Confindustria—the number one man in Italian business... I did not want to go to the meeting with Madigan, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. I was "demonstrating" my displeasure with R.M.'s "action," and with M.S.' reaction to it.

He noticed my absence: called me seven times a day for trifle reasons, sometimes immediately forgetting why he called me. Maybe one could add to this the "awkwardness" of him having made Shakhnazarov a State secretary, but not me. But I had refused it myself! Still... it stung...

M.S. argued with Madigan that we have people to do business with... And optimistically assured him that on the 11th the State Council will convene, and then we will have the economic agreement, and a food agreement, and a Union Treaty... By the way, Madigan—on behalf of

³⁰ This is how naïve I was. I measured things by different standards, by an intellectual's standards. [Author's note]

Bush—truly offered to help... (it still doesn't get through to us that this is guided by morality and decency, as well as friendly feelings)... For example, they are ready to install for free their managers in our food processing plants, so that through "correct," i.e. American, management, we could increase our production of meat, milk, bread, vegetables, and potatoes by as much as 25-70 percent using the equipment and personnel we already have. He also promised to create a model farm in the St. Petersburg district, again for free. M.S. kept trying to find out how much such a farm would cost in the U.S. For a while Madigan thought M.S. was asking him how much it would cost to him, and assured that it would not cost anything. Finally, he "got it," and gave a number—1.5 billion.

I had to go to the meeting with Madigan, because Gusenkov was busy escorting R.M. and the children for questioning by a prosecutor; and Zagladin, as usual, was either in Brussels or in Rome...

Some really unexpected things happened at the State Council. After the confusion in the Russian parliament, government, and presidential power, the press is beginning to suspect a split in the new, post-coup democracy. Yeltsin came to the State Council, though three days before neither Rutskoi, nor Khasbulatov could reach him in Kislovodsk, which they mentioned publicly. People say he was on a heavy drinking bout, and the only ambulance in town was parked at his dacha the entire time...

During the six hours of the State Council, B.N. sat without opening his mouth, sulking as he used to at the Politburo. But at the end he did open his mouth to say "yes" on all three issues: the economic agreement, the food agreement, and the continuation of work on the Union Treaty.

On the first item Yavlinsky made a brilliant report—an educational program, cultural enlightenment for the basically illiterate presidents of the republics. He was not shy with them. For example, his response to the Central Bank, which they want to make inter-republic-collegiate, was to throw up his hands in bewilderment. "This is a law of nature... If the ruble-zone remains, if you are for a single economic space, then the law of nature makes "your" collegiate management impossible. What can I do? What you are suggesting would be akin to having a central hospital in Moscow, where you demand that a board of 12-15 different doctors operate on you, and there is no way around it. I think nobody except for you would go to such a hospital." And so on.

It was strikingly primitive. PB members (in their own system) were far more intelligent and qualified!

Kravchuk is getting worked up about the Union Treaty. Despite the fact that M.S. has again seriously backed down. Now there no more talk of having the Union Treaty before the economic agreement. Now we are only talking about continuing work on the text of the Treaty in inter-republic working groups. But the Ukrainian keeps saying: my Supreme Soviet decided not to participate until December 1st (Ukrainian referendum)...

Then M.S. suggested that the State Council address the "workers of Ukraine." The word "workers" was immediately shot down. The Kyrgyz suggested "people," others the Supreme

Soviet, since it made the resolution. Kravchuk protested: it would truly look silly if he, a member of the State Council, together with other members, would address his own Supreme Soviet to overturn a decision they made together. And this is while he is running for president. Nevertheless, M.S. “assigned” himself to prepare such an address!

In a word, things are unwinding in every direction. But what will happen in the “White House” when Yeltsin, gloomy and dulled by vodka during his vacation, will be taken to task by the likes of Burbulis and Lobov & Co.?!!

On the 8th I visited Pankin: we had agreed to talk... He is in the MFA building, right here near my house. I hadn’t been in this high-rise in a while. They reception was stiff and servile... policemen and officials bowing...

We walked through an enfilade suite to get to a remote “compartment” and sat down over some whiskey. Talked... it is difficult to say about what. More or less that we will be making the “new thinking” policies together now. We reminisced about the last 20 years. Picked the bones of the turncoats during the coup. We relegated Kvitsinskiy “into the shadows,” so as not to lose him... I “praised” Borya, saying that the MFA finally has a politician rather than a simple official.

But even though we made an agreement, the next day he bypassed me, and “without me” met with M.S. and offered him to invite Milosevic and Tadjman to Moscow: to reconcile the Serbs and the Croats. When I found out, I started objecting to M.S.—why should he stick his nose out and bless Croatia’s separation (the first of world leaders), not to mention that we have our own people to reconcile, at home. It would look strange. And most importantly, it is a hopeless affair. M.S. already agreed to invite them, and ignored me... Once again he put me in my place: write your memos for texts, so to say. Although he was gentle about it this time.

I have to leave, and soon.

My wife’s second operation on her eye went well. This is good. She will be able to read. In return, Slava Fedorov demands that I get M.S. to remove the 40 percent exchange tax he has to pay. That’s how it is, dear Chernyaev! But I am not going to do it.

I want to go to the forest, out of the city... The autumn is beautiful, but it is passing me by this time.

The other day I bought an original illustration to *The Master and Margarita* on Arbat for 400 rubles. Here it is on my wall. It is nice to wake up in the morning and “pray” to this beauty, which takes you away somewhere...

Evening of the same day

I was preparing a “memo” for Nakayama. Brutents distracted me with his conversation... Why did he come over? Maybe he is avoiding his wife, or maybe he is preparing for the visit to Saudi Arabia and the UAE, where I “arranged” for him to go with a message from M.S., “in secret” from Pankin, who refused to take him to Syria and Israel.

The MFA's background for Nakayama is weak verbiage. I improved it, made it in Gorbachev's style. But there is still no position.

Weber came... I transferred the memo on him, and asked him to pull up a "dossier" on Khasbulatov's trip to Japan... about the meetings and the press against giving up the islands.

I got back to work. Weber showed me how he finished up the memo. I fell into despair, and called Pankin. "We don't have a position," I told him, "what are we taking to the President?" He started saying something routine.

"Borya! It's time to stop stalling," I said, "Everything we could have said to stall has already been said. We have to choose: either give up the islands and go to the people (either in the Russian or the USSR Supreme Soviet) and justify this decision... Or tell the Japanese: you'll never have these islands and take a hike with your good intentions, with your 'friendship' and your billions! And then we should straightforwardly tell our people: is this what you wanted?"

I did not hear anything worthwhile from the Minister in response.

M.S. will try to talk his way out of this subject: "history will be the judge," "let's create an atmosphere"... it's pointless and pathetic. There is no policy. All that's left is empty talk.

It's the same deal with inviting Milosevic and Tudjman. Pankin could not explain why he dragged M.S. into this affair. To be the first world leader to bless Croatia's "withdrawal" from the SFRY? Or to persuade Serbia and Croatia to avoid bloodshed? It's a joke! Do we not have our own Chechens, Ingush, Ossetians, Armenians, and others to reconcile?!

Once again, this is not policy but empty talk. M.S. must be engaging in it to appear to be participating in "real world politics"...

Yesterday I wrote him my opinion about the Yugoslavs. In response he called me and said: "This is what we're going to do: schedule Milosevic on the 15th at 3:00 p.m., and Tudjman on the 15th at 5:00 p.m." This is the extent of his conversation with the international affairs adviser to the President of what is still a superpower.

What the hell do I need this for?!

The day was wasted at work, we didn't get anything done. So I will have to do it tomorrow... But I wanted to get out in nature...

M.S. told me about a conversation with Yeltsin yesterday after the State Council. Yeltsin told him, "Mikhail Sergeevich, were you not a little hasty with your book ("August Coup")?" "No," Gorbachev replied, "and I recommend that if you have anything to say about those days, you should say it now."

He commented the exchange: "Yeltsin was probably jealous and decided to 'warn' me, since he seems to have made no progress on his book in Kislovodsk..."

There is a scandal about the stolen transcripts of interrogations of Yazov, Kryuchkov, and Pavlov... They were published in *Der Spiegel*. This is the extreme collapse of the State. But this is not the point... I said to M.S.: “This confirms what you say in the book—that your refusal to accept the ultimatum upset all their plans. The coup fell apart at that point. This entire farce depended on you showing weakness...”

October 13, 1991, Sunday

By the way... I just realized that today it is exactly 50 years since the day I joined the army and went to the front. The student volunteers from the History Department joined at the recruitment office in Stolovyi Pereulok, near the Nikitskiy Gate (the building is still there). I remember how because of my nose and hearing I was disqualified from being a pilot, which was my first choice. Then they shaved my head and I did not take off my hat when we were getting on the bus (to the train station) so my mother and Jenya would not see how awful I looked... I still had my moustache...

So, half a century has gone by... Look where fate has taken me...

The last issue of “Rodina” [Motherland] is devoted entirely to the lies about the war that have accumulated over half a century—the white spots that we are only now beginning to fill... But they are being filled and replaced with other lies. For example, take V. Astaf’ev’s article in which he curses the Communists, the commissars and political instructors who supposedly spent the war in triple-reinforced dugouts. There were some like this... the same goes for non-partisan commanders! But I remember another kind, for example our battalion commissar, Ljubutin from Byelorussia, who never left the front lines and died in the trenches from a shell-splinter wound to his head. Yes, “all of us” became Communists there: it was like swearing an oath together with something of a death-warrant: if we were taken prisoner or if the Germans won, it would mean certain death, there was no way back. And it is very bad that some veterans are strengthening the “democrats”’ revanchist hysteria with their “testimonies.”

I had to go to work today. I finished the memo for Nakayama. But I attached a personal note to M.S., saying that this “verbiage” and repetition. There is no policy here. Policy is a choice. And we have to choose instead of shifting from foot to food (an expression he uses). We either agree to transfer the islands, in which case I suggested that he should make an agreement with Yeltsin and go to the Supreme Soviet or the Russian Congress with this and get the sanctions in spite of local “patriots.” Or we have to tell Nakayama: we cannot give them to you; the people are “against” it, so to say. But then we have to tell the people at the Supreme Soviet: “This is what you wanted—to disregard our friendship with the Japanese for two cliffs and some barely populated islands, at a time when we ‘gave away’ the entire Baltic region (which is also a legacy of the war) and will be giving away some other things, too.”

I wrote it pretty sharply. I thought he would get mad. But he just called me, saying: “I discussed this with Pankin, tomorrow I will talk to Yeltsin. Indeed, it is time to make up our mind.”

We discussed the article in *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* that Yeltsin will not agree to the radical reforms, since they contradict his populist nature, and he will lose his base quickly. He is doomed to hold on only through applause. (At this point M.S. noted that we already went through this and can act rationally and reasonably). By the way (I just thought of this): the Japanese islands will be touchstone whether *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* is right in its analysis. To give them away would be very unpopular, though it would help Russia's economic revival. But it is like the proverbial two birds in the bush.

October 16, 1991, Wednesday Morning

Yesterday M.S. once again surprised everybody, including me. He got Milosevic and Tudjman on the fact that despite all their enmity and intransigence, they agreed to have dinner together (in the mansion on Alexei Tolstoy Street) and accepted a joint memorandum (which I dictated to Tamara 5 minutes before going to this Shekhtel palace). And the three of them appeared before the camera together, while Andrei Grachev read the text (which we "collectively" edited in the Vrubel reception room).

In a word, it is the miracle of Gorbachev's charm, "trusting" persuasiveness and skill... It is disarming... above all by common sense and the thing that nowadays is called openness.

However, I think in the Yugoslav conflict, that will be about the limit [of this "miracle"]. I keep arguing with myself—was it worth it?! M.S. won more for himself here (in the sense of his international and even domestic image). He announced that tomorrow he will bring together "the same way!" Mutalibov and Ter-Petrosyan! As for Yugoslavia, I will be wrong only if they themselves have become exhausted from smashing and shooting at each other: there are 1000 dead soldiers, 10 thousand civilian casualties, 388 historic landmarks destroyed, and Croatia's economy is completely devastated.

Nevertheless, on this question I was mistaken from the point of view of M.S.' interests as a statesman, I underestimated his abilities.

As for Japan and Nakayama, even though my position was extreme and I insisted that we should announce right now (even if in private, confidentially) that we are ready to give them the islands, my persistence was not futile. It made M.S. stop and think that we should not tread water. And he made a little step, giving Nakayama to understand that we have one goal with Japan: to give them the islands through the peace treaty. But we have to "get there," without jumping over things and disturbing the process. Because now we too have a democracy, and in our Far East it is vigorously against transferring the islands!

Rosenthal from *Time* came by. He told me that I will get \$5,000 for my text about August 18-21st! It will give us some peace of mind to have this sum, in today's world. Maybe we will be able to buy an apartment, as Anya insists we should. But Mayor Gavrila Popov changes property regulations every week.

We agreed with Rosenthal that “maybe” I could keep giving them materials about “my service to Gorbachev”... I really should... Much of this will disappear with me, until 50-100 years later some historian will find my diary.

I have a pain behind my ear. What could it be? Usually all such “illnesses” I have go away on their own... for example, like the hernia in September... Maybe this will also go away on its own? Like on a dog.

October 19, 1991, Saturday Morning

Yesterday the Economic Agreement was signed, without Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, and Azerbaijan. The day before, on the occasion of his “100 days,” Yeltsin once again took credit for finishing the job of collapsing the center... When asked how he and Gorbachev are doing, he said: “Better, but if he again... (gesture!), I will deal a blow in response (gesture—smashed his first on the table).

Yesterday on TV the Russian Minister of Finances said that “they” are ready for currency reform and to exchange the Soviet currency for the Russian ruble.

M.S. keeps asking about the progress of my work on materials for his speech at the opening of the Supreme Soviet on October 21st. By the way, deputies from Ukraine, Moldova, and Azerbaijan are not attending. The Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan passed a resolution not to participate or sign anything in Moscow until the Center provides some guarantees on the border with Armenia. Moreover, no governing bodies for the Supreme Soviet have been set up to replace the former Supreme Soviet Presidium and Presidents of the Chamber. Laptev and Nishanov are in the offside, since their chambers no longer exist. The Supreme Soviet of Ukraine declared that it is subordinating all armed forces on its territory and taking over all their property. This is some kind of madness.

Why am I saying all of this? To point out that all we have left is the semblance of a Union.

Every day I prepare for him texts for addresses—such as for a Paris Conference on Cambodia, or the UNESCO General Conference, or a letter to Bush (with Akaev)... He appeared as the magician-mediator between Serbia and Croatia. But before the world could utter a word, they resumed clobbering each other with even greater fury.

He received the Japanese and practically promised them the islands, though right now he does not have the power to transfer them absolutely.

He received Voscherau, the Mayor of Hamburg, to please the Mayor of Saint Petersburg Sobchak. But the latter, after getting his way, did not even consider it necessary to come to the meeting. Instead, he sent his “Minister of Foreign Affairs.” We have those now in Leningrad.

Moskovskiy Komsomolets printed a large picture of the President’s brother-in-law, R.M.’s brother, who is an alcoholic and has been in a Voronezh mental institution for many years. It’s

terrible! Afterwards, the editorial staff got off with an apology. But Gusenkov told me that the Presidential couple has been in shock the whole two days since it happened!!

The press has switched to serious criticism of Yeltsin. They remind him that since there is no longer a Center, or at least the Center is not holding him back—he will soon have to make good on his promises... And that he hasn't done anything since the "great victory" in August. Meanwhile, they write about Gorbachev in passing, ironically, with ridicule and mocking condescension. They no longer make demands or throw accusations at him.

So... my worst fear was that M.S. would become pathetic as he clutches at the remains of power and position. He did not manage to make a good exist at the right time and with dignity. And when you talk to him, especially when you see how confidently he holds himself with foreign interlocutors, how he speaks to them (in style and manner) the same way as he did a year or two ago, you don't know what to think: either it's his nature, or some feeling of self-preservation, or he is a good actor.

But I feel his uncertainty (and wretchedness) when I see how interested and involved he is in the publication of his book "The August Coup"—the contracts, fees, translations, deadlines, etc.

In the beginning, he said to me about the fees: "It doesn't matter; it's a wasted effort anyway. They didn't value it before and now the more so, nobody will notice..." I think he understood that it's time to secure his rear.

Which is a serious issue now. Yura Zhilin (the former head of a consultant group in the CC International Department) stopped by. His pension is 200 rubles. Is it enough to live on?! And many from the International Department, even those who were on the barricades on August 19th, ended up without a job. The day before yesterday Lisovolik jumped out of a window (my former subordinate, head of the U.S. Sector in the International Department).

If we barely signed the Economic Agreement, we will never get the Union Treaty... The Center will disappear. Yeltsin is claiming the role of "President-coordinator." He publicly stated that he will allocate the Union budget only to maintain the Ministry of Defense, Atomic Energy, and the railways. Even the MFA is not on the list!

There definitely will not be funds for the presidential staff. Although Revenko told me that he set up some "firms" that are pumping out currency, so the presidential apparatus will have some funds for now. But this is nonsense, that the President of a "superpower" is funded through some practically underground business!

Yesterday we restored diplomatic relations with Israel... This would truly be a major event... if there was a Union left... though, Russia will inherit it. A Conference on the Middle East has been scheduled in Madrid. M.S. will go... While here at home we have people killing each other every day in Karabakh, Ossetia, Chechnya, Georgia, etc.

October 20, 1991, Sunday Morning

Yesterday was a peculiar day. I went to work, almost sure that I would have to spend the day with M.S., working on the speech for the opening of the Supreme Soviet (on Monday). Last night Shakhnazarov gave me a text that was a conglomeration of pieces on different subjects, prepared by different people. Though, he told me, Medvedev and Ozherel'ev never finished the economic section. So the text consisted of the "legal" part (Shakhnazarov), the international part on the foreign policy of the new Union (mine), and a section Shakhnazarov's team improvised on social-economic themes.

I went over everything... changing a lot of things, removing attacks (Ukraine, Georgia), and most importantly removing the moralizing, lecturing, and sermonizing (though they were written in Gorbachev's style). The time for such things has passed. I gave it back to Shakhnazarov...

At noon, M.S. was again engaged in something that's not his job: he gathered entrepreneurs and labor groups to teach them how to proceed after everything that has happened. It would seem: you have given everything over to the republics, associations and corporations, so let everything take its course, let them be responsible. But no, his hands are itching to organize everybody like in the olden days, which he consciously brought to an end. And that is his historic accomplishment.

By the way, *Kultura* [Culture] ran a 1.5 page opus: "Who is Gorbachev?" (The editor, Albert Belyaev, notified me about it in advance). It is a psychoanalytical (Freudian) essay about Gorbachev's personality and motives. It was written by a doctor, psychotherapist. It's written "beautifully"... And I, who knows Gorbachev closely (unlike the article's author), agree with 90 percent of it. It's published in the October 19th, 1991, issue.

By around 3 p.m. I found out, however, that M.S. already started working on the text with Shakhnazarov and Yakovlev. This means they "did not deem me necessary"...

