

Edited by  
Vladimir A. Kozlov, Sheila Fitzpatrick, and Sergei V. Mironenko

# Sedition

Everyday Resistance  
in the  
Soviet Union  
under  
Khrushchev  
and  
Brezhnev



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Vladimir A. Kozlov, Sheila Fitzpatrick, and  
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*Compiled by V. A. Kozlov and O. V. Edelman*

*with assistance from E. Yu. Zavadskaia*

*English edition edited and introduced by Sheila Fitzpatrick*

*Translated by Olga Livshin*

*English edition annotated by Andrew Janco*

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Sedition

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INTRODUCTION TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

## Popular Sedition in the Post-Stalin Soviet Union

SHEILA FITZPATRICK

WE ARE USED to picturing the Soviet Union, even after Stalin's death, as a totalitarian state with iron controls, a pervasive secret police, general conformity with ideological orthodoxy, and a cowed population. This book about popular sedition (*kramola*) presents a different, though not necessarily incompatible, picture. The secret police are well to the fore, certainly, for it is thanks to their investigative efforts that we have information about popular sedition in the first place; prominent also is the regime's obsessive concern with preventing "heresy" and enforcing ideological conformity. But viewed through the prism of prosecutions for "anti-Soviet" speech and actions, the population looks a lot less cowed than might have been expected. What these archival records show is a society where grumbling and jokes about the government were endemic and where drunken outbursts involving abuse of the authorities and desecration of the flag occurred regularly. They show us Soviet citizens venting their anger by criticizing the regime in anonymous letters to the authorities and leaflets, making idealistic blueprints for a return to "true Leninism," and—influenced by stories of the Bolsheviks' exciting life in the revolutionary underground before 1917—"playing at revolution" by forming tiny clandestine organizations, whose members chose code names, observed rules of conspiracy, and argued about political philosophy but virtually never attempted any concrete actions against the regime.

Everyday resistance is the subject of this book. Its forms range from dropping abusive notes in ballot boxes and defacing statues to handing out leaflets and demonstrating with a placard in a public place. The time span is the 1950s to the 1970s, that is, the first three decades after Stalin's death. Typically the subversive words or actions came from individuals, although there were also small conspiratorial organizations of a few like-minded friends. These were not serious, large-scale threats to the regime<sup>1</sup> and almost never involved violence.<sup>2</sup> Nor were the participants usually intellectuals, so the story of popular sedition must be distinguished from the story—much more familiar in the West—of the intellectuals' dissident movement.<sup>3</sup>

To understand the acts of resistance that are the subject of this book, we have to enter into the “us” and “them” mentality that was so ingrained in Soviet citizens.<sup>4</sup> “They”—the political leaders, the privileged elite—were the ones who ran things, often cruelly and arbitrarily and in their own self-interest, while “we” were the masses, whose common skepticism about the probity and good intentions of all rulers was taken for granted. *Kramola*, the title of the Russian edition of this book, is the old Russian term for “sedition,” dating back at least to Muscovite times; and its use in the Russian edition of this book points to the roots of Soviet popular subversive speech and actions in the “traditional opposition in Russia between the state and the people,” as well as emphasizes the equally traditional sensitivity of both earlier Russian and Soviet rulers to all forms of heretical expression. We are dealing, in short, with popular behaviors that in other cultures might be considered no more than normal subaltern grumbling and disorderly behavior but that the Soviet regime—like its imperial predecessor—construed as subversion.

The traditional Russian roots of sedition are evident; however, the Soviet context is equally important. The language and genres of popular protest in the post-Stalin period are surprisingly similar to those of the Stalin era, despite the much greater danger attached to sedition in the latter, and the later language and genres are by no means identical to their pre-revolutionary precursors. It was in the Stalin era that anti-regime jokes (*anekdoty*) began to circulate widely within the population, along with the more traditional rumors of imminent war, disaster, and the