Oh, I forgot: on Friday Bruno Malov visited me. The one who was the deputy head, and then the head of SED's International Department, who flashed across our TV screens as Honecker's interpreter. Now he is 55 years old, and he is "living it out" in the PDS [Party of Democratic Socialism] apparatus in Berlin. He told me that not all his former friends with whom for so many years we "consolidated the International Communist Movement [ICM]" now wanted to meet with him. We talked about life, *perestroika*, the old days... we've known each other for 20 plus years. We discussed what we did, while we understood the absurdity of it all, and that it would lead to a dead end. We remembered how Ponomarev would gather officials at his level from five socialist countries and teach them how to rebut the French and Italians with their Eurocommunism, or the Romanians (I remember in Poland, at night before Warsaw we were in some old castle from the Mickiewicz era, we met secretly from the Romanian delegation to conspire!)... Bruno understands everything and did not argue with me when I started to "justify" the inevitability of what happened... That it was natural for revisionism to be born in such units as the International Department... because we knew the world and we knew that nobody was going to attack us, we knew what the ICM was in reality, and that it was a lost cause... It was not without reason that in the SED and especially in the apparatus of the CC CPSU, the international affairs workers were considered revisionists from Trapeznikov's days, and they were endured

only because “technically” it was impossible without them to maintain relations with other Communist Parties, and to keep them on our bandwagon.

He told me that people in his apartment building treat him decently. They say nice things to his wife (she is from Kiev), and try to reassure her, saying: “You lived with privileges for a while, but you’ll survive without them. We made do without them!” And these are Germans. But it is probably because Bruno is a “good person,” he did not abuse his proximity to Honecker and his position.

I wish I could take a week-long vacation and go “to the village” with Lyuda!! Like in the movies.

Yesterday I had this conversation with Revenko (Chief of Presidential Staff). The day before I had written him a note about my own “apparatus”: about the women who for two months now have been sitting practically on top of each other in a 14-meter room; about Brutents—that he cannot be my deputy and he should be appointed somewhere, like Zagladin was.

He responded point by point. The point that was important to me is this: my last question was “What should I be called now?” That is, considering that Shakhnazarov was made a State adviser. I refused this position, but on the condition that I don’t want to remain at the level of Yegorov or Ozherel’ev. (Revenko agrees: “I don’t even know what they do,” he said. “M.S. gives assignments only to two people: you and Shakhnazarov. I told Gorbachev—there are 18 advisers, and I, the Chief of the Presidential Staff, don’t know what they are doing!”). In any case, Revenko continued: “I told M.S.—let’s appoint Chernyaev as the ‘Special Adviser on international affairs’ and another guy as the ‘Special Adviser on security issues.’ But M.S. did not respond. You probably know better than I do, what this reaction of his means. I repeated the suggestion, but again, he changed the subject.”

What conclusions can I draw? The following: we were always “scribes” for him, as Yakovlev and Shakhnazarov like to say (more precisely, in older Russian, we are clerks [*d’yaki*]). And it is in this capacity that he needs us...

By the way, I should note: I like Pankin’s decisiveness and readiness to take matters into his own hands... For example, he went ahead and established diplomatic relations with Israel while he was in Jerusalem, not after the start of the Conference in Madrid, as had been planned, but before?!

Maybe I should request to be sent as an ambassador to Israel?! Heh-heh. How surprised M.S. would be!! And it would be a “soft” challenge... in response to his “respectful” attitude.

I am thinking about retirement. It is time. My days have passed... Some of the genres I created are no longer necessary and are not used. Plus, my ECG is getting worse by the week. I am ready to file my resignation even today.

I wonder what his reaction would be... But what reaction am I talking about! He is “busy,” he has to win victories every day, or at least have a semblance of victories. This requires tremendous effort. The author of the psychoanalysis in *Kultura* is right.

October 21, 1991, Early Monday Morning

My Italian friend Bianca and I visited Karyakin. They (Yura and Ira) haven't seen Bianca since 1967, since “their second Prague.” They've been in their new apartment three months: the living quarters of intellectuals! We talked for about three hours, while drinking good tea... they didn't have any alcohol at home. We had a fierce discussion of the coup and the people involved... Yura and Ira know some details that are worth remembering. By the way, it turns out that a crowd of people was waiting for M.S. outside the White House upon his arrival from Foros. The people had posters, chants, etc. They waited until 4 a.m. He did not show up. But I don't remember Silaev or Ruskoi telling him while we were in Foros or on the airplane that people were waiting for him. On the contrary, Ruskoi was very concerned about his safety, even after arrival. In the airplane he kept asking, “Where are you going to go?” M.S. said that he is going to the dacha. “Is it safe? Perhaps you should go to your Moscow apartment? I installed covert security guards there just in case!” But M.S. replied that there is probably security at the dacha now as well, and the family is tired, so they will not go to different places, etc. But it turns out that people were waiting for him, and they say that his failure to appear caused resentment and disappointment... even the Italians felt this way, as Bianca told us: she was also waiting by the TV at night, back at home, in Livorno.

What followed afterwards was gross blunder—when he did not attend the “victory rally” on the “Free Russia” square the next day... Instead, he was busy writing decrees to appoint... Moiseev, Shebarshin, and other deputy ministers to replace the cabinet members who were at fault.

Although, maybe they made an “agreement” with Yeltsin, who did not want to share a single iota of his victory glory with anyone, and who set M.S. up to be torn apart by his parliament a few hours later.

Karyakin assumes that's what happened. He warned about two things. Firstly, that Yeltsin's entourage, headed by Burbulis, hates Gorbachev with a fierce, animal hatred. Secondly, that the RSFSR Congress is preparing some kind of action (he doesn't know what kind) against M.S. I bet they'll call the CPSU a criminal organization.

I am reading Pushkin's letters. This is probably the first instance of the use of the living and quite modern Russian language (well, with the exception of some expressions and “outdated” words). His manner is the same as of Moscow's intellectuals today.

I read in Rozanov: Tolstoy is a genius, but not intelligent... Pushkin is both—which is very rare. I wonder, what about Lenin? He is clearly intelligent, but his genius turned out to be “wrong,” although perhaps genius is determined by the effects “in its field”...

November 2, 1991, Saturday Morning

I glanced in my diary and turns out I haven't written since October 21st. I didn't mention that I had a big talk with M.S. about my position and apparatus, after the Deputy Chief of the Presidential Staff told me that as an adviser (according to the new structure) I get only a secretary, and no consultants...

There was a conversation over the intercom with Revenko... "He (i.e. me) won't let me alone," Revenko said, when he did not know that I was listening. And this is after all the polite conversations and praise in my address, in comparison to the other advisers.

M.S. told him sharply: "Sort it out. And the resolution is to give Chernyaev whatever he asks for."

The preparations for Madrid (on the Middle East). Gorbachev's and others' speeches at the opening of the conference sounded "better" than Bush's. The Americans were elbowing me (Scowcroft from the right, Sununu from the left, and then Ambassador Straus), and giving me a thumbs-up.

I tried to refuse to go to Madrid. M.S. looked at the list I compiled. He glanced at it, saw what was there, and asked; "Are you seriously planning on not going?" and included me in the delegation (as opposed to the accompanying party). He understood that I do not want to associate closely with R.M.

What happened in Madrid?

Before the start of the conference on the Middle East, Gorbachev and Bush, the co-chairs of the conference, talked thoroughly about everything in the presence of Baker, Scowcroft, Pankin. I was there too.

M.S. started by praising both of them—this conference is another example of the effective partnership between the USSR and the U.S. in world politics. For M.S., this is especially important at a moment when, as he told Bush himself, both here and in the U.S. people are asking: does the Soviet Union exist, and what does Gorbachev represent? He expressed his appreciation to the President and to Baker, and to the US Administration for the "balanced approach" in this matter.

They agreed on behavior tactics for each of them and for both of them together during the opening of the conference and afterwards: to act in a way so the sides (the Arabs and Israel) assume the responsibility for resolving these issues, as opposed to shifting this on the superpowers.

M.S. agreed and said that he recently met with the President of Cyprus in Moscow. He called him a good person (with which President Bush agreed) and relayed the Cypriot's request: "to demonstrate (U.S. and USSR) a joint commitment to resolving the Cyprus problem." "We cannot allow the use of force (by the Turks)," M.S. said. He relayed Vassiliou's opinion that if things remain the same, it would set a bad precedent. M.S. commented on this information by saying that in other similar cases we would not accept the use of force.

That was the end of the discussion of the Cyprus problem.

They discussed Yugoslavia, establishing that the situation is deteriorating. M.S. suggested returning to the Yugoslav issue at the UN Security Council.

Bush reacted skeptically, along the lines of: some members of the Security Council and staff of the UN Secretariat believe that it is an internal affair, and they do not want to get the UN involved.

Gorbachev agreed that intervention is unacceptable. "But if the UN states its position, it could have certain consequences."

"The UN has already stated its position," Bush objected, "We support the EC's [European Council] efforts. You spoke with representatives of Serbia and Croatia. Do you think it was helpful?" he asked, not without a hint of malice.

Baker joined in the conversation, "Regrettably, there are disagreements among members of the EC, as well. It is difficult for them to maintain a unified approach. Some Europeans want to recognize the independence of the republics. I tried to oppose this, but Germans ran ahead of us."

"I also spoke about this with Kohl when we met near Kiev," M.S. noted. "I am worried about this. After all, we are not talking only about Yugoslavia. How can we continue the European process, if we can't solve problems like these?"

"Let's keep in touch on this matter," Bush concluded.

What the American President and Secretary of State were impatient to hear from Gorbachev, and what he himself wanted to share with them, were our domestic affairs. "Today, the main question for us is how to recover from the crisis," Gorbachev began. "We need to speed up the reforms and move ahead on the path of political and economic freedom, within the framework of a common market economy for all the republics."

"The central issue," he explained, "is statehood. The August events spurred the desire to declare independence. But, they did not change anything in principle," Gorbachev declared, to my surprise. "They only created the foundation to move toward the creation of a truly voluntary Union of Sovereign States. Yeltsin spoiled the situation when he brought up the territorial question of boundaries. This strengthened the separatist tendencies in Ukraine. They started talking about Russia's imperial pretensions.

Together with Boris Nikolayevich, we are conducting major work to reform our State. We prepared and sent to all the republics a draft Union Treaty. We are talking about creating precisely a union state, not some association or community. It will be a state with unified armed forces, a coordinated foreign policy, and a unified market. The Union will be responsible for a unified energy system, transportation, communications, ecology, essential research and some other areas. On November 11th the State Council will review the draft, subject to comments and amendments.

Unfortunately, Yeltsin is under pressure from certain people who claim that Russia must shed the burden of other republics and go forward on its own. I spoke with Boris Nikolayevich and he assured me that he understands what this would lead to. It would result in great difficulties for Russia, it would mean several years of turmoil. For the other republics it would be catastrophic.”

“For the other republics?” Bush asked with some surprise.

“I repeat, it would cause serious shocks even in Russia. And Yeltsin understands this, but unfortunately, he is influenced by a certain kind of people. Analyzing his speech from yesterday, I see two sides in him, two parts. One side confirms the position for the Union. The other side moves away on some specific issues from the provisions included in the draft Union Treaty, on which we worked together. He makes rash, biting remarks about statehood. Obviously, it will cause a reaction from a number of the republics.

But on the whole, I have to support him right now. Because if reforms start in Russia, they will start in the other republics as well.”

“The key question is this,” Bush interrupted. “Do you think that Russia, and Yeltsin, are trying to take over the center? What do they want? Do they want to narrow even further the role of the center, and your role? This makes it difficult for us to determine positions. We are having a hard time making sense of the situation.”

Gorbachev acknowledged that such attempts are taking place. But he is certain that Russia needs a new Union center. This is the only legitimate format through which Russia could have a leading role in the republics. They will not accept direct control from Russia. That is why they support a Union center. The majority of them support a general election for the president. “I thought I had an understanding with Yeltsin about this. But his last speech is disappointing. If he isolates Russia and destroys the Union, it would have devastating consequences for Russia. I,” M.S. said, “remain optimistic. I continue working with the republics together and separately. I would like to emphasize: today it is a fundamental, life-changing question not only for us, but for the West and the United States as well. You have to make a strategic choice. Right now we need support to continue the reforms, for the future of the Union depends on it, the kind of Union that I am convinced the United States and other countries need.”

Turning to specifics, M.S. asked [the American side] to decide the question of a food credit for 3.5 billion dollars and debt payments. For the latter, we require emergency assistance in cash in the amount of 370 million dollars, plus the financial loan from Saudi Arabia and South Korea (1 billion).

“I think we all understand,” M.S. pressed, “what is at stake. What happens with the Soviet Union will have repercussions for the entire world process.”

In response, Bush made a meaningful speech, which I will try to reproduce in detail (especially since it helped when writing it down to hear first the English version and then the translation).

“I will be extremely frank with you,” Bush started. “I hope you know the position of our government: we support the Center. Without giving up contacts with the republics, we support the center and you personally. Even before the coup, I made a speech in Ukraine, for which I had some price to pay at home. I was criticized for allegedly ‘selling’ Ukraine. Of course, there was no such thing. But I spoke out against mindless nationalism.

We maintained contact with Yeltsin and will continue to do so, as well as with leaders of the other republics, but we are not doing it behind your back. I asked this question because in the Congress and in the Administration, many people were surprised by his speech, they cannot understand what it means. The issue of the Soviet Union’s creditworthiness is tied to this matter.

According to our laws, I have to attest to Congress that our borrowers are creditworthy. I cannot circumvent the requirements of our legislation. We believe that we can meet you halfway with loans, but not fully. We must have confidence that the republics are fully aware of their responsibilities. We want to help you, but we need certain additional guarantees regarding the republics’ positions.”

Gorbachev interrupted. “Let us speak frankly. Ten-fifteen billion dollars is not such a great sum that we would not be able to pay it back. If we miscalculate right now, we will have to pay a much higher price down the road. We are not talking about something ordinary and routine. We are talking about an enormous country that is going through great transformations, and routine approaches are unacceptable here. References to the Congress and experts do not convince me. We need a political solution.”

Bush: “I want to assure you of our understanding. That is why I am asking you once again: do you consider a return to a totalitarian regime a possibility? This would be bad for the entire world, and for the United States, because it would put an end to our fruitful cooperation.”

“Precisely for this reason we need concrete action,” M.S. chimed in.

“Nevertheless, I have to take into account public opinion at home in the U.S. I cannot argue with the figure you named for food credit. But we cannot fully satisfy this request. Right now we can make a decision only to allocate an agricultural credit in the amount of 1.5 billion dollars, and a part of it would be available now, while the second part only after January 1st. We hope that this will help you to get through the period when you finally decide the relations between the center and the republics.

You know how strongly the Secretary of the Treasury Brady spoke in support of the Soviet Union at the IMF session in Bangkok. It even irritated other members of the G-7. If you prefer that this question is not discussed openly right now, let’s do that. A billion and a half is the maximum of what we can do right now. We could come back to the question of an agricultural loan later, when the republic’s level of participation is more defined. But the present sum should allow you to get the process started.

I don’t want the announcement of a sum that may seem inadequate to cause you difficulties at home. Perhaps it would be better not to announce anything, but this is the

maximum that we can provide at this time. And while Secretary of State Baker can sometimes work wonders in Congress, we have to be realistic.”

After assurances from M.S., James Baker took the floor. “Allow me to make a general statement. I think you know that we support and will strive to continue to support your efforts to reform the Soviet Union. You know that we influenced the other donors, particularly Saudi Arabia. The President in essence went as far as providing direct U.S. government loans, which means they are guaranteed in full. We believe now it is necessary to have the republics’ signature on the loan documents. This will give the President the legal basis to raise the issue before Congress.

At the moment we can provide approximately 1.5 billion dollars: 250 million as a gift in food aid and provided free of charge. The rest as credit guarantees. Out of that, 250 million would be available right now, and 1 more billion in 60 days. This is what we can do right now.

With regard to new projects on food, we will pursue them, but they will not give a quick effect. We understand that our proposal does not fully cover your needs. But in these circumstances, this is what we can do.

I will tell you one thing that the President cannot say. You know that we were in contact in June of this year, when there were rumors of Pavlov’s coup. We stressed that we are interested in the stability of the Soviet Union, and in letting the Soviet people determine their own future. And we believe that this is a significant argument to show that we understand the need for a Center. Last week we received alarming signals about the content of Yeltsin’s upcoming speech, including the fact that there will be a call to liquidate the Soviet Foreign Ministry, and a statement that Russia will protect Russian minorities wherever they might be, etc. We appealed to RSFSR officials and asked: what is happening, why is such a speech being made on the eve of a peace conference on the settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict? This would undermine the Soviet Union’s efforts. We expressed the hope that it would not happen. We were surprised that on the question of minorities there was no mention of the Helsinki process. It appears that the republics will be concerned, and you will have to regulate this process. We will try to do something from our side; it is possible that we may be able to help in some way. We would be interested in receiving specific information on what parts of the speech deviate from the agreements you reached in the development of the Union Treaty.”

“Yeltsin called me the day before his speech at the Parliament of Russia and did not say that the speech will have controversial positions,” Bush noted.

“He said only good things,” Baker added.

“You must take into account,” M.S. explained, “that the leaders of the republics want to demonstrate that they have contacts with the U.S. President, they want to play this card to satisfy their ambitions. I think we can straighten out this situation, it will be a challenge. But that is why I am raising the question of food credits and financial support so persistently. I need it right now.”

“I would just ask you to consider that I am in a different situation than I was before. Of course, I will speak with our representative at the G-7,” Bush summed up.

At the end of the conversation, Gorbachev raised the issue of Bush’s unilateral initiative on weapons reductions.

Bush asked: did Gorbachev get his letter about this? “Yes,” M.S. replied, “and I consider it to be very constructive and useful.” He reported that we prepared a counter-initiative, approved by the State Council, and related it to the Americans.

I am attaching this paper.³¹

A joint press conference followed. Bush tried not to show the disparity of their political weight, and M.S. is not the kind of person who would have “allowed” it... He behaved as if nothing has happened... But he was “realistic”... and in general he spoke well at the interviews and press-conferences.

Shamir! It is an event!

³¹ - Five-hundred-three ICBMs, equipped with 1154 warheads all together, are to be taken off combat alert.

- Six SSBNs and 92 SLBMs have been decommissioned.
- All heavy bombers have been taken off combat alert.
- All 36 rail-based ICBM launchers have been permanently stationed.
- The following development programs have been discontinued: compact mobile ICBMs, modified nuclear short-range missiles for Soviet heavy bombers, modernization of ICBMs for rail missile systems.
- The timetable for reducing strategic offensive arms has been adjusted to the total level of 5000 nuclear warheads (instead of 6000 units according to the Treaty).
- We are starting to withdraw the following types of weapons from their places of permanent deployment: nuclear ammunition of the atomic artillery, nuclear warheads from tactical ground-based missiles, nuclear bombs and nuclear warheads for anti-aircraft missiles.
- Tactical nuclear weapons are being removed from ships and attack submarines, as well as naval aircraft for accommodation in central storage sites in ground-based facilities. As in the U.S., the withdrawal of tactical nuclear weapons from the fleet will take us approximately 8-9 months.
- The following deadlines have been established for the completion of the liquidation: tactical nuclear weapons in the naval forces—1995; nuclear warheads of anti-aircraft rockets—1996; nuclear mines—1998; nuclear warheads of tactical missiles and nuclear artillery projectiles—2000. It should be noted that the scope of our work surpasses the U.S.’ efforts.
- We declared a moratorium for one year (from October 5th of the present year) on nuclear testing.
- We developed a timetable to downsize the USSR Armed Forces by 700 thousand people in 5 years.
- We are creating a special coordination committee involving ministries and republics (RSFSR, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus) to oversee the implementation of the program of unilateral measures and to develop positions for negotiations and consultations.

The program has been approved by the State Council. [Author’s note]

Dinner with the King (plus Bush and Gonzalez). M.S. still cannot settle after all the impressions: they were outraged by Yeltsin's speech at the Congress in the Kremlin... and they made it clear that it would be difficult for them to imagine the country that used to be called "Soviet Union" without Gorbachev.

On the 30th there was a meeting with Gonzalez. Passionate and intelligent speeches... It would be good for our Ukrainians and "Kozyrev's" to hear them...

Then there were a few hours in the company of the Crown Prince in Barcelona: Olympic facilities, Pablo Picasso's house. Then, on to France.

The trip to Lache (October 30th)—President Francois Mitterrand's farm in the Pyrenees. This was a remarkable event in many respects. I looked at my notes a week after the event and saw that they look like, if not a will, then parting words to my political descendants. I have a duty to record as much of it as I can recall.

The flight from Barcelona was short. From the airport we drove through the beautiful scenery of the Pyrenees foothills. By the way, we drove past Biarritz, where I was 20 years ago during my first visit to France... It was an evening meeting, arranged for the five of us Soviets by the local Communist Party cell. I had to make an impromptu speech in French, which surprised me and my colleagues. I remember I was very pleased with myself. I did not recognize the city from a distance: now it looks more like an industrial center, back then it was a quiet resort town.

The cars turned from the highway into the woods. The road became narrow, paved at first, but then just a dirt road for village carts (or so it seemed). Branches of bushes lashed the car windows. After 10-15 minutes we drove into a meadow. There was a garden fence made out of ledgers, the kind you see in our poorer villages. There were three huts—I can't call them anything else—squat houses with small windows and straw roofs. It was damp, dark, green, and cool. Goats and chickens walked about the grounds. Wide-branching trees surrounded the "huts."

There were only a few of us with Gorbachev: Raisa Maksimovna, Andrei Grachev, myself, the interpreter, and security. The rest of the people who accompanied him to the conference in Madrid flew directly to Moscow from Spain, or were dropped off on the way to Lache in the district town of Soustons.

Mitterrand came out to meet us. He gave us a tour of his "estate," and with obvious relish told us where he got such a family farm, founded as early as 1793, which he bought from a peasant 28 years ago. He prefers it to the three other countryside residence that are more "appropriate" for his rank. "Sometimes," he said, "I used to go there to receive foreign guests." (I noted the past tense of the verb). "Perhaps my successors will make better use of these official residences. In the meantime, the staff there doesn't know what to do with itself."

The madam led Raisa Maksimovna away. The Presidents, two advisers, and the interpreter retired to the hut—a chalet that served as the office. There were sofas and armchairs. A few bookshelves. A fireplace.

[The conversation started with] the protocol jokes. Mitterrand explained how he envisions the “program” of their interaction. He warned that in the morning, Gorbachev and Raisa will be awakened by the cock-crow. (Later I stepped into the room they occupied for the night. It reminded me very much of the corner in village huts where in my childhood, “at the dacha,” I spent my summer vacations).

The conversation started. Further I will quote from my notes.

Gorbachev began talking about the Madrid conference, and congratulated Mitterrand as one of its initiators. F.M. (hereafter for the sake of brevity I will use only their initials) interrupted him to express his regrets that the conference did not follow the formula he offered: five permanent members of the UN Security Council, under the auspices of the UN. Then the questions would have been “to the point” (occupied territories, Israeli settlements, the West Bank of the river Jordan, the Gaza Strip, the division of Jerusalem...). This did not happen because of the “too close ties” between Israel and the U.S. Shamir does not want the Europeans to participate, because they maintain relations with the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization]. So it turned out that the conference became limited only to the question of procedure (for future talks)... But this is already good. The fact that there is a place where the opponents can talk—and, incidentally, the love to talk, both of them—is already an achievement, F.M. concluded.

M.S. talked about the difficulties of preparation. Until the last moment they were not sure whether the Palestinians would show up. He told how he, Bush, and Baker had agreed to “pressure” Shamir, how at the meeting with the Israeli Prime Minister he prevailed upon him to “take a constructive position.”

M.S. “shared” that he liked the conversation with Shamir in Madrid, it was open and friendly. It is good that Shamir is concerned about the supply of weapons to the Middle East. He requested that the USSR stop supplying them, to which M.S. responded: then let the U.S. stop as well. Shamir agreed. M.S. liked that the Israeli did not limit himself to theme of the conference, but spoke about major regional problems: energy, fresh water, and environmental hazards. In all of these issues he would like to have relations with the USSR.

M.S.’ final impression on Shamir: he wants to run the show in this entire process. But this won’t work.

F.M. expressed his readiness to help the “process,” if France is consulted. But he is of a rather pessimistic view about this: “we are dealing with fanaticism, fanaticism on both sides, and it is difficult to make it see reason.”

“There are two types of fanaticism there,” M.S. commented.

“No, this is one type. Especially since they have similar temperaments,” the Frenchman objected and... asked Gorbachev to tell him what is going on at home.

“We are in the most critical period right now,” M.S. said. “It came sooner than we expected. We had prepared programs to move toward a market economy, toward a new Union,

we had a draft for Party reform. That is why I did not leave the post of General Secretary—I could not abandon that power in its condition. But the August coup ruined everything. It tore the mechanisms of power. The coup brought confusion into the political process.

So, on the one hand, we had a victory for democracy, but on the other an aggravation of all contradictions.

Separatist tendencies grew stronger after the coup. Certain forces used it to further undermine the internal relations in our country.

A great deal depends on Russia. With the help of the State Council we managed to relieve some stress, including stress around Yeltsin. This allowed us to sign the Economic Agreement. Now we are facing the problem of signing the Union Treaty. We came to an agreement with Yeltsin. We prepared the draft together. But he is surrounded by very difficult people. They throw this and that his way, complicating his decisions. Additionally, his circle is dominated by people who think that Russia should throw the burden of the former Soviet republics off its shoulders.

Yeltsin's position is full of conditions for the Union Treaty. But we need a negotiation process, not ultimatums. You cannot solve problems this way. Yes, Yeltsin is in favor of decisiveness in implementing reforms, and basically this is in line with what I am proposing. But we cannot disregard the other republics. That is not politics. We cannot provoke rejection. Seventy-five million people live outside of their republics. We have such a division of labor that we all depend on each other. This applies not only to economy and ecology, but also to science, culture, and human relations.

In the context of the global situation, I put the question this way: what is the West interested in, what is the world interested in? That the Soviet Union continue to exist. Reformed, democratic, dynamic, economically healthy—in other words, completely new—but a Union.”

“What I think about it,” F.M. started to respond, “you already made the decisive action, you destroyed the system that had been out of order for a long time. Your second action is this desire to resolve the issue of the Union and the republics. A certain mentality has formed that creates a centrifugal tendency. It is encouraged from the outside. France's position is not to succumb to opportunistic circumstances. I am using absolutely cold reasoning: it is in France's interest to have an integral force in Eastern Europe. If there is a collapse, we will go back to what you had before Peter the Great. It would be a historic catastrophe and would contradict France's interests.

Centuries of history teach us that France needs an ally to maintain a balance in Europe. Any collapse of integrity in the East would bring instability. That is why we do not want to encourage separatist ambitions.

Furthermore, we are great friends of today's Germany. But it would be very dangerous if there would be a soft underbelly in the North or East of Germany. Because the Germans will always have a tendency and a temptation to penetrate these areas.”

“And they would not have to use military force. It would be an economic empire with all the ensuing consequences,” M.S. added.

“What might we find?” Mitterrand continued. “A number of small states around Germany and, beyond that, a vacuum. This is dangerous. I am one of those who wish to have a strong partner in you, a new Union.

If this is how things go, then my distant successors will have to establish strong relations with Russia, because it will be the most powerful country of what is left of the old Union. But until then we could all find ourselves in a state of anarchy. I am for your country’s rebuilding in 2-3 years on a federal-democratic basis. This is the best scenario for the rest of Europe.

You, Mr. Gorbachev, are guided by patriotic considerations. I, in this case, am guided by the facts of historical logic in the development of our continent.”

“What you are saying is very important,” M.S. responded. “And it is also important that Gonzalez, with whom I spoke at length yesterday, came to the same conclusions. He used practically the same expressions.

I see it as my duty to reach a new Union through the Union Treaty. And I would like to be able to count on the West’s support, guided by their real interests. Instead, I see that some people are looking to take advantage of our collapse.”

“France will not contribute to the centrifugal forces. And I think,” F.M. said, “that this position is shared by all old European countries with long history, which have ancient traditions and deep European experience. I am talking about England, France, Spain, and Portugal.”

“The people at home should know the positions of the main actors of world politics on this key issue,” M.S. responded. “Last night the Spanish King hosted a dinner for me and Bush. Gonzalez was present. At this dinner, he fiercely defended his point of view, which is similar to what you told me right now, for a few minutes even forgetting the protocol and that the King was present.

They unanimously expressed surprise at some passages in Yeltsin’s speech at the Congress of the People’s Deputies. Especially over the idea that the MFA should be reduced tenfold, which would call into question the very need for a common foreign policy mechanism for the Union. At the press-conference before the King’s dinner, President Bush took a very strict position and very clearly expressed his support for the Union policy.”

“This is very good,” F.M. said, “I remember how in April of last year Bush and I met in Miami, and the conversation touched upon the Baltic problem. I told him then: yes, the Baltic States have to become independent. This is a position of principle. But do not rush to recognize them. We need to give Gorbachev time for constitutional reforms. Everything must be done consistently and gradually, not vice versa. Bush supported this approach, even though it was very difficult for him, because the Congress and the public demanded an immediate recognition of the Baltic States. So President Bush understands the situation well.

Bush supports a democratic Union, and its incorporation into the global economy. But he listens to public opinion and he is cautious, while from all sides people whisper in his ear: don't lose, so to speak, you have elections coming up. I keep telling him: a new Union in Eastern Europe is an issue that has to be viewed globally, not in the context of a political situation. Preserving the Union is a vital issue for Europe. It seems that I have his understanding on this point. But Bush is somewhat indecisive and cautious."

"I have told Bush repeatedly," M.S. joined in, "that this is an extraordinary situation and that we must not act in a routine manner, but take into account the uniqueness of the events. I think he understands me. After all, he decided to offer us a large food credit."

"I understand that to deny you substantial aid right now would mean to make the process of reforming the Union very fragile."

"If," M.S. summarized, "it is our common goal to have a new Union as the largest bastion of democracy and peace, then we must not waste time on trifles. Especially because we are not talking about handouts. Everything will be returned. But we need the help right now, right this moment."

Then there was a break. In the neighboring house the TV crew set up their equipment. M.S. and F.M. went there to give a joint interview. I did not go: there simply was no space to perch oneself without getting in someone's way. Sometimes I glanced in through the window—how cozily they were sitting together in low armchairs, two great Europeans at the end of a terrible century, so different yet understanding each other so well.

I wandered the overgrown paths in total darkness: two lanterns near the houses could barely be seen through the dense greenery.

The second conversation took place over an evening meal in the other chalet, which served as the dining room and bedroom. The composition of the group was "extended": Raisa Maksimovna and Danielle, Danielle's sister, the Mitterrands' youngest son, Gorbachev and I, and Pierre Morel—F.M.'s adviser.

We were all apologizing as we squeezed through to our seats around a round table in a room that was around 14 square meters. Entirely like a village. Naturally, I could not take notes as I was sitting at dinner next to the President of France. I reproduced the conversation already on the airplane. I probably did not remember every detail and will not try to reproduce it word for word. Nevertheless, I will vouch for the general sense of the conversation. They talked about the fate of Europe in the context of the Yugoslavia crisis and the USSR's collapse. Mitterrand said whole speeches. He ardently supported M.S.' opinion that the people who supported the centrifugal forces in Yugoslavia from the outside did a disservice to Europe.

"Separatism was always there," F.M. said in his measured and impressive manner, "But the Germans immediately moved in favor of recognizing the independence of Slovenia and Croatia. As for myself, since June I had been against these republics' independence. The majority of other countries, EC members, followed my example. It is not that I view the idea of

independence negatively. But my point of view stems from the idea that independence should be proclaimed in accordance with international agreements; in particular, the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris for a New Europe. In my opinion, we can hardly welcome the other option—the proclamation of independence under pressure from nationalist forces.

It is clear why the Germans adhere to a different position. The fact is that Slovenia and Croatia at one time were part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Besides German influence, they also felt the impact of the Roman Catholic Church and the Vatican.

I once discussed the subject of Yugoslavia with Major. He asked me what would happen next. I replied: It would seem that Croatia will seek help from the armed forces of Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Turkey. Serbia, in turn, will send an analogous request to Great Britain, Russia, and France. Thus, our armed forces will be in Yugoslavia and a situation will arise like at the beginning of World War I in 1914. Major was clearly surprised. He declared that he will not send his soldiers anywhere. I am not sure whether he took my words seriously... We must not recreate the conditions of competition like we had at the beginning of the century. This option would mean enormous drama for Europe.

So, life itself is bringing the EC countries to establish a political union. You cannot avoid history.

“... Of course, you know,” F.M. moved his thought in a different direction, “that the Americans are tempted to extend the functions of NATO and turn it into a political, rather than military, alliance. I take a different view on this subject. I think that NATO should continue to remain faithful to the foundation on which it was created. If NATO was vested with functions that are in principle under the jurisdiction of the CSCE and the EC, it would be very bad. The European process was largely made possible by the concerted efforts of the Soviet Union and France. You, of course, remember that France was practically the only country to support your initiatives in the sphere of European cooperation. Our collaboration yielded good results. So let us not allow the fruits of our cooperation to be eliminated. If we give NATO excessive powers, the non-NATO members will feel ill at ease. In addition, the role of the Paris Charter for New Europe will decrease.”

Responding to M.S.’ remark about the U.S.’ European role, Mitterrand continued his verbal essay: “Europe is also America. This situation will persist for some time. I agree that the U.S. will continue to play an important role. It’s simply the recognition of existing realities. But in the future, Europe should be in Europe proper. It is important that the transformations in the Soviet Union contributed to the politico-economic rapprochement between East and West, and the creation of what you call the common European home.”

“A great deal here depends on how America sees the future united Europe, and how it sees Japan,” M.S. joined the conversation. “These are two sore spots for the Americans, especially if we are talking about Europe as the area between the Atlantic Ocean and the Ural Mountains. After all, this is a vast expanse with almost 600 million inhabitants, and with enormous scientific-technical, economic, and intellectual potential. This is where we should seek

the answers to the major questions of world politics. This is also where we can find the answer to the positions of different countries on the changes in the Soviet Union; including an explanation to the adjustments that can be seen in Germany's European policy. I am talking about what recently came up in the Baker-Genscher statement. This is also why Germany supports the new idea for NATO, which you mentioned earlier. It is not impossible that the Germans are planning to increase their influence in the East this way, and get a free hand in regard to Hungary, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and further east.

... This is my view, and it is tied to my assessment of the future. There are two pillars. One of them is the European Community, which is acquiring a system of political institutions. The other is a Union of sovereign states on the basis of the former USSR. There is also interaction between them within the framework defined by the documents of the European process and disarmament agreements. The roles and presence of Europe, the USA, and Canada fit into this concept. But this has to be a European policy, not an American policy towards Europe."

"Of course, it would be important to have the support of both these pillars," F.M. supported the idea. "But one of the pillars has been created already. As for the other pillar, it is still not clear what exactly is happening. If all the people in your republics (and that's almost 300 million people) were Gorbachevs, then the issue would be resolved."

"That's fine," M.S. laughed, "This is how I understand the task before me: I have to strengthen the second pillar."

"We also want this," F.M. cheerfully assured him. "Did you notice that in my statement for the TV cameras I just spoke in favor of a Union that is strong, cohesive, and reinforced by federal ties? This would be very important not just for your countrymen, but for the interests of France, and Europe in general. France will never, under any circumstances, encourage the destruction of the Union. Under Stalin, this position was fraught with certain problems. But even then, at the time of de Gaulle and Stalin, France and the USSR were allies. This is even more important now, when your country is becoming truly democratic.

I repeat, I am convinced that Europe will form. All our policies are aimed at reaching this goal as soon as possible. If this does not happen as quickly as we would like, then a situation will arise the consequences of which Europe will suffer for centuries."

This was followed by a merry drinking of "coffee and cognac" in the adjoining room, which did not have enough space for everyone to sit down. They talked about whatever came to mind. M.S. could not stop talking. Mitterrand, sitting in a large chair, would occasionally "stop" the disorderly conversation with significant remarks... with a kindly-indulgent smile on his tired face.

Andrei Grachev and I went to Soustons to spend the night, to a tourist hotel where the rest of Gorbachev's team was staying. In the morning we returned to Lache. There was a breakfast meeting, with a discussion of urgent financial and food assistance to the USSR. A

young woman, the lovely Anne Lauvergeon (an expert in these affairs, she is also the “sherpa”) was present, she had just flown in from Moscow to report to her President.

I think this just about covers this, I think quite remarkable, meeting between two presidents.

November 3, 1991, Sunday

These will probably be the decisive days, after all. After a thoroughly inebriated vacation, Yeltsin woke up and sobered up, and showed what he is capable of. And it was to be expected... Only M.S. did not expect it. He kept thinking that through persuasion and friendly terms Yeltsin could be “channeled,” as he likes to say.

Yeltsin’s report at the Congress of the RSFSR is, of course, a breakthrough to a new country and a new society. Although all the ideas and plans for this breakthrough were laid in the “philosophy” of Gorbachev’s *perestroika*. But Gorbachev could not break his habits in time, even though more than once he confessed: “we are all from the past.” Alas! Not everyone had the strength to break with the past completely, and most importantly—in time!

Yeltsin did make the break, and surrounded himself with people of different motivations—careerists, impudent scoundrels, sincere democrats, true intellectuals, skilled administrators, old and new businessmen—all of whom made the change [*perestroivshimisy*]. He was able to use them to break with the era of 1917 once and for all.

His report was either all or nothing. But this is how great things were always done in Russia. M.S. did not go beyond Mirabeau. Yeltsin will go on to be a Napoleon, stepping over Dantonism, Robespierreism, Barrasism, and even the Enrages...

He threw people a sliver of hope... This is a sign of charisma, despite his primitivism as a person... As a person, he is mediocrity and dullness, but as a leader in this particular situation he is exactly what is needed.

And he is betting on Russia. Again and again I repeat that Gorbachev’s historic mistake was that he was tied by the psychology of “internationalism” and did not understand Russia’s role. On a human level I feel sorry for him, but it is a sorry sight for me... Instinctually he understands that it is not only pointless to oppose himself to Yeltsin right now, but from the standpoint of the country’s interests—it is impermissible. He has no alternative... Neither Yavlinsky, nor the State Council, nor the interstate economic committee is an alternative.

The only way out is through the irrational nature of Russian consolidation, in the desperation that brings people together. When Moscow was without bread and milk before, people would yell at Gorbachev. Nowadays there is practically none of either, and people are rallying around Yeltsin... and Popov!

Yeltsin announced: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is to be cut tenfold! Why by 10, and not 2, 5, or 20? It doesn’t matter... The point is to liquidate this expensive central department, the last pillar of Gorbachev’s real activity... And Kozyrev, when he “convened” his colleagues

from the republics for a meeting, openly said: no Union, no President. We will leave him with protocol functions. Yeltsin said last spring that, “We will leave Gorbachev this much, even though he wants this much!” (he gestured with his hands). “His position will be like that of the Queen of England.” Now Yeltsin achieved that goal.

Our neighbors on Smolenskaya are in a panic: some are hurrying to bow to Kozyrev, some are going off to JV (joint ventures), some are off to protest demonstrations, etc.

Yagodin (Minister of Education) called me, saying that Lazarev (RSFSR Minister of Finance) closed the accounts for institutions subordinate to the Union (Moscow State, Bauman, Mendeleev Universities, the Pedagogical Institute, the Moscow Aviation Institute, the Moscow Power Engineering Institute, etc.), which means that hundreds of thousands of students did not get their stipends in October! We are going to have a “Tiananmen,” they say... I told M.S. about this... I don’t know what he will do. This is all to say, what actions can one take here! It seems to be a provocation... But at the same time, kind of “logical”!

Yavlinsky reports that on November 4th, the Bank for Foreign Economic Affairs will declare bankruptcy: it has no means to pay for our embassies, trade missions, and other representations abroad. They won’t have means to come home... M.S. assigned me to write to Major, who is the coordinator of the G-7 right now: “Dear John! Help!”

Tomorrow the State Council is meeting, they will have another discussion about the Union Treaty and the fate of the MFA—i.e. “common foreign policy.” I wrote texts for M.S.’ theses on the MFA question. What will happen? Nothing will happen in M.S.’ favor, even if they part in peace. At the Congress, Yeltsin obtained authoritarian powers. He promised the people that in the summer there will be an improvement. And he will push his way through, without looking back either at Kravchuk or Nazarbayev... he will tolerate M.S. on the sidelines for now. He is no longer an obstacle. But since Gorbachev is “respected” in the West and in some decent, honest intellectual circles, why offend him too much! Let him fuss... within the bounds that Yeltsin will provide from his budget.

I think that tomorrow he might even keep quiet at the State Council again, with a smirk: let them play their games... they already don’t matter! Even the 100,000 Soviet officials who are losing their jobs no longer expecting anything from the State Soviet or from Gorbachev!

By the way, Baker whispered to Pavel Palazhchenko in Madrid, already on the way out: “Take the 1.5 billion—it is hard cash. Take it before we change our mind! It’s not enough? But we can’t give more than that.” M.S. told about this to the people meeting him at Vnukovo airport (Silaev, Yakovlev, and others). And nothing! Even Moskovsky (director of Moscow City Bank) and Gerashchenko don’t know about it, and did not reach for this money immediately, even though already on November 4th they are facing bankruptcy. And I am the one writing the letter to Major. So we can’t even operate on the principle of “the rescue of the drowning is in their own hands,” even after someone threw us a life-buoy, though it’s a small one.

M.S.' mistake was that he did not create an apparatus to replace the Politburo. Boldin's apparatus is designed to work completely differently... He kept thinking to adapt the Party apparatus for his new government. But revolutions have laws!

In the evening M.S. was on the phone with Kohl, talking about the MFA, the State Council, about Kohl's son who was in an accident, and about 1.5 billion and the "SOS" to Major. There was an attempt to contact Yavlinsky, but we were not able to locate him while he was "visiting friends." The same happened with Moskovsky and Nosko: our bankers are not in a rush to save the country, someone else will take care of it, they think... In a word, a nerve-wracking evening on the telephone. Afterwards, Mit'ka and I listened to Mozart on a laser disk.

The book "August Coup" came out... Yesterday I re-read the article that was written in "Zarya"... historically it would be more interesting (if anyone will read it!) than what was written about the coup and its consequences: that's done and over with, we have passed into... the Yeltsin era!

November 5, 1991, Tuesday

Today Gorbachev met with Preston. They signed an agreement on joining the IBRD... it seems in the name of the "Soviet Union," which all our newspapers and other media outlets are calling "former"... while heads of foreign states are congratulating the "USSR" with the 74th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution!

Yesterday there was a session of the State Council. Gorbachev made an emotional introductory speech about "the current, most difficult moment," but the heads of sovereign states (former Soviet republics) refused to discuss it... He strongly urged them to exchange views and to "work together"... they kept mum. Yeltsin, who arrived 15 minutes late, rudely demanded that they "stick to the agenda."

The agenda included the question of implementation of the Economic Agreement, on which nothing has been done... The memorandum on external debt, to which M.S. referred to Madrid and in Lache, turned out to be signed only halfway... Mutalibov and Karimov declared that they don't have to pay, it is the Center that has to pay them... And try as he might, Yavlinsky failed to convince them not to follow the Bolsheviks of 1917, who stated that the Tsar made the debts so he should pay them. They did not heed...

About 80 Union ministries have been eliminated. In Moscow alone, around 50,000 officials are out on the street.

Today Gerashchenko cut off funds for government officials (following students and university professors). I, for example, did not get my salary today.

At the closed part of the State Council, Gorbachev managed to salvage the MFA (it will not be reduced tenfold, as Yeltsin wanted, but only by 1/3), the Interior Ministry, and the unified armed forces. When it came to the MFA, his information on Bush's, Gonzalez', and Mitterrand's positions probably had an effect.

In the same vein, today I gave a message to the TASS on the “West’s desire” to deal with a Union, and their appalled reaction to the demands to abolish the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Today we (Ignatenko, Grachev, and I) finally persuaded M.S. to give an interview to the BBC’s Masha Slonim, for the series “The Second Russian Revolution.” He was magnificent. He spoke for 1.5 hours... Bright, decided, eloquent, profound, sincere. He slipped neither in language nor in his assessments, even of Ligachev and Yeltsin. Incredible. Afterwards, we praised him a great deal and even drank some gin for the occasion.

But immediately after that, Turbin (Prosecutor General) told him that some lawyer from the former KGB³² initiated a criminal case against him under Article 64 for treason—for tearing away the territories of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. Totally perplexed, he clutched the phone and was going to call various people: to stop *Pravda*, which was going to publish this, to forbid, disable, warn... in a word, the General Secretary in him was coming out: how dare they! If the three of us hadn’t been nearby, there would have been trouble. Unanimously we told him that this a story for the “horns and hoofs” section of a comic magazine. He calmed down and went to his dentist appointment.

November 8, 1991

The second day of the “holiday”... Yesterday morning, the TV showed “November 7th on Red Square in 1980,” as a mockery. Brezhnev, Ustinov, Suslov, Ponomarev... and... Gorbachev... in the background! This is awful: you feel horrified that we lived in that atmosphere... But we did! and... and one feels sad! I was at 42nd kilometer, on the occasion of Yura Plam’s 70th anniversary. His relatives from Kaliningrad were there. They live in harmony with the Lithuanians and feel completely fine in their environment; they even set their lifestyle as an example. They regret that Lithuania did not get its independence two years ago.

I wrote a letter from M.S. to Bush, which Yakovlev will take there—he is going with lectures and as the head of the “Group on Strategic Stability.” I tried to finish up a letter of instructions to our ambassadors in the G-7 countries, so they would not rub shoulders too much with envoys from our sovereign new-states, which may interfere with creating a Union. But it is not coming together. Plus, I am certain that it will not go anywhere.

November 9, 1991, Saturday morning before work

I spent the night in a strange state of half-sleep. Only in this state did I understand what I heard on TV yesterday at 9 p.m.: Yeltsin imposed a state of emergency in Chechnya, appointed Burbulis as his first deputy in the Russian government; Kravchuk declared that the Center has completely exhausted itself and there can be no question of any political union. Ukraine will be independent. He expressed his confidence that 85 percent will vote for this at a referendum. And more along these lines.

³² Later we found out that it was Iljukhin, who became Zyuganov’s assistant and a deputy of the Russian State Duma. [Author’s note]

What does this mean? That Russia has set its course for the Burbulis line: one and indivisible, and without those who want to be independent—cast off their burden! It also means that Russia will be ruled with an iron fist... in the name of democracy and the market. And that Ukraine will go... As for the Crimea + Sevastopol, and maybe the Donets Basin and Odessa... they will have to deal with Burbulis... and the Ukrainians will have to tuck their tail between their legs!

Plus, there are the Cossacks... Yesterday, their “all-Union” rally in Stavropol was broadcast on TV. They swore to serve Russia, like centuries ago...

And the heir to the throne visited St. Petersburg. This is a circus, of course. But with such tricks people are being acclimatized to “new life”... against the background of the fact that someone from abroad has already offered 14 million dollars for the coffin with Lenin’s body. Only the old ladies gasped. Orthodoxy brazenly tramples people’s brains—stupid, ignorant, sullen and desperate.

Meanwhile, Gorbachev is totally in the offside... Nobody needs him... Even though he tries as hard as he can to get food and loans from his Western “partners”... But in the ruin that is spreading, nobody will notice this drop in the ocean, and certainly nobody will give him credit for it...

But does dream = night? Because I suddenly acutely felt that this concerns me personally... Now only Gorbachev needs me, but nobody needs him.

That is why I must hurry up and live... Yesterday I was reading at the same time Aldaranov’s “Istoki” [Origins], Bunin’s “Zhizn’ Arsen’eva” [Life of Arsen’ev], and re-reading Bunin’s “Okayannye dni” [Cursed Days].

I have to figure out my women... What is a game and should it continue, and where is the only support in life, its meaning...

November 10, 1991, Sunday

Yesterday M.S. called me in to work for routine matters. When I got there, he was on the phone: Barannikov, Shaposhnikov, Bakatin... He was persuading them not to accumulate forces and send troops into Chechnya... i.e. to block the execution of Yeltsin’s state of emergency decree. In between calls he cursed at B.N.: “What is he doing, what is he doing! If this starts, there will be hundreds of casualties! I am informed that the governor he appointed there (Islamov) refused to carry out his duties... the Parliament (which is against Dudaev) too. All the factions and groups out there who have been arguing and fighting among themselves, now united against the ‘Russians.’ Idiots!” Barannikov, Bakatin, and Shaposhnikov completely support Gorbachev’s position... and are offering options for how to avoid clashes...

He told me: “I just spoke with B.N. After a couple seconds I could tell that it’s useless talking right now. He is too drunk to make sense.” In front of me, he called Khasbulatov, who demanded that he “get things straightened out!” M.S. told him, “Calm down. I wanted to gather

the appropriate people right now, but B.N. is 'not feeling well,' so we'll meet tomorrow at 10 a.m."

Rutskoi called and started ardently proving something. M.S. took the phone from his ear and started reading some papers on his desk. He "listened" like that for about 10 minutes! Then he said, "Aleksandr, relax, you are not at the front—to surround them, besiege them from the mountains, blockade so not a single Chechen could crawl through, arrest Dudaev, isolate others. What are you talking about? You don't see how it will end? I have information that nobody in Chechnya supports Yeltsin's decree. They are united against us, don't talk nonsense." Rutskoi again spoke vigorously for a long time. M.S. got tired of it, "Alright, bye." And put down the phone. He said to me (about Rutskoi): "He is a good, honest fellow. But people like him should not be allowed anywhere near politics."

Yakovlev came. We sat at the round table over coffee. M.S. started telling us about his "Stavropol" experience with people from the Caucasus. The refrain was: "Idiots. What kind of policy is this! They want to show their power, teach Tatarstan and Bashkiria a lesson... They will get something worse than Karabakh." We talked about Burbulis, who will now determine Russia's policy.

M.S.: "Here is what troubles me. It seems that Yeltsin's circle is consciously trying to make a drunkard out of him. We could have a very serious turn of affairs... He will become their instrument..."

Then M.S. "corrected" the letter I wrote to Bush for him, which Yakovlev is supposed to take over there... He crossed out the praises and compliments to Yakovlev I put there "for diplomacy's sake." The latter grinned: "I brought you what Anatoly wrote, I did not add a word to it." M.S. also crossed out the elegant criticism of the leaders of our republics, who are, I wrote, "just learning about international responsibility."

He said that on Tuesday he will have a meeting with his advisers and consultants. He will put everyone in their proper place. He said that he will name me (to set me apart from the rest) as the "special adviser"...

It seems I persuaded him to make Brutents a consultant and take him away from me. Let him be a la Zagladin, except on issues dealing with the East.

We persuaded M.S. to go to the presentation of the book "The August Coup" (November 12th). I considered what he might say there.

By the way, when the conversation turned to consultants... and to Medvedev, he added: "I can see that he is not pulling his load, but as a friend I cannot dismiss him. After all, we started out together—you, him over there (pointing to me and Yakovlev) and Vadim too (Bakatin)... We have to stick together." In general, it looked like the country needs him... Yeltsin's blooper with Chechnya "inspired" him, even though to us he said: I will try to save him; we cannot allow this matter to hurt his authority.

He mentioned something from which I understood that Silaev won't remain the head of the IEC (Inter-republican Economic Committee)... Yeltsin, who removed [Silaev] from himself, is probably against it! Back in Madrid, Lukin whispered in my ear: how is it possible that the Union government is headed by a person who was rejected by Russia... That means M.S. "disposed" of him, even though "in Russia," Silaev worked for Gorbachev. This is how it works out. One more example of a "betrayal" and leaving the group (there are people behind Silaev) for the M.S. opposition camp... purely on moral grounds.

I took a long walk to the Kremlin. When I got to my office, there were immediately papers and phone calls.

November 11, 1991, Monday

The Russian Parliament not only reversed Yeltsin's decree on Chechnya, but appointed a commission to investigate how such a decree could have appeared in the first place.

Is this a blow, or just a slap? I think it's probably a slap—for the Russian masses Chechnya is a trifle, they don't care about it... The masses will wait before deciding about Yeltsin—to see what he does with prices, bread, and milk!!

M.S. didn't succeed yesterday in convening a meeting with Yeltsin on Chechnya. The latter was drunk throughout the "holidays." Although, Pankin visited him yesterday and got approval for the "Ministry of External Relations" project.

Tolya Kovalyov visited Shevardnadze to consult on the draft.

Novoe Vremya ran an article stating that on June 20th in Berlin, Baker had told Bessmertnykh about the conspiracy and the latter notified M.S. A rumor spread in connection with this article—that Chernyaev hid the notice...

Analysis = speculation... in a serious journal! How primitive these democratic-sensational journalists of ours are, how superficially they see things—Agatha Christie-style. The reality is both much simpler, and more psychological... There was no conspiracy... There was an intent and calculation that it would be possible to reel Gorbachev in... There was a conspiracy maybe 3-4 days before August 18th, not earlier than that. And as soon as M.S. "gave them a kick in the ass," everything crumbled. From the start, the nature and makeup of the State Emergency Committee made it unfit to play Pinochet!! They had the old line of thinking and belief that all "normal" people think like them. Indeed, we have tens of millions of normal people all around the country. They really were ready to dutifully follow the State Emergency Committee... but these kinds of things are done with hundreds, not millions...

Vattani (Andreotti's assistant) visited M.S. and told him about the NATO meeting in Rome on the 7th-8th. Indeed, they are fixing the "new era" policies. This was M.S.' view of it... Only the components of this era are not what he thinks... In this, he is diametrically at odds with NATO, led by Bush. They lost an enemy... But from M.S.' point of view, they obtained a new partner, just as powerful (in the future).

After meeting with US governors, M.S. rushed to the Column Hall for the celebration of Dostoyevsky's 170th anniversary, where Karyakin is making a report. Yura invited me, too... I both wanted to go, and didn't. The public was a "nuisance." M.S. went there because it is a part of R.M.'s "Cultural Fund."

November 13, 1991, Wednesday

Yesterday the presentation of the book "August Coup" took place. The MFA's press center was full of diplomats, activists, and journalists.

M.S. made a good speech. The questions were commendable, he replied readily. But the most important thing: it would seem this is a major political event, Gorbachev is talking about the things that are most important right now—the fate of the Union, the new structure of society, new layers and their interaction, freedom to the peasant, and what will happen to the separatists. But after I got back to the office, I found out that Yegor Yakovlev (TV) ordered to give only 2-3 minutes of airtime to this event on the program "Vremya." I tried to locate Yakovlev and called his driver, who told me: "Yegor Vladimirovich stopped by the House of Cinema, and now he left in a private car, I don't know where, and he ordered me 'not to look for him until morning.'"

M.S. called me: "How are they presenting me?" Grachev and I reached Lazutkin (Yakovlev's deputy on TV), persuaded him to give it some airtime after "Vremya." He did...

In the morning I found out that Yakovlev is furious that Lazutkin went "against orders" and demanded Lazutkin's resignation. I reached M.S. in his car... he invited Yakovlev to talk... They talked for an hour. I saw Yegor when he left M.S.' office, he had a satisfied look, which means M.S. again reached a compromise.

Grachev, Ignatenko and I called all the newspapers to get them to publish Gorbachev's speech from the book presentation. The result is that *Izvestiya* ran only his response on Chechnya-Ingushetia. And even that is only to bait him against Yeltsin... No other paper even mentioned the event and the fact that the President spoke about the situation in the country.

The previous morning he gathered his aides and advisers. This happens rarely. He assigned our roles, and started talking about the information blockade of the President. It boiled down to M.S. saying irritably, "Yeltsin's circle is 'running' from microphone to microphone, while you are sitting in your offices. You are used to the CC, where everything that 'came from us' was printed, no questions asked!"

It was a demonstration of his impotence... Even though he boosts himself by appealing to history, which will "have the upper hand."

Tomorrow the State Council is meeting... I am afraid that they might inflict the last blow, especially after a financial swindle was discovered in the Supreme Soviet. The machinery of State has no means to pay people's salaries. The 30 billion that M.S. requested can only be printed on a printing press.

The Union Treaty, which will be on the agenda in Novo-Ogarevo, will not pass. I read the new version. But Kravchuk isn't going to show up at all... nobody from Ukraine will. Revenko tried for a long time to persuade each of the republic's presidents to come... but toward evening it was still not clear, whether they would! All of this looks like Gorbachev's rearguard undertaking...

November 14, 1991, Thursday

Today *Pravda* published Bol'shakov's second opus, exposing Mr. Chernyaev on a passage about Mitterrand in Gorbachev's book... There is an obvious forgery: two photocopies were imposed upon each other, crookedly. One of them has Gorbachev's writing: "To A.S. Chernyaev," it is on an article (you can see the text!) and the signature dates to August 15th, before the coup. The second one reproduces the phrase about Mitterrand... The visual impression is that the signature authorizes the book's text, while in reality it has to do with something completely different. What morals and manners! My friends advise me not to get involved—if you do not touch it, it doesn't stink!

I got some calls on my private phone line: "Have you read *Pravda*? See how they got you!"... "They got you good, eh? There's more to come!" Then he hung up... This is on government phones! Some people!

All day today I was working on the meeting M.S.'s has tomorrow with the Minister of External Affairs of India Solanki. I included Kutsenkov's urgings and re-worked the drafts from the MFA and Brutents.

I met with Hewitt, special assistant to Bush. I had seen him before, but this was the first time we met and talked. About the same thing—the fate of the Union, Gorbachev's intentions, nationalism in the republics, the armed forces and nuclear weapons!

November 15, 1991, Friday

This morning M.S. met with Solanki. He is a dull, gray man. M.S. explained the situation to him and called for patience... and to preserve the capital of relations accumulated under Rajiv Gandhi.

Then Solanki went to Yeltsin, who instructed the Minister: "Do not bother with the Union, it doesn't have anything. I have everything—oil, equipment, weapons, and transportation. And I will take from you what Russia needs. Make a political union with us, and everything will be good for you... No? You don't want to? Then take a hike to your Gorbachev!"

And this is after Novo-Ogarevo, after they agreed to a "confederative democratic state."

In the morning Andrei Grachev gave me an "artistic reenactment" of what happened in Novo-Ogarevo... ("Van'ka in a village") Later M.S. told us about it even more eloquently and colorfully... with his gestures and expressions... I should reproduce it. But not right now, I am too tired.

November 17, 1991, Sunday

M.S. kept Andrei and me in his office and, standing behind his desk, began to describe what happened in Novo-Ogarevo. Yeltsin started with the previous scandal before the meeting even began. He said that yesterday M.S. again attacked Russia and its President. “I told him—where did you hear this? On the contrary, I defended you.”

Yeltsin: “I was told. There you go, starting a confrontation again... You won’t get anywhere without Russia, anyway.”

M.S.: “Come to your senses, it is the other way around. Andrei, show him the transcript.”

Andrei did not have one handy; he sent a car to Moscow... Later, at lunch, M.S. showed it to Yeltsin. He looked at it, then looked at the newspaper from an arm’s length, as if admiring it: “Well, this is a different story!” (They were talking about the part where M.S. discussed Chechnya).

M.S. continued: “I decided for myself—I put everything on the line—to achieve the main goal. It is either a state or something vague, amorphous—and then I am leaving! In the draft Union Treaty this subject is in the Preamble... And off they went, each offering some kind of ‘flexible’ terminology... Yeltsin (with the words of his Burbulis), [suggested] ‘A Union with some government functions’... ”

I asked him, ‘What is that?’ He said, ‘Something with no Center.’ I said, ‘I am also against the old Center, but I demand that we have a State, i.e. something with power functions.’

I exhausted all my arguments... But overall, not one of our republics’ leaders, not even Nazarbayev, actively supported the argument. Mostly it was between me and Yeltsin.”

Kudryavtsev (academician) and V.M. Yakovlev (not A.N., but another one, his legal adviser), who were present at the meeting, suggested to use the word “confederative.”

Yeltsin: “So what! Where there is a confederation, there is a federation, and then we are back at the Center! This won’t do.”

Kudryavtsev: “But it is a democratic formation!”

Yeltsin: “Oh, well, if it’s democratic, then alright.”

M.S.: “Then let’s call it a ‘Confederative democratic state’...”

They chatted about it... and agreed. This took four hours, all before lunch.

Andrei commented on Yeltsin’s behavior this way: “You know, it is like big Van’ka in the village. ‘Come on Van’, let’s do it, it would be nothing to you, it’s for your own benefit...’ ‘I don’t want to do it, I don’t want to and that’s it, this doesn’t suit me!’ ‘But Van’, think about it, we are all asking you, look—people are staring, waiting for you, everything depends on you!’

‘But I don’t want to.’ ‘But think about it, when you sober up, you will regret that you did not agree. Tonight you’ve had a little too much to drink... But tomorrow things will be clearer.’ ‘Alright, fine, I agree. But watch it!’”

M.S.: “Next, we talked about the power structures. About the president. I told them that the president should be elected by the people. All of them responded ‘why is that? After all, each one of our republics will have a president, why do we need another one? It would be dual power...’

I told them: ‘It would not be dual power, but a clear separation of powers and complete control over delegated rights and duties.’

They: ‘Fine, but let the president be appointed (or elected) by the parliaments of the sovereign states.’

I told them: ‘No... I will not agree to be a puppet or a ceremonial bystander, so everyone could walk all over the president. And it’s not about me. Whoever it might be, if we are talking about a State that would be the subject of international relations, with unified armed forces and a foreign policy, with a common market, financial system, and so on—there has to be a plenipotentiary and powerful head of state, who has a mandate from the people.’”

He prevailed upon them in the end: the president would be elected by the citizens of sovereign states—members of the Union. There would be a triple citizenship (“automatic” former citizenship, the citizenship of the sovereign state, and Union citizenship)... This is so a person would have equal rights on the entire territory of the Union, there would be one overall “Union” citizenship for everybody. The elections would be held according to the law, meaning that the sovereign states could lead them differently, possibly through electors. Still, it would be a mandate from the citizens themselves, not from parliaments or some other authorities.

Yeltsin threw out a comment: “The electoral college is nice, like in America!” M.S. remarked: “Doesn’t he know that in the U.S., the president is quite something!”

Then, in the same spirit, they went at it again—how the common parliament should be structured. Yeltsin insisted that it should have one chamber, composed of the delegations of the states’ parliaments. “I spoke sharply against this,” M.S. said. “Because once again, it would turn the president into a puppet. Yeltsin objected, but I won him over. I said—but Boris, then Turkmenistan would have 50 representatives, and Russia would have 50 representatives!!”

“What?!” Yeltsin bellowed.

“‘Well, if you are for that kind of parliament, then...’ And you know,” M.S. laughed, “I said this in front of everybody, in front of Niyazov (the future President of Turkmenistan—“Turkmenbashi”). We quickly came to an agreement that the second chamber would be elected by all citizens.”

They got through discussing the situation with the Ministry of External Relations, the Defense Ministry, and the unified armed forces without further scandals.

But, they got stuck on the budget—on M.S.’ request for 30 billion for the quarter until the end of the year. Here again, Yeltsin began to play the Van’ka. “I won’t give you the printing press, and that’s final. Money is practically not worth anything right now as it is”... Gerashchenko and other financial experts were called to the floor. One after another they tried to explain to Yeltsin that a State, no matter what kind, cannot operate even a day without money. And there is no money in the State Bank. After all... something is left of the government: the Army, the Academy of Sciences... people have to get their salaries, and students their stipends...

“I’m not giving it and that’s that!” Yeltsin responded.

They argued for two hours... Among other things, they appealed to him not to disband the Ministry of Finance tomorrow (November 15th is the deadline), because then there would be nobody to distribute the money, even if it became available.

“Fine! Let them live until December 1st!” Yeltsin was so kind.

At the end, nobody wanted to participate in the press-conference. “You, Mikhail Sergeyevich, should tell them what we agreed.” “No way,” Gorbachev objected, “Let’s do it together, if we really have an agreement...”

Everybody moved toward the exit. But there was no guarantee that they would turn in the direction of the crowd of journalists. However, Andrei channeled the crowd so there would be no way to escape. Only one got away—Mutalibov. The rest were forced to say that “There will be a Union.”

However, the next day Yeltsin announced that he was not satisfied with Novo-Ogarevo: “We had to make more compromises than we should have.”

And he said to the *Die Zeit* magazine before his trip to the FRG—“I can resolve practically all the issues without Gorbachev!”

M.S. “complained” to me about this over the phone in the evening the day before yesterday, already after his interview to *Stern*. I reassured him. We talked about the “decline of morality in politics.” Starting with *perestroika*, M.S. began to raise the ethical bar in political activity (honesty, trust, truth, the inviolability of agreements, etc). Now everything is peddled away, but under the guise of democracy, pluralism, and *glasnost*. This plague is spreading into international relations, where M.S. created an atmosphere of trust and faithfulness to one’s word. But now, Bush and Mitterrand, and Kohl... betray him “under the pressure of *real politik*,” they betray their assurances to support his policies, they quickly change course for the new “real” centers of power—Russia, Ukraine. Even Uzbekistan...

In this regard, Kohl’s behavior towards Yeltsin, who is going there on the 21st, will be a test.

November 19, 1991, Tuesday

Yesterday I was at lunch with Braithwaite, at the British Embassy. All the talk was about us—what will happen after the State Council on November 14th? Russia—Yeltsin—Ukraine, debt... Sherpas, the seven of them are here right now... Did M.S. foresee that this would happen with the CPSU? When did he understand, that they are going in different directions?

But, even though it was barely noticeable, the Ambassador behaved differently toward me—less deferentially, since I no longer represent a superpower and the world-respected Gorbachev.

Today, Ambassador Blech... Before Yeltsin's visit to Germany... I told him about a great deal... And, by the way, I told him (confidentially), alluding to M.S., that [this visit] will be a test of his Chancellor's friendship with Gorbachev, and the Chancellor's own statements regarding support for Gorbachev's policies and the integrity of the Union... even though M.S. supports Yeltsin's policies, does not see an alternative, and sincerely tried to save him in the Chechnya incident!

About Honecker... Yeltsin was ready to agree to sell him for marks or something like that... but if M.S. gives him up, even the most notorious anti-Communists will condemn him, though nobody here ever particularly liked Honecker.

Today M.S. signed an order to name me "Special Adviser for International Affairs." This is to compensate for my refusal to become a State Adviser.

Today there was an epic affair with naming Shevardnadze a Minister, and assigning Pankin as an ambassador to London. M.S. called me, saying "Connect me with Major, urgently. (I thought it would be to pressure the "G-7" sherpas who are in Moscow right now.) Major could not be located... M.S. called me again: "Give me your Braithwaite..." I replied, "He is at lunch right, it is a sacred thing for an Englishman!" M.S. cursed. Finally, they found Major. It turns out M.S. wanted an agrément (at once!) for Pankin. Major promised, breaking all diplomatic canons, to do it immediately. Just as soon as he could speak with the Queen, he said. In an hour, Braithwaite called me and said: Her Majesty approves!

All of this took place in the presence of Shevardnadze and Pankin, both of whom were sitting in M.S.' office... He offered Pankin to position of State Adviser on International Relations to the President, and a member of the Political Consultative Committee. But Pankin—with a stony face and his protruding jaw—asked to be returned to the embassy post.

M.S. in his presence praised him very highly to Major: he is my friend, a wonderful person, who has done so much in three months.

What's going on? At the State Council, when they were approving the Ministry of External Relations, they agreed on Shevardnadze. I doubt that it was Yeltsin's initiative... (his Kozyrev is a whelp next to E.A. Shevardnadze, but he would have been equal with Pankin). Most likely the republics wanted it so their ministries would have a patron, a figure that was not "accidentally at the top." And Gorbachev needed it even more, because if E.A. agreed, it would

be a signal that the Union structures are viable and the “coordinated” common foreign policy has a future. It is most welcome right now, to show the West...

November 21, 1991

It has been exactly three months since our rescue from “Zarya.” How long ago it was!

M.S. flew to Irkutsk after another unsuccessful session on the budget at the Supreme Soviet. All the newspapers are making fun of the Supreme Soviet session (*Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*).

But let us talk about Gorbachev.

He easily parted with Pankin: *real politik*! He returned E.A., who until the last day was giving the press degrading assessments of Gorbachev, and, of course, elevating himself.

Back in the day, he pushed away Yakovlev (for Ligachev and Ryzhkov...)—for the sake of *real politik*. Because of *real politik*, he held on to Ligachev until the last drop, out of fear to lose what seemed to be one of the unshakeable pillars—the CPSU. In the meantime, if he had not lingered with the 5th article of the Constitution and left the General Secretariat immediately after it was repealed, the Party would have split. But the most intelligent and progressive part of it would have been preserved—for him, for *perestroika*. Instead, not only did he lose it entirely, but he made it into his fierce enemy.

Now Kohl is doing *real politik* with Yeltsin. But the ethics that M.S. introduced into world politics are also a reality. Without it, there would be no trust, and without trust there wouldn't be anything, including the German unification.

So far it doesn't look like the Chancellor has gotten this, either himself or through Blech. We'll see whether he will call Gorbachev. Bush did. If Kohl doesn't, he sold out.

And the issue is not that we have to adjust to the environment, such is the fate of politics; it is that looking ahead is also the ability to take reality into account.

I do not believe that the kind of Union M.S. envisions right now is viable. And I doubt that the initialing ceremony will take place tomorrow. Not to mention that yesterday, Kravchuk publicly stated that he will never sign any Union Treaty. There is already a joke going around: one fur cap with earflaps + five [Central Asian] skull caps = the new Union. It's sad, but true... But later, in the future... We are going to take the European way = the way of the common market.

However, it is possible that the Muslim republics will join the Muslim world in the South. But that would mean war in Kazakhstan. The Cossacks are already preparing. And war in Ukraine—for the Crimea... We cannot give it away, it would be a disgrace to the national consciousness of Russia. And it is the only “ideological” pillar of Russian policy. Otherwise, the people will not withstand the economic reforms.

But let us return to Gorbachev. According to the logic imposed on him (M.S. realized it and therefore took E.A.), he has to quickly and markedly shift into the sphere of foreign relations... and became a Weizsäcker, Cossiga, even the “Spanish King” with his army (a very limited and professional one, although he is ill fit to command the respect of the military and the officers—not based on his personal qualities, but based on his rank)... And later, he should become a figure from the past, like Giscard, Schmidt, Kissinger, Vance, Thatcher... Although that is not done here. But let him pave the way. The Roman Club is offering him honorary membership and even the position of honorary chairman. Why not?!

If the trip to Irkutsk (to the military factories and a garrison) is a step in the direction of the army, it is the right move... But he has to do it sooner, he cannot allow Yeltsin to take the Russian army into his own hands. M.S. should become its patron, including the Cossacks... After all, he is from there, even though he is a “non-Cossack.”

What do I have to do with this? I promised to be with him until the end. He offered me this when two times I hinted at retirement. We had a falling out over Foros (and over of my TV interview—because of R.M.), there was a chill, but it seems to have disappeared... Revenko really resisted making me the Special Adviser for international affairs, but M.S. did it anyway...

So, I will serve until the end. What else have I left to do?

But on Saturday Belikov visited me, from the editorial office of *Red Square*, a presidential newspaper that has been trying to get off the ground for a year now. Finally, it looks like it is going to start getting published, even though it has no means or sponsors. Belikov suggested that I should open the first issue with an article on Gorbachev, or an interview. I think I will decline...

I am not afraid of apologetics: he deserved it as a historic figure of the XX century... But against the background of the load of psycho-Freudian publications (for example, Professor Belkin’s article in *Kul’tura*) and just the yellow press portraiture of him, I would look pathetic, like an obedient official, unless I say everything or almost everything that I know and think about him.

No way! Once I retire, then we’ll see... And even then—for posthumous notes...

A few days ago Yulia Drunina committed suicide. It means that for some people, the shock of our lives makes them want to slam the door on their way out. Or... is it the collapse of the entire past of socialist spirituality? Maybe not even the “socialist,” but in the ‘30s, and during the war, and afterwards, in the ‘80s—there was life, there were passions, struggles, ideas, and a “way of life”... Everything collapsed. And to replace it (so far??!)—absolutely nothing, not even store shelves with goods.

That is why Gorbachev represents the loss of hope in the eyes of the people.

November 23, 1991, Saturday

Yesterday, while M.S. was in Siberia and Kyrgyzstan, I was preparing his interview for Kyodo News, working on a platform for a conversation with Janitschek,³³ greetings for Dubcek's 70th anniversary, materials for the meeting with the Spanish parliamentarians, materials for a meeting with Velayati (Iran). In other words, my regular work. Overall, I did get to enjoy myself while he was traveling, as I had planned to...

Gorbachev is being shown in a sarcastic light on TV... His actions are portrayed as convulsive attempts to keep his position... It looked that way especially against the background of Yeltsin in Germany, where Kohl embraced him the same way as he had Gorbachev just a little while ago.

I wonder, will Kohl call his friend in Moscow about the outcomes of Yeltsin's visit. He did not call before the visit. Only Blech came to visit me, and even that was on his own initiative.

November 24, 1991, Sunday night

I was waiting for a call from M.S. He called only at 12:30 a.m. It is not certain whether the State Council and the initialing will take place tomorrow, which M.S. promised to the whole world. And what will he do, if it goes wrong... threaten to leave once again?!

Right now... at 11 p.m. "Vesti" broadcast an interview with M.S. from Vnukovo airport. He flew in from Kyrgyzstan yesterday. His view on Yeltsin's visit to Germany: he considers it normal... And, he said, they should not oppose Russia—the largest state—(!) Usually he called it a republic, along with the others—which cements this enormous (silence) organization (instead of the word Union!). And again: do not oppose them. There are common interests... And a common policies (again!) instead of 12 and 8 foreign policies (I "gave" that phrase to him, it's from some newspaper). He keeps referring to this "image." He looked sad, tired... in that hat of his. With sad eyes.

He should tell them all to go to hell!!

He probably did not bring much from Siberia and Kyrgyzstan...

We'll see tomorrow...

November 25, 1991, Monday

As could be expected, the Union Treaty was not initialed at Novo-Ogarevo. We know what Gorbachev told the journalists on TV. Even though he lost his temper sometimes, he made the best of a very bad bargain. He just called me at home and told me, "It was harder than on the 14th, it was an exhausting struggle, I flogged them, I left them"...

I said: "But on TV you seemed to mention that they feel the need to put an end to the maneuvering... That the country can't take much more..."

³³ Hans Janitschek, Secretary of the Socialist International from 1969-1977. [Translator's Note]

M.S.: “That’s what I want them to finally realize.”

I: “Who was the main (saboteur)...”

M.S.: “He is the main one (i.e. Yeltsin).”

For the TV, M.S. tried to present the collective communiqué on the transfer of the draft to the republics’ Supreme Soviets as a form of initialing... But even the terminology (the meaning of the word) is different.

I am certain that the parliaments will bury the draft... In the best case scenario, they will postpone it “indefinitely”...

M.S. is facing a choice—to carry out his threat to leave, or to keep dragging it on (and be everyone’s laughing-stock). This is not just defeat. It is worse: one more humiliation on the most important issue, which still carried a symbol of his power—statehood.

November 26, 1991, Tuesday

Details from Novo-Ogarevo.

Yeltsin was the ringleader of the disruption. He brought a heap of comments on the draft Union Treaty.

M.S. said to him: “What is this, didn’t we agree on everything last time? And before that, we developed this draft together.”

B.N.: “What of it? Some time has passed, we discussed it in groups and the Supreme Soviet committees... people are saying this draft won’t do. The main question again is that it is not a State, but just a Union... or a ‘Confederative Union.’”

M.S. once again started to prove his point. Only the Kazakh supported him—Nazarbayev’s deputy, a Dr. of Law, the one who used the metaphor from Mayakovski—“a cloud in trousers.” The rest hesitated... Almost all of them, except Akayev, who felt uncomfortable objecting since M.S. had just been his guest .

M.S. got completely worked up. Three hours later he told them, “As you wish. I am leaving. Stay here without me. And decide. Whatever you decide, that’s what you’ll do.”

And he went to his office.

An hour later, a “deputation” came to him: Yeltsin and Shushkevich.

B.N. came in, averting his face, practically spitting with disgust (Grachev’s words), saying, “We came, cap in hand, to our prince, our Khan...”

M.S. to him: “Stop it, tsar Boris. Let’s get down to business.”

He came back to them... And they agreed on a joint statement, which in front of the journalists M.S. tried to equate to initialing.

Later, at a strictly closed meeting [they discussed] how Yeltsin will carry out his economic program. His colleagues from the republics tried to persuade him to go easier, saying that he is putting them in a terrible position. He told them, "We are already late; on December 16th I am introducing free-market prices."

M.S. reacted sluggishly... Only warned about social upheaval.

Yavlinsky in his report, after bowing to Yeltsin's courage, said that the main question is what all of them will do after February, when people will take to the streets. The old, dying system will keep "developing" on momentum until February. But this will only last until the end of February. Then there will be a collapse. Are you ready for this? Are you thinking about this? Nobody replied.

In the evening, M.S. gathered his advisers and consultants and set them before the task of thinking about what we should do!

Yesterday I had a long conversation with Yakovlev. He came back from the U.S... He came over and, sitting across from each other, we went over everything for about two hours. Our conclusion: whether we like it or not, there is no alternative to Russia's breakthrough path on its own. Gorbachev's attempts to save the Union are hopeless convulsions.

And in general, the situation wouldn't be too bad if it wasn't for Ukraine, for the Crimea, which it is impossible to give up.

November 27, 1991, Wednesday

M.S. met with Japanese businessmen. They talked business... They know more about our industry than we do. And yet, they want to "work" with us.

M.S. still remains a world-leader on the world stage. And he should "shift" his presidential role precisely in this direction. He should engage in political and "spiritual-ethical" affairs of the modern world... And take a distanced position on domestic affairs, warning about dangers now and then.

In this spirit, I held a meeting with my consultants. I made a speech; we talked and decided that they will put together a draft of this image with such a "shift."

The eloquent and not very clear, impetuous Yermonsky; the practical and cautious Gusenkov; the active and very knowledgeable Palazhchenko; the strained Kovalyov (the son); the calm and skeptical Weber; the show-off, pseudo-scientific and self-assured, but, it seems, really "prepared" Kuvaldin.

November 28, 1991, Thursday

Today M.S. met with Ernst Neizvestny. This is “my work.” By the law of pairs—his article was published in *Voprosy Filosofii* [Questions of Philosophy] No. 10.

The company: Yu. Karyakin, Andrei Grachev, Ignatenko, and I.

M.S. opened up to the limit... As if he was at a fraternal banquet. And politically he said some things for the first time... He called himself a dissident since 1953. Ernst and Yurka burst into my office three hours before the meeting. And with me, Ernst was more interesting than with M.S. We’ll see how this meeting will resound tomorrow. It was recorded by dozens of reporters and TV operators. They say that after leaving M.S., Ernst was “dignified and reserved,” without euphoria (I didn’t hear it myself)... Even though M.S.’ openness seemed unusual even for me. [Imagine what it was like] for an “outsider”... after all, Ernst was speaking with “The Man of the Century,” the man who changed the world!

M.S. (to me): “If you write an address to the parliaments, maybe something will work out.”

Together with Andrei, we engineered a “retort” to the White House regarding the U.S.’ promise to diplomatically recognize Ukraine after the December 1st referendum... The MFA again proved to be flimsy (E.A. + Petrovsky).

November 29, 1991, Friday

This was a remarkable day in many respects.

In the morning I gave an interview to *Newsweek*, for an end of the year review, mostly on M.S.’ motives and actions from March of 1985 until now... About his “ideological” evolution... I shot down the myths and primitive thoughts that Fred Coleman suggested... even though he is smart and knowledgeable.

The USSR Supreme Soviet blocked the emergency budget until the end of the year, and the State Bank has closed all payments to the army and to us poor sinners, the officials. We are left without our salaries.

I sent M.S. an “exploratory paper” with a recommendation to change his role toward international relations and culture... to use his world-wide prestige at home and hold on to this position, not trusting in the Union Treaty, nor in the Congress’ decisions, which elected him and confirmed the election after coup, nor the Constitution of the USSR!!

I wrote a draft address to the parliamentarians, urging them to ratify the Union Treaty, even though I don’t believe in it myself... But I found the words!

I told Ernst that I was disappointed with his interview. It was his job to support M.S. “in this situation.” He needs it. Ernst replied: “Tolya, what are you talking about? I am not a prostitute. I am grateful to you for bringing us together; and to him for being so open and sincere. That’s all!”

Yeltsin transferred the Ministry of External Relations to his “jurisdiction” and his expense... Petrovsky complained to me. I “objected”: you have Shevardnadze now, let him “tell” Yeltsin!

I am afraid the Ministry of Defense is going to face the same fate...

But what can we do? Right now, Russia still has the means to pay, and M.S. has nothing!

Izvestiya gave a dressing down to the advisers—why did they “offend” Bush for wanting to diplomatically recognize Ukraine. The newspaper poses a rhetorical question: “Which adviser suggested this?” Grachev suggested it, and I supported him and wrote the text.

Golembiovsky has no shame...

December 1, 1991, Sunday

There is no whiff of winter... Nothing is right anymore. Yesterday I expected to have a quiet day at work. In the morning I started editing the address to the parliamentarians (on ratifying the Union Treaty), instead of the version I gave M.S. on Friday.

But a report came in that he is going to meet with Yeltsin. They sat for four hours + Burbulis and Gaidar. Their conversation centered on the fact that it is impossible to leave the “Center” like this, without means [for existence]. They came to some agreement...

But at 6 p.m. the experts were still sitting in the Walnut Room, formulating a “document.”

I got a call from the MFA (pardon me, the MER): Bush wants to call M.S. at 4 p.m. I reported this to Gorbachev. He replied: “For what?! I won’t be here... (he thought for a moment)... Let them connect us, wherever I will be.”

That’s the reaction. On the one hand, the trigger went off (Grachev and mine report to the TASS about recognizing Ukraine); on the other hand, he was angry and offended... And it was unpleasant for him to speak with Bush.

The conversation started exactly at 4:00 p.m. (he wasn’t able to go anywhere). And M.S., in his usual “friendly and open” manner he started greeting George (“my dear” and so on). The latter congratulated him on the achievements in relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia (the State Council’s resolution), and moved on to Ukraine. He explained for a long time... M.S. in turn suggested our concept to him: “independence means separation,” and separation is “Yugoslavia” squared, “Yugoslavia” x 10! Bush was very careful, twice assuring M.S. that he will not do anything that would put “Michael” and “the Center” in an awkward position. Once he even said [he would not do] “something that would impede the process of the Union’s reunification.”

It was clear (he said that he will call Yeltsin immediately) that he was particularly concerned about the possibility of “violent processes” over the Crimea and the Donets Basin.

When M.S. mentioned this issue, Baker commented (he and Scowcroft were on parallel lines): “Yes, yes, this is very dangerous...” You could see that Baker has more freedom in his judgments, he is less influenced by the pressure of various lobbyists, he is more frank.

The conversation ended with Bush wishing Michael success in his difficult mission of “reunification.”

Palazhchenko translated. Yakovlev and I were present during the conversation. We discussed what we would give to the press. M.S. and A.N. threw out some common phrases, and then I had to rack my brain to write something that wouldn’t “sell-out” Bush, while at the same time would cool off Kravchuk & Co. I came up with a page. I don’t know how people will react to it.

Yakovlev said (I should find out the details) that at the Political Consultative Committee on Friday, which met from 3 p.m. – 10 p.m., everyone—Popov, Sobchak, Yavlinsky, A.N., Yegor Yakovlev, in a word, everyone—spoke in favor of the Union and condemned Yeltsin’s line, which will lead to social upheaval and is very clearly authoritarian beyond all measure. A.N. said they were ready on the spot to create a formal opposition and put together a declaration to state their views. Shatalin offered to “personally” appear on TV and “expose” all of Yeltsin’s moves.

However, so far it resulted only in Sobchak’s very definite and even sharp address on TV the same evening...

Yegor Yakovlev complained that the TV³⁴ was being “taken away” from him. He is no longer the boss there. “The Russians” are running the show... “Vesti” on Friday had some downright insulting passages about M.S. and his “Ukrainian” policy.

By the way, in the heap of information, nobody noticed that in an interview to *Izvestiya* on November 25th, Yeltsin openly said that he will not sign a Union Treaty, unless Ukraine signs it as well.

Could M.S. be right in his long-held suspicions that Yeltsin and Kravchuk conspired to collapse the Union from both sides?!

December 3, 1991, Tuesday

Yesterday he called on us to “go over” the address to the parliamentarians... urging them to approve the Union Treaty. We came up with three versions—mine, Shakhnazarov’s, and Yakovlev’s. He rejected Shakhnazarov’s right off the bat. He wanted to accept mine, but Yakovlev asked to read his out loud, with feeling. M.S. gave me a sly look, and then said: “Let Chernyaev use it as the basis and then give us the final product directly.”

I replied (also giving Shashka a sly look): “Without getting it verified by Alexander Nikolayevich?”

³⁴ Yegor Yakovlev was chairman of the All-Soviet Television Company in 1991-1992. [Translator’s Note]

M.S.: “Without!” (Everybody laughed).

In the evening I made a symbiosis... I took a great deal from Yakovlev (he had a long text), but removed the sap and flashy passages. M.S. accepted it without corrections.

Today he spoke on TV. It looked like he was speaking freely, not reading from the text. But he glanced at it every now and then. The text has been sent to each parliamentarian.

The problem is—who is going to publish it? It seems Andrei got *Izvestiya* to do it.

Shakhnazarov presented a draft of an appeal “To the citizens of Ukraine.” M.S. tore it up demonstratively: it had “historic choice,” and “Ukraine’s great role,” “congratulations with victory,” “independent, self-sufficient,” “Hurrah!” And more of the same.

He ordered me to write it, along the lines of “everyone has independence, but not everyone turns it into a weapon against the Union... The Ukrainians will be in trouble, both the people who live in the country, as well as those who are scattered around the Union... This is even more true for Russians... Borders, nuclear weapons...” In a word, alarms and warnings, and a list of consequences...

In the morning I gave it to him. He still hadn’t decided.

Today he spoke with Kohl on the phone. The latter called. The same thing about Ukraine. And warnings—do not rush with recognition; do not jeopardize what was developed in our relations “on the basis of friendship.”

Yeah... In the evening he spoke about the same thing on the phone with Yeltsin. The latter was going somewhere in a car and was already drunk. M.S. tried to persuade him to meet, or for the three of them to meet (+ Kravchuk), or the four of them (+ Nazarbayev). Yeltsin drunkenly disagreed: “Nothing will work out anyway. Ukraine is independent.”

“What about you, Russia?!” M.S. objected.

“What about me! I am Russia. We’ll manage. It won’t work out with the Union... On the other hand, if we go back to the idea of a union of four—Russia + Ukraine + Belorussia + Kazakhstan?”

“Where would my place be then? If that’s the case, I will leave. I am not going to dangle underfoot. I am not doing this for myself. But understand: without the Union, you will all fail. And you will destroy the reforms. You have to decide. To a great extent, things depend on the two of us.”

“What would we do without you, Mikhail Sergeyeovich!” Yeltsin drunkenly taunted.

“Well, what would I be, if there was no Union?”

“Don’t worry... You can stay,” Yeltsin graciously agreed.

Yakovlev and I looked at each other: how much patience M.S. has! But he is also clearly ready to leave... Without regrets... Without drama... Quietly!

It looks like that's the direction we are headed in.

Today he met with Janitschek, the former General Secretary of the Socialist International. Tim (Timofeyev, Director of the Institute of the Labor Movement) suggested him, and I convinced Gorbachev to meet. And then I took time off... and sent Weber to attend the conversation, as an "encouragement." I don't know what took place there. Timofeyev begged to have the guest visit him, but I got out of it.

December 6, 1991, Friday

You miss a day and important things disappear from your memory. For example, after the address to the parliamentarians, he made me write an address "To the Citizens of Ukraine." We spent the entire evening with him + Yakovlev and Revenko. The latter called himself an "ardent Ukrainian nationalist" and objected to the very idea of the address, saying that it "will have the opposite effect," and is "too much." "You seem to have said everything already..." and more along those lines.

Yakovlev supported Revenko. I defended the "desirability" [of the address]. Also, I proceeded not from the possible results, which are obvious. I was thinking about what is necessary for Gorbachev. He made a bet... They took everything away from him—control of the economy, management over the leaders, influence over the press... The only thing left is the idea of unifying the Union. He is its symbol and its advocate. Otherwise, he has nothing left to do... And this is clear from his agenda. He is seeking sorts of meetings, with our people and with foreigners. He gives interviews almost every day; he goes to reporters after meetings, etc. He spends hours talking with people from whom he might expect any small measure of influence over the process: either Yegor Yakovlev, or Alexander Yakovlev, or Grachev and Chernyaev, or Shevardnadze... And so on.

After composing the "Address to Ukraine," which turned into a statement that he scrapped again the next morning (I changed my point of view and convinced him that it would not be a good idea), we got together with the same group to work on his meeting with Yeltsin (on the eve of tomorrow's meeting of the three Slavic presidents in Minsk)... We did manage to go over the options because he listened listlessly and then made us listen to his monologues. There was nothing new, just more and more arguments in favor of the Union. There are dozens of them and they are all reasonable and irrefutable, but they cannot overcome the gut feeling of "We want to do it ourselves, and we are sure that it will work!"

His refrain is—if they do not agree to the Union, I will leave, there will be no place for me. At the same time, he is coming up with a plan to convene the State Council, a Congress of the People's Deputies + a direct address to "the people" (on TV)... and demand a referendum: are you for the Union, or not? These are all illusions—he won't be able to convene a Congress, or have a referendum if the republics don't want it. Plus, who will pay? And who will carry it

out, even if it's a "yes"? After all, the "reality" right now is that real power is in the hands of the elites—the Kravchuks, Yeltsins, and Burbulises.

I said all of this openly. He won't let go. And in a sense, he is doing the right thing, because this is the only "visible" activity he has left, even though the newspapers are making fun... Although, especially in connection with the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Moscow, there is some shift toward unity.

And I, with all my lack of faith in the Union—when I met with Braithwaite and Dufourcq these last two days, I ardently used Gorbachev's arguments.

Today he met with Antall, the Hungarian President [sic]. The talks were "normal," friendly... even though with some skepticism on the Hungarian's part ("such a vast country cannot be controlled from the center")... M.S. did not bat an eyelid regarding the fact that it was his mistake to refuse to invite Antall for so long. When he finally did invite him, it was only under the threat of a "Bulgarian" option, because he still would have come at Yeltsin's invitation... Once again, there was a flow of arguments (in the conversation) in favor of the Union, even more expressive. And in front of reporters he even presented Hungary as an example to Ukraine—look, it is "joining" as associate member of the EU, and Ukraine doesn't want to be in a political union with the people it has been intertwined with for centuries!

He went to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier for the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Moscow... The President and who else? Shevardnadze, Yakovlev, Shaposhnikov, Bakatin, Primakov, Silaev, Medvedev, and Grachev and I. Those are all the people close to the highest authority, the "Soviet (central) government" at the moment!! It's not much.

I felt sad, after all. I remembered how on these days 50 years ago our 203rd ski battalion of the shock army was brought by train to Skhodne-Kryukov (from where the remains of the unknown soldier were transferred)... How cold it was, and few kilometers from us there was shooting on the front line, my first encounter with the war. [I remembered] how my mother and Lyuba Artishevskaya, my first, ill-fated woman, almost miraculously made it there. For about twenty minutes we sat in some hut, the owner let us in. It was so "awkward" (Lyuba no longer loved me and was serving a charity number) and my mother, who also had "cut me off" by then, was doing her motherly duty. I don't remember that she cried. Out goodbyes were quick... accompanied by the non-stop crackle of machine guns somewhere nearby. But our battalion did not go into battle, and the next day we again were in the echelons going toward Moscow, then on the circular line, from there to Savelovskaya railroad (Leningradskaya was cut off) to the North-Western front near Staraya Russa—to surround Demyansk.

I was still given a medal "For Defense of Moscow" later. Tolmachev presented me with it... And I remember how I didn't feel too comfortable about it, since it seemed like I didn't deserve it. Although, I did spend that summer digging anti-tank trenches near Roslavl', and so on... retreating from the Germans... under fire.

December 7, 1991, Saturday

M.S. met with American businessmen, who together with Velikhov are organizing a program to teach out guys about business. Marvel! The “sharks of imperialism” are investing billions in us, for nothing!

M.S. again started on his pet subject, he was at his best, talking about “unpredictable consequences” of the collapse and rejection of the Union. And this is while the three “Slavic” presidents already decided “this question” in Minsk!

Next week both M.S. and I might find ourselves unemployed.

In the meantime... I sent him agreements between the “USSR” and Finland and Greece to sign; a greeting for the Islamic Conference (OIC) in Dakar; an address “To the readers of *Rynok* [Market] journal” (organized by *MN*); and some other nonsense.

More importantly, I’ve begun work on the theses that M.S. assigned me to create for his “1+4” meeting this Monday (with Yeltsin, Kravchuk, Shushkevich, and Nazarbayev). He gave this assignment to each of his advisers, according to their profile...

I fell behind. I had to finish it at night, and I’ll read it over tomorrow.

However, however... Next week, it is difficult to imagine that I will become unnecessary... Although, even now I am useful only to M.S. personally, not to politics.

I wonder, how will my women react to this?!

December 8, 1991, Sunday morning

I used a courier to send in my “essay” on why we need the new Union from the international relations perspective. Now this is my work, idling, for him personally.

There is still no information from Brest. Yeltsin, Kravchuk, and Shushkevich probably all got drunk in Belovezhskaya Pushcha! But judging by what Yeltsin told journalists in the Byelorussian Parliament, it is clear that they will not agree to the Union. And they will leave no place for Gorbachev... Of course, he will linger, using the fact that he still has the army. For some reason, Lobov was removed the other day and replaced by Samsonov, from the Petersburg Military District. Of course, Lobov is a blockhead from Yazov’s old cadres... But a change at a time like this? That is...

M.S. “gets” everything, and it seems he is ready for everything. Yesterday he made the Americans laugh when he said: “Reporters keep asking me, you are the President of what country?”

But on Monday at the “1+4”... the question has to be decided. Because they will not allow him to convene a Congress, and they won’t finance a referendum.

Ogonyok published yet another verbal “portrait” of M.S., written by a certain Leonid Gazman. It too has a great deal of guesswork, successful “deductions,” but also a great deal of rubbish...

Lyuda invited me to meet two of her acquaintances, Dutch journalists, to discuss this subject...

By the way, Masha Slonim from “The Second Russian Revolution” gave an interview to *MN* on how the series was created by the BBC. Unpleasant. It turns out that I and the others were simply the object of a cynical business. She boasts that for a year and a half, she regularly called me at half past seven in the morning, trying to get a meeting with M.S... She spoke with disdain about the advisers to the main players: “Well, they said what was permissible.” That means she is talking about me, too! We Russians are such simpletons. We’re gullible. Nothing teaches us a lesson... Maybe this is good from the point of view of “high morals,” which are ruining our country... Because this gullibility is compensated *post factum* by barbarity, rudeness, and senseless brutality.

Speaking of morals... Brutents made me think about it through his indignation at Krasin’s behavior. Krasin declared that he will not take anyone from the apparatus (to his Fund, which was formed in the former Lenin School... by the CC International Department, by the way). He said he always hated Party apparatchiks (even though he came from them, under Ponomarev’s wing!).

Where am I going with this? I have a trifling relationship with morality... from a narrow-minded point of view. It is enough to look through my full diary, especially its “women” parts, to see this. But what really is true (no wonder Bovin nicknamed me the Count), is that dignity and honor stand above all else for me. That is why people rarely succeeded in humiliating me. And never did I live my life at somebody else’s expense, or elbow someone to the side!!

Sunday Evening

Just heard on the radio: Yeltsin, Kravchuk, and Shushkevich agreed to establish a Commonwealth of Independent States... And tomorrow (+ Nazarbayev) they will discuss it with Gorbachev. It is an open agreement, others may join... That’s it! When Nazarbayev arrived, at the airport he said that he regrets the loss of the Union, he appealed to conclude at least a defensive alliance with central command...

M.S. finally has to decide. A clip from an interview he gave yesterday to a Ukrainian journalist was broadcast on TV. Again, he said: “Who knows if I will offer my candidacy for elections?” This is inadequate, once again. Where will he offer it? Is anyone planning to have elections? What presidency is he talking about? For whom?

In a word, I was right when I said a long time ago: there will be Union. I did not believe it even before the coup.

I went to work. I finished the international aspect of arguments in favor of the Union (for tomorrow's meeting of the four and maybe for the State Council)... Who needs this? The interstate agreement has already been made... What Union Treaty are they going to discuss? It's a joke!

I decide to talk a walk in the frosty cold. Walked out to the Manezh... And came across a thousand people demonstrating, under red and black-and-yellow flags... "Hands off Lenin!" "Hands off Socialism," "Down with (or put on trial) the traitor of the motherland, Gorbachev!"... "We are selling ourselves to the Jews with 'Patriot' Rostropovich," "Russia for Russians," etc. There were also some against the Lithuanians, in support of the Special Forces commander who bombed the TV tower in Vilnius. All kinds of "economic demands." Someone handed me a leaflet: "Everybody to the demonstration on December 22nd, out of the hungry queues!!"

Midnight. The radio just broadcast: Yeltsin, Kravchuk, Shushkevich just announced that the Soviet Union ceased to exist as a subject of international law, and all the laws pertaining to it as a state are now invalid. They agreed on how to co-finance defense... They will work out the economic mechanism over the course of December.

And I had just listened to a 1.5 hour interview with M.S. on Ukrainian TV, recorded yesterday. In it, he passionately argues that it is impossible to "separate," and that a rejection of the Union would mean ruin for us all. He did not let the Ukrainian interviewer get a word in... [He said] he would go over the heads of these "newly minted politicians, who surfaced over the last two years," he would address the nation and supposedly he still has some "means, about which I will not talk right now!"

In a word, from this moment I am living in another country—Russia. And in this country I am unemployed.

December 10, 1991, Tuesday

How did I spend yesterday, when I became "nothing"?

In the morning, in a Kremlin hallway I ran into four people: Kudryavtsev, Veniamin Yakovlev, Sergey Alekseyev, Kalmykov—the main men of law. They were coming from Gorbachev. Kudryavtsev lingered. He told me, "Mikhail Sergeevich is in a rage, he is saying that he will leave, he'll tell everyone to go to hell, he'll 'show them,' etc. We tried to persuade him not to clash with them, but instead to say 'Alright, you passed this stage, let's discuss what to do next.' Now we are going to make him a draft statement along these lines, which he plans to present after the forthcoming meeting with Yeltsin and others. What is your point of view on this, Anatoly Sergeevich?"

"I am for it."

"Support this line then."

"Definitely."

Alas! I wasn't "summoned," neither personally, nor to the various meetings he had during the day.

At noon, M.S. spoke with Yeltsin. Kravchuk and Shushkevich did not come. Before that, he spoke with Nazarbayev. Then the three of them met. I don't know what happened there. After that, he met in turn with Nabiev (Tajik), Niyazov's representative (Turkmen). Presidents Akayev and Karimov also did not come. Ter-Oganesyan publicly supported the Belovezhskaya Pushcha threesome, which sentenced the Soviet Union to death.

In the second half of the day he had a long session with the Political Consultative Committee in the Walnut Room: Yakovlev, Shevardnadze, Bakatin, Primakov, plus V. Yakovlev, Shakhnazarov, Revenko, and somebody else. They gave birth to the statement that was read by the announcer at 9 p.m. on TV. It's a good thing they realized not to let M.S. himself appear on TV. There would have been another lecture...

He announced the convening of the Congress of People's Deputies, and the possibility of a referendum. But I've already written about that here. Even if the People's Deputies collect 1/5 of the signatures, still nothing will come of it. Nicholas II has the courage to abdicate after a 300-year dynasty. M.S. does not understand that his job is done. He should have left a long time ago... preserving his dignity and respect for what he has done in history.

Travkin and the Democratic Party of Russia are going to Manezhnaya Ploshchad' to lead a mass rally for the Union... Maybe it will end in speeches... But if they go to the White House and Yeltsin's police intervenes, that would be another story.

The worthless Kozyrev said today at a press-conference, "There are two ways out of this situation—the self-liquidation of the Union organs (starting with the President) and voluntary transfer of property, or the uncivilized option like the one in August." Threats. I thought to myself, what would we take to the barricades for? We, Gorbachev's team, shat ourselves [*obosralis*] "not at this stage." Of course, seeing this intellectual gang around Yeltsin (all of those Burbulises, Kozyrevs, etc.) is disgusting. In the same way, the intellectual cadets, Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, not to mention the monarchists, were disgusted with the intellectual Bolsheviks in 1917-20. But they also shat themselves. I do not believe that Yeltsin will lead "Russian cause" on the right path. But I also do not see an alternative to "surrendering to Russia." The Union is dead...

I will go to work... which in essence no longer exists. I wonder, how will they empty out the offices—same way as in the CC CPSU?

December 11, 1991, Wednesday

A boring day. I found out that M.S. met with Yeltsin. Before that, he gave an hour and a half-long interview to V. Tretyakov (*Nezavisimaya Gazeta*). Nobody knows what he talked about with Yeltsin. In the evening, Grachev said, "Same old." Ambassador Blech asked to see me. For over an hour I explained to him what's going on, without knowing myself what's going on. M.S.

did not call me today or yesterday... Today there was no Political Consultative Committee; instead, he met with various people in turn, mostly Yakovlev and Revenko.

When I found out that he is going to speak at the Supreme Soviet tomorrow, I (with Kuvaldin's help) created a draft with 12 bullet points—an anti-confrontational one, with readiness to fit into the post-Belovezha “reality”... And to legitimize its “growth” through others.

I offered to call the country “Eurasian Commonwealth of Independent States.” I don't know how he will react. Most likely, he will see it as disloyalty: right now he does not tolerate diverging opinions, much less positions, from anyone who is in office under him.

Grachev and I talked. M.S. should concentrate on leaving with dignity. All of Yeltsin's power (plus Kravchuk and Shushkevich) is directed at toppling him right now. And in fact, Yeltsin has already done so, depriving M.S. of all means of resistance. Yesterday Yeltsin took all government communications under his control, which means he could just turn off all of M.S.' telephones, not allow his apparatus to enter the Kremlin, or just lock the doors of the offices.

Every day that he spends clinging to the Kremlin—and that's what his actions look like right now—he is delaying the day when history will place Gorbachev in the position of a great man of the XX century.

He should not look for “work”... He should just retire and continue the “tradition” of the greats and the not-so-greats—De Gaulle, Churchill, Thatcher...

True, we are not France or England, but... it is time to create “this model” of leaving. Not to fuss, not to contradict everything that he considered necessary for every decent and courageous person.

I suggested that he should use Mitterrand's idea and insist on calling together the “four nuclear powers,” to confirm where our button is and therefore the statute. He returned it without notes, or maybe he said something about it Eduard Amvrosievich before his trip to Brussels.

By the way, Kozyrev said, “Gorbachev is not a leper, we'll find work for him.” Grachev told him off at a briefing.

December 12, 1991, Thursday

It is the first time that I got to my office on a normal, ordinary day, and saw that there is no work to be done... and if there are papers, I don't have to carry them out. And the whole day I did not get a single work-related call.

M.S. is getting reports of hot rumors, by one person and the next. He is sending off parting responsibilities. Grachev got together 20 journalists for him; he said practically a farewell speech. He was completely not at a state level, frank and unnecessarily detailed in telling them about how Yeltsin, Shushkevich, and Kravchuk “got around him” on December 8th-9th.

Closer to evening he summoned me. He was sad. Asked me about my impressions of the Russian parliament, which ratified the Belovezha Accords... He wondered about the insults from astronaut Sevastyanov, who said from the rostrum of parliament, "The document is weak, but it's a good thing that "the Gorbachev era" has come to an end." Shallow simpletons! The Gorbachev era is just beginning!

He asked me to make a handwritten draft of his farewell speech for the nation. I started it, but it is still only a rough draft.

December 14th, 1991, Saturday

Yesterday M.S. surprised the Englishmen (Braithwaite and Appleyard—Hurd's deputy) by his cheerfulness, presence of mind, irony, and self-confidence, as if nothing is happening. He greeted them with the words, "So what? Have you come to find out, what country you are visiting, and who am I nowadays?" This immediately created "an atmosphere," because the Englishmen had walked in with glum, funereal expressions, looking apologetic. M.S. led the conversation confidently, brightly, figuratively, defending his ideas, but without excepting the option of looking for a solution (on the Commonwealth) that would open the brackets on many problems that appeared as the result of amateurism and ambition.

After the Englishmen left, he kept Yakovlev and me in his office. Once again, we started going over what to do. The trouble with him is that he, knowing that everything is being done to oust him from the presidency, keeps grasping at the slightest excuses to "think" that not all is lost...

For example, Kravchuk declared himself commander in chief... M.S. calls him: "What are you doing? Do you realize what this could lead to?!" Kravchuk replies, "Oh, Mikhail Sergeyeovich, this is no big deal. The Supreme Soviet insisted on it, so I issued a decree... But I have no pretensions to the army!" And so on. In a word, pulling wool over his eyes.

Then M.S. relates it to Yakovlev and me, this is what happened, so to speak, in reality it is no big deal.

Or, another example: he met with Yeltsin. They had a "peaceful" conversation, as B.N. told reporters. But afterwards, he said to the leaders of his parties, "I named Mikhail Sergeyeovich some dates—December, January at the latest—in which we (!) will finish with one era and go into the next one." A child could understand what this means—that he has two-three weeks left in the Kremlin!

By the way, I reminded him about these words. And of the fact that we have already gotten wind that the presidential apparatus has to clear out the premises by December 20th. His countenance changed, but he still kept "thinking about two options."

The first option is to go on TV and say farewell to the nation. The day before yesterday he assigned me to work on the text. I made it and yesterday gave him the handwritten version (Tamara helped me to make a typed copy for myself). But, he says, we will not rush with this.

The second option is (if today in Ashgabat and Alma-Ata the heads of the “sovereign states” reach an agreement, or do not reach it) to put forward the conditions of his agreement to “help” them solve the problems they created with their Commonwealth. These conditions are—for him to have a post, and not of a ceremonial bystander or a man on duty by the button, but... in a word, he wants a fitting position.

However, judging by the results of Ashgabat and the prospects from Alma-Ata, nobody is going to offer him a position today, or any position at all. So the second option is an illusion.

Although, when we were talking about it, I was sitting twiddling my thumbs, like Yakovlev, when he threw a remark at me, “Why are you just sitting there? Take notes. You are the one who will have to write this.”

Yesterday late in the evening he told me that Bush called him. M.S. gave him a dressing down for his behavior. He dictated to me a message to transfer to the mass media that Bush proposed to maintain regular contact. Morel (Mitterrand’s assistant) called me from the Elysee Palace, to say that his boss wants to speak with M.S. The conversation will take place today. These are all straws M.S. grasps at.

This morning I talked with Grachev. He is also in favor of M.S.’ immediate and “proactive” departure. But he paints a grim picture. We are not France (who later again called on de Gaulle), Grachev thinks, and everything won’t be “forgotten” as soon as he leaves. They won’t write off [all the problems], rather, they will start a process (together with the CPSU) to find a scapegoat (after the Honecker model).

I doubt this will happen. “The people won’t allow it.” We are not Germans. Already after his meeting with reporters the other day, “the people” began to feel sorry for him.

Although, you never know. In any case, there will be no second option. He should leave as soon as possible... Otherwise they will drive him out even harder, they will insult and humiliate him... Even Nazarbayev said, “We’ve had enough of Gorbachev’s intimidation.” Everyone perceives his “perseverance” for the Union as a struggle to keep his seat.

December 15, 1991, Sunday

Yesterday I started the day at the Kremlin by writing in my diary. I filled a few pages with thoughts on Gorbachev and his last two days. I forgot to take my actual diary notebook, so I will insert the pages here later. In the meantime, I’ll write about myself.

My consultants (Weber, Yermonsky, Kuvaldin) took bags of papers to their office on Razin Street (they have temporary rooms there)... to sort them, organize them, and destroy some of them. Because we may be driven out of the Kremlin at any moment!

Olga (Lanina) told me that they summoned Pestov, chief of M.S.’ bodyguards, and told him that starting tomorrow, Gorbachev’s security will become subordinate to Yeltsin’s!

And M.S. keeps dragging it on, hoping for something... Tonight Starovoitova asked to see him, she probably came to sympathize with him... In general, the people now “loyal” to him are mostly those from the Interregional Deputy Group, which was created under Sakharov!

December 18, 1991, Wednesday

Tonight M.S. called me, “It’s not working out.” This is regarding the text of his message to participants in Alma-Ata. In the morning he told me that he worked on it, and that Yakovlev and I should go over it. But then he gave a two-hour interview to *Komsomolka* (he gives interviews every day. Today at 4 p.m., he is giving another one to NBC!), then he met with Shaposhnikov and Barannikov, then summoned me and Yakovlev. He “confronted” my text a little bit, totally rejected Shakhnazarov’s banal and clearly unacceptable draft, which was put together in purely “constructive” tones—blessing, conciliatory, with good wishes for success... But also with advice and hints that “his way” would have been better...

Before that, we were having a conversation in passing... He asked Yakovlev, “Why are you so gloomy?” The latter anxiously began to argue that Yeltsin is afraid of serious opposition (A.N., Shevardnadze and the like!). When M.S. went to call R.M., A.N. leaned toward me and said, “I think they are going to kill me. I will ask Gorbachev to send me somewhere, for example as ambassador to Finland. Yeltsin will agree—I am a threat to him here...”

I responded with a “?” expression and an inward “smile.” M.S. came back to the table... Started talking (at my suggestion) about the intellectual level of the heads of the “sovereign states.” “Sometimes,” he said, “you get dumber when you talk to them. And you really want to escape such ‘collaboration.’”

Then he started to think about the “New Thinking Foundation”—the Gorbachev Foundation... It seems he and Yakovlev came up with it before me. M.S. started to “develop [the thought],” thinking of how this matter could be done on a large scale... I supported the idea, but suggested starting the Foundation not here, but in America.

Suddenly he said, “I got \$800,000 for the book.” (Yakovlev immediately calculated that it would be 80 million rubles). “You know, Anatoly... I want to keep \$200,000 for myself, and give you \$30-40,000.”

I: “You should not do that. I don’t need it.”

Yakovlev: “Keep around \$600,000 to start up the Foundation... And afterwards you will get various sponsors.”

A.N. and I told him in unison not to give anything to all sorts of hospitals and such, because it will disappear like your previous subsidies, while “you need to live decently and no go around begging Yeltsin”...

I raised the question of my “boys”—my own and other consultants. Yakovlev and I vied in suggesting to give everyone “severance pay” (for two months), and assign Revenko to find work for them... But M.S. was in a hurry and we did not finish the conversation.

I myself began to “place” my boys: Weber to Krasin, Yermonsky to *Izvestiya*... I quarreled with Shakhnazarov, who snatched up the Lenin School with his Foundation... and doesn’t want to hear anything about giving people jobs, except for “his own”! I swore at him and hung up.

“The boys”: Weber, Yermonsky, and Kuvaldin are sorting through bags with my archive from these six years. Some things (quite a bit) I am taking home. I’m going to write a “book”—“My Six Years with Gorbachev.” But they + Grachev warned me not to rule out the possibility that my house might be searched when they open a “case” against Gorbachev. Actually I don’t believe such things... But who knows. If things go badly for Yeltsin, he will need “spectacles” and scapegoats. Then I will be the primary candidate (at first) as a witness... Although, there is nothing “criminally” compromising in my archives... But they could find materials to smear Gorbachev with the liberties of post-totalitarian behavior... as well as excessive candor in private conversations.

Today I “arranged” for Tamara to go to Bovin, to Israel. He promised me a long time ago, but he did not want to “insist” at the MFA, he folded... So I had to do everything myself, through Kovalyov and Avdeyev. I wonder if we will get it done in time, before Kozyrev gets his paws on all these procedures.

Yeltsin’s entourage, unlike the Interregional Deputy Group (“Sixtiers”), is not tied to the intelligentsia. And the intelligentsia is beginning to “understand” what it did, when it rose against Gorbachev... They sympathize, now that stones are raining down on him.

In two days I will have to be out of the Kremlin.

December 20, 1991, Friday

Today I got my last paycheck. Yesterday some people were already searched when leaving the Kremlin. When a warrant officer tried to search the Chairman of Committee on Afghan Affairs Aushev (Hero of the Soviet Union), Aushev punched him in the face. Gusenkov threatened to go back and “complain” to the President, and they let him go. They didn’t touch me, even though for many a day now I do not leave the place without a thick briefcase. Today I asked a courier (they respect me), to take a whole bag of documents from my personal archive. Government cars have been taken away from everybody except M.S. and his aides and advisers. But it is a matter of days. Yesterday, Kozyrev’s clerk came to Shevardnadze and conveyed Yeltsin’s decree on the liquidation of his ministry, and asked E.A. to “clear the premises.” Revenko also passed on to us Burbulis’ order to “finish up.” My phone numbers have already been transferred—I get calls, but they ask for someone else. At least I can still make outgoing calls...

In a word, this is Yeltsin-style banditry. And M.S. keeps insisting on a “civilized” transfer of power.

Today he twice went back to his final declaration... I “finished it up” twice. But in the evening it turned out that there is an alternative version, from Yakovlev. The three of us sat to

work on it. I stated my explicit disagreement with Yakovlev's version—it was defeatist and whiny. I don't know which one he will ultimately choose. M.S. was tempted by Yakovlev's... Although I strongly discredited it. We agreed that A.N. will use my text as the basis, work on it, and present something tomorrow.

Kohl called M.S. today. He asked, "What are you going to do?" M.S. explained his vision for a long time (based on the letter to participants in Alma-Ata), and said that he will leave if they approve the Commonwealth... Even though he does not agree with it, he will not confront them.

He said that he will engage in "social" (not political) work. He revealed his plan to me (again, full of enthusiasm): to create a "RAND Corporation" on the basis of Krasin-Shakhnazarov's foundation, and "expand it." Money will flow (from abroad), partners will come from other foundations... It will be a powerful intellectual center, which will help form a truly democratic society in Russia. If necessary, this Foundation will take on the role of a powerful opposition to these "amateurs, smug mediocrities"...

Kohl invited M.S. to Germany—to rest, give lectures, live... M.S. did not refuse... He gets many such invitations.

Karyakin visited him (I brought them together). "The Sixtiers" are washing themselves clean... "Moral support." Yurka even promised to make a loud exit from Yeltsin's Presidential Council. We'll see!

Tretyakov's article in *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*: Belovezhskaya Pushcha was a coup d'état.

I am finding places for my boys... I have to take care of my own pension. I hear I will have to do some footwork to get all the paperwork...

December 22, 1991, Sunday

Yesterday the Alma-Ata pogrom took place. It seems this turn of events is comparable to October 25th, 1917, and with the same uncertain outcomes.

Gorbachev was crudely overthrown. They did not even adopt a special document about the "abolition" of him as the head of state. Nicholas II at least got an "authoritative delegation" of the Duma to issue him a request to resign and abdicate. But for Gorbachev, all that Yeltsin did was explain when asked in an interview, "Yes, we discussed what would happen to him. We won't do what we did with our previous leaders—bury him, and then re-bury him, calling him a criminal. We will behave like a civilized country. We agreed on a pension for him, and 'in general' discussed his 'position after resignation.'" By the way, this took place exactly 4 months after the coup, and on Stalin's birthday!

The Soviet Union no longer exists. Russia a member of the UN Security Council... Our "Europe" and "Asia" are going to go their different ways, as well as the so-called "Slavic" world... Russia will have to be rebuilt... hardly in accord with the Tartars, Buryats, and the descendants of Shamil.

In the meantime in the Kremlin: at 11 p.m. M.S. gathered Yakovlev, Shevardnadze, and me... We sat down to finish up the farewell address. E.A. did not support Yakovlev's version (two paragraphs, snotty and whiny). My version is practically accepted. It is especially important that they kept my "dashes" that signify *perestroika*'s historical significance... Alas! They castrated the emotional aspect...

As we were editing, we got carried away, as if we were in Volynskoe or Novo-Ogarevo, working on yet another speech for the Supreme Council or something like that. We argued about words as if we forgot that we're working on an obituary.

While we were talking (after all, we sat there for two hours), E.A. declared that "they won't get anywhere"... He insisted on his latest predictions that there will be a coup; there will be a ruthless mass upheaval. He talked about the cynicism and impudence of Yeltsin's cohort. "They promised to keep the 'valuable' parts of the Foreign Ministry. But I don't believe them. The most important thing for them is to occupy the seats. They are admiring themselves and boast in front of each other over what offices they got on Smolenskaya-Sennaya!"

M.S. chimed in on this subject. He said that B.N. reminds him practically every day to vacate the "good office" for him in this (Kazakovsky) building. He had been admiring Ryzhkov's former office on the 2nd floor. Yes... the most important thing for them is to occupy the Kremlin, everything else comes after, M.S. concluded.

The day before (on the evening of December 20th) M.S. cheered up when Ignatenko told him that the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine adopted an "interpretation" of Belovezha Accords that is incompatible with the concept of the Commonwealth. He demanded to see the text, and read it to us with pleasure. Yeltsin's whole idea with concessions for the sake of "keeping" Ukraine in the CIS is falling through, he said. A.N. and I cooled his enthusiasm, saying that they had a different goal—to knock out the USSR with Kravchuk's help, and to eliminate him, Gorbachev. That was the most important task. The next step will be to advance Russia everywhere... Others will adapt, and if someone falls away, they don't care. M.S. agreed with that, too... But he was still happy about the "failure"... And again he railed against the amateurs and mediocrities, their complacency and irresponsibility. Then he said, "They will accept the document, even if it's a sham, but they cannot afford not to demonstrate their victory right now. Gorbachev barely got 7 republics for his Union Treaty, so to speak, but we got all 11, and Georgia will join, which means 12! But still, they will fail."

Yakovlev "predicted": God willing, Yeltsin will last until spring.

Mitterrand's call (scheduled ahead of time) interrupted our "thoughts." He "took off his mask" of grandeur and pomposity and said all kinds of words about Gorbachev's significance, the immortality of what "they accomplished together." In response, M.S. kept expounding his "conception" again and again: he will not get in the way; he will try to "enrich" the CIS process... If B.N. does not retreat from democratic reforms, he will provide assistance (which Yeltsin does not want and will not allow).

Mitterrand invited him to France, saying that although M.S. has been there several times, he never really saw the country...

Well, it is noble of him!

It would have been good for Andreotti to call Gorbachev right now too, especially after Yeltsin's visit to Italy.

And Bush? He... looks around all the time, and spoke somewhat dryly a week ago. And the first thing he did was to invite Yeltsin to the U.S.

That's fine... But what will I do? I did not even take care of my pension. Tomorrow M.S. will say his farewell, and immediately we will be kicked off the premises. Where do I go to get my pension, to which regional social security office?

When M.S. was talking about his "RAND Corporation" he said that there will be a spot for everyone there. He got carried away with his daydream. And the money will start coming in, he said... I don't believe it. Plus, I don't really want to. I want to feel free. But what will I live on? "My verse has brought me no rubles to spare"³⁵... What is that? Am I disinterested in money? Indifferent to myself and my "home"? Lazy to deal with commonplace matters? Is it a habit of nomenclature services? But even before the nomenclature I could not take care of myself... It is probably a mix of everything...

I should start getting used to "freedom"... But while I have a "family," I won't be free, even in the sense of leaving the house without "glancing over my shoulder!" Will I be strong enough to damn it all and be with the woman I love? But she needs me when I visit her, cheerful, self-confident, interesting, with status... not a dependent and miserable suppliant for kindness and consolation... And I want to live...

December 23, 1991, Monday

Even last night, over the phone, M.S. started to mutilate the text of his Farewell speech. I did what I could to "ennoble" it... I toned down the places that will rouse nothing but irony or mockery. He is stubborn, and I don't feel comfortable arguing sharply with him nowadays, lest he think that I'm becoming insolent because he is no longer President.

But he wasn't even planning to read it out today, although "everyone" can barely wait.

From 12-6 p.m. he was in the Walnut Room with Yeltsin + A.N. Yakovlev... And from the start, they were getting cognac "for their coffee," and they also had lunch.

³⁵ A quote from Vladimir Mayakovsky's poem "At the Top of My Voice." The source for the verse translation is *The bedbug and Selected poetry*, translated by Max Hayward and George Reavey. Meridian Books, New York, 1960. Accessed at <http://www.marxists.org/subject/art/literature/mayakovsky/1930/at-top-my-voice.htm> [Translator's Note]

At 6 p.m. M.S. had a scheduled conversation with Major, for which he went to his office, and he was already pretty tipsy... A corresponding conversation with the British Prime Minister followed. It was touching. The latter was probably completely stunned by such sincerity... I will definitely reproduce that conversation.

Then M.S. went back to Yeltsin, who had been “having it out” one-on-one with A.N.

Tomorrow M.S. will bring together the apparatus “team” to say goodbye. They already assembled today, but M.S. postponed because of his meeting with Yeltsin. I noticed that 70 percent of the people there I was seeing for the first time, even though only the command staff was present.

Today NBC filmed me. Together with Yegor Yakovlev, they are making a movie on “Gorbachev’s Last Days.” I spoke with them for an hour and a half... Yakovlev and Grachev later told me that they loved it! They were sorry that they hadn’t gotten to me sooner. And later I was so sorry that I did not say many things to them. But, I did intrigue them about my future book.

Eidlin, the publisher of *Novosti* came over... He brought the first two orders for Gorbachev’s future book. They are ready to put down 1.5 million dollars right now, and wait two years! Today *Izvestiya* already reported about the future “Gorbachev Foundation”... That’s what the foundation should start with. First and foremost, he should publish the records of his conversations with foreign statesmen, between 1985-1991... It is invaluable material for history. I told him about it. He shrugged it off. As always...

December 27, 1991, Friday

Today is the first day that I am unemployed (although I’m not yet a pensioner, I did not get that taken care of in due time).

I need to gather my wits. But first of all, I’ll try to recollect the events of these days.

On Wednesday, the 25th, M.S. decided to make his last “Address”... At first we prepared it as a Statement. I already wrote about some episodes of this process. In the end he used my text as the “basis,” and actually he used almost all of my text, he even restored some things from the previous versions (for example, that a State should be dissolved with the people’s will)... But he also stuffed it with details that the newspapers didn’t “accept” anyway... Not a single newspaper printed the Address in its entirety! Everyone is afraid of Yeltsin.

In the morning he asked to be connected with Bush (at 5 p.m.). And even though it is their Christmas, Pavel Palazhchenko located Bush in Camp David... And the latter agreed.

M.S. conducted the conversation on the verge of familiarity—“Russian-style,” “like friends”... But Bush also for the first time “stepped away” from restraint and said many words of praise, many of which ended up in his speech about the end of the Soviet Union and the importance of Gorbachev.

Genscher asked for a telephone conversation, and before that Blech brought me a letter from him. My conversation with Blech was more interesting than M.S.' conversation with Genscher... Although this was literally half an hour before the last speech by the "President of the USSR."

Many reporters gathered in room No. 4! (next to his office), where he usually appeared before the TV-cameras... Overall, if in these last few days Yegor Yakovlev hadn't attracted the NBC crew—who practically spent all their time in the hallways, filming everything that had anything to do with M.S.—if it wasn't for them, M.S. would have been in an information blockade until his last days at the Kremlin. It is symptomatic and shameful for us that only the Western TV-journalists hung around him, symbolizing Gorbachev's importance for the whole world, which the Western public rightly attaches to him.

Thus... I stood to the side, around 8-10 meters from him. It was a live broadcast. He was calm. He did not hesitate to look into the text. And it turned out well "right off the reel." Afterwards, all the informal assessments I heard from the people watching at home, agreed that he appeared dignified and noble.

Indeed, he is a tragic figure, even though for me, who is used to seeing him in everyday life, it is difficult to attach this term to him, with which, of course, he will go down in history... *Izvestiya* after all printed "quotes" from the appraisals of him by "outstanding statesmen of the West."

He got back to his office. I stayed in the waiting room. Two men in civilian clothes were sitting inconspicuously on the couch in the corner. I thought one of them looked familiar (later Shevchenko, the Chief of Protocol, explained it to me: that man had been on all the foreign trips with us... He sat in the back of the airplane and minded his own business). Next to him stood a "briefcase" and something that looked like a portable telephone. It turned out that even before I came in, Shaposhnikov was already in M.S.' office. After fifteen minutes these two were summoned to his office... One of them soon left. But two others came in, men I don't know, and they were escorted into the office. Then they all came out. About 10 minutes later Shaposhnikov also came out, "smiling" like always, he greeted me. But he was (visibly!) embarrassed, too.

Two Yakovlevs and I went in to M.S. He was clearly agitated, red in the face. We sat down at the oval table. He told us what happened: Yeltsin really did not like his speech. After listening for a minute, he turned off the TV and told Burbulis to get him the "complete text." M.S. told Andrei to send it over...

Then we found out that Yeltsin said, "if that's how he wants it," he, Yeltsin, would not come to personally receive the "button," let Gorbachev come to him. Gorbachev refused. Then Yeltsin sent Shaposhnikov... And what happened then, see above, as they say!

But Yeltsin started acting like a dick even earlier. Before the conversation with Bush, Andrei and I were sitting with M.S. while he was adding the final touches to his last speech. Suddenly, R.M. called, in a panic: people came to the apartment (the one on Kosygin Avenue) and demanded that she gather all her belongings and clear out in two hours. M.S. flew into a

rage, his face covered with red spots, he called one person, another... cursed them out. He was able to stop the highway robbery. But yesterday, on the 26th, they had to clear out after all. And for a long time were refused a truck to move their things!

Yesterday morning (I am running ahead)... his security barely managed to get a car to come to M.S.' dacha, the car that Yeltsin "condescendingly" left him...

In the morning of the 25th M.S. still did not know (Grachev and I told him) what was published in many newspapers—Yeltsin told newspaper editors (on Staraya Ploshchad'!) about the "outcome" of his 8-hour meeting with Gorbachev and Yakovlev, "I cut his security tenfold (which is a lie, Gorbachev did not ask for 200 people), gave him a 'smaller' dacha than the current one, minus the apartment in the city... Immunity is out of the question, if he is guilty of something, he should acknowledge it now, while he is still President. I gave him a 4000-ruble pension." And some other vile things of this sort.

Meanwhile, the illusionists Gorbachev and Yakovlev spoke about this meeting, which lasted from noon until 11 p.m. (with only one break for the conversation with Major), in serene tones, saying that they had a normal, friendly conversation, as if nothing had happened. So much for what happened!

After the "button" had been transferred, we drank some cognac (M.S., two Yakovlevs, and I), then relocated to the Walnut Room, where Grachev joined us... and until midnight we "had a party." It is impossible to remember everything that was said, which is too bad. Some things were said in the course of conversation that were worthy to be set in stone. Although mostly we talked about the past, even about Suslov... and about how when M.S. came to Moscow in 1978 he was appalled at the political and other mores... and how "politics are done in Moscow." Some of these things I had heard from him many times before. By the way, he said that the first book he would like to write for the Foundation would be on how and why the *perestroika* idea appeared in his mind.

As we went along, he gave me two assignments: to arrange for Grachev to go to UNESCO, and to tell Teltschik not to send the money (for the "August Coup" book) to Moscow.

By the way, yesterday... Grachev organized a display of courage [*gusarstvo*], he invited all the press to the Hotel *Oktyabrskaya* on Dimitrov Street. A farewell party. For two hours, the reporters clung to Gorbachev, barely giving him a chance to drink from his glass... It was an outburst of feeling... not toward a head of state, for which journalists get paid large fees and get recognition, but on a human level... He said everything he wanted to say. And the journalists questioned us, poor sinners, along the way.

By the way, Krepostnoi (that's his last name), the director of the hotel, a protégé of the late Kruchina, for a long time did not want to allow the meeting to be held there. He gave the excuse that the President's accounts were "closed." But we put cash in front of him, which came from M.S.' personal account. Still, he ran to his superiors and again tried to get out of it. But since the hotel is now a private enterprise, not government-sponsored, he had to give in... At least there is some benefit to privatization!

Yesterday I received two ambassadors, the Spanish and the Norwegian. They brought letters from their heads of state. To the first one, Cuenca, I told about Grachev (about getting him into UNESCO). The Ambassador's countenance changed. Despite the fact that he knows Grachev pretty closely and is friends with Mayor (Director-General of UNESCO), he said, "This is impossible, it is not done (for an ambassador to intercede for someone)." Fine, it is not done... I know that myself. But why did he get so scared? Is he afraid of Kozyrev, that he'll drive him out?

I should set Grachev up through Attali—to the EBRD in London. I'll have to call Peissik (Counselor of the French Embassy).

I will take care of the second assignment through Sanya. She will be flying to Germany soon. I already told her about it, I stopped by in the morning (taking the metro, now). She outlined all the mechanics of the banking services... with great knowledge of the subject. It turns out she has a large account there... But she hasn't paid taxes, so she is a "candidate for jail." Yes... Papa Leva has his own account. Mama Ronnie—her own. Sanya—her own.

Gusenkov just called, saying that M.S. arrived at his office at 11 a.m. for an interview with Japanese journalists... But an hour before that, Yeltsin had settled into his office. And M.S... received the Japanese in Revenko's office! Why does he humiliate himself like that, why does he "go" to the Kremlin... the flag has already changed over the dome of the Sverdlovsk room, and he is no longer President!

It's a nightmare! And Yeltsin is becoming more and more impudent, stomping his feet louder and louder... He must be taking revenge for yesterday's meeting with the press!

At 8.15 a.m. Yeltsin and his entourage showed up in Gorbachev's reception room. He commanded the secretary on duty, "Well, let me see it!" And went into the office...

"There was a marble desk-set here... Where is it?"

The secretary, trembling, explained, "There was no desk-set... Mikhail Sergeyeovich never used those kinds of pens. We always put a set of markers on his desk..."

"Alright... What's in there?" and he proceeded into the back room (the "lounge"). He started opening the desk drawers. One turned out to be locked.

"Why is it locked? Call the commandant..."

The commandant ran over, with a key. He opened it, it was empty.

"Alright, fine..."

They got back into the office, sat at the oval table... He, Burbulis, Silaev (?), and somebody else.

"Give us some glasses!"

Instantly, a man appeared with a bottle of whiskey and glasses. “The main party” knocked back a glass.

“That’s better. As for the Walnut room and the State Council premises, the Politburo used to meet there. I’ve been there, I’ve been there...”

Laughing, the crowd walked out of the office. He told the secretary before he left, “Watch it! I’m going to be back today!”

December 28, 1991, Saturday

Yesterday I convinced M.S. not to give an interview to NHK (Japan)—it is dishonorable to go to the Kremlin, where Yeltsin “made merry” in his office... It is even more dishonorable to look for some other place. Revenko reproached me afterwards: the Japanese had promised \$1 million for the interview.

I sent Gorbachev a letter from Major (Braithwaite gave it to me), for which I made a handwritten translation myself; a letter from Miyazawa (Tamara went to the embassy); a book signed by members of Vachtangov theater, which Yulia Khrushcheva gave to me. M.S. called me, excited. Such signs of attention are like a balm for him right now. He told me he is getting sick, probably the flu. But he was given only three days to move out of the dacha... So he has to sort his books and things... He told me to go ahead and start working on a “chronicle of New Thinking,” from the records of his conversations between 1985-1991.

Weber and Yermonsky seem to be leaving...

I started to sort my own books today; I already took two suitcases of them to the dumpster... Some things are only good for the trash bin, even though I feel sorry to part with them, there is some significance attached to each one. But nobody will read them, neither I nor my grandson. This is hard work. And time-consuming.

December 30, 1991, Monday

Yesterday Yeltsin gave the New Year’s speech. One could agree with it, if he had “reported” to whom he owes the fact that he can speak like this right now, and to “conduct business” like this... But, not a word... On the contrary, he is saying that the Russia he inherited is in a state as if it had been run by an enemy for 70 years...

And everything is going smoothly in Minsk, but the Commonwealth will not amount to anything, it is only a screen for the Union’s collapse.

Afterword to 1991

This is the year of the State's disintegration, the collapse of the economy, social chaos, and Gorbachev's and the Center's loss of authority and power over the country.

It is the year of "Vilnius" and the subsequent desperate attempts to save the Union—through a referendum, the Novo-Ogarevo process, a new Union Treaty, and alas! The CPSU's resuscitation on a "democratic platform," despite the fact that it was not capable of anything besides creating a noisy, destructive opposition once Gorbachev deprived it of its political and ideological monopoly.

It was the year of the coup, which sent the process of the Soviet empire's self-destruction down a landslide. The finale was in Belovezhskaya Pushcha, where Yeltsin, Kravchuk, and Shushkevich usurped all the rights and institutions of power, and signed the Soviet Union's death sentence.

What happened in the Soviet Union during this year is in essence what happened "in due time" to other empires, when the potential given to them by history was exhausted.

The emergence of Gorbachev was inevitable in the Soviet Union of the 1980s. He became "an instrument of history." He did not understand right away that history wanted something different from him than he wanted from it. That is his tragedy as a statesman and outstanding figure.

The empire disappeared in a unique, original way. The way this objective-inexorable process affected Gorbachev's work, how the unpredictable changes reflected in his thoughts, ideas, feelings, behavior, and interactions with people—all of this is interesting not only as a historical source. It is also a rare opportunity to observe the role of a major figure in history through the nitty-gritty details of how he initiated processes and events, and then lost control over them.

However, this is the fate of all great leaders, revolutionaries, and reformers in particular. It does not matter what capabilities they possess at first, even if dictatorial.

These people's thoughts about themselves and others, about their mission, their country and the world, even their reactions to the seemingly particular and little things—they always have independent value, regardless of the outcomes of their work. This may be even more true for Gorbachev than for anyone else of his ilk. For he is at the root of a landmark turning point in the course of world events.

The international aspect of Gorbachev's *perestroika* once again repeated the Russian paradox: the revolutions in this country tend to bring more benefits (even through a negative experience) to the outside world than to this country and its people. The year 1991 made this very clear. The Soviet Union's approach to catastrophe did not undermine Gorbachev's authority as a world leader. He continued to make original, long-lasting and beneficial contributions to the development of the situation in the world.

However, the use of foreign policy for the so-called “national interests” did not achieve what Gorbachev expected. “New Thinking” was too much ahead of its time. People were not ready to perceive it as a fundamental guide in international relations. A compensation for this can be our certainty that at some point the future, the main principles and fundamental ideas of Gorbachev’s political philosophy will become the norm of existence in his own country and the international community as a whole. Otherwise we will not survive.

As for the specifics reflected in this collection of the year’s events, their author still believes that he was right about many of his fears and misgivings, expressed or unexpressed, about the possibilities and outcomes of *perestroika*.

However, I have to acknowledge that as an adviser and close associate, and as a human being, I was at times severely unfair in assessing Gorbachev’s behavior, views, and mode of action when I considered them unworthy or inadequate to the position and deserved grandeur of such a figure. The more so because, although in practical terms the objectives Gorbachev put forward turned out to be unfeasible or deliberately illusory, in the historic perspective, his mission was objectively necessary, and many aspects of it became irreversible. He is right when he refutes his adversaries who say that the “Gorbachev era” is over. No, in reality he laid the foundation of a new era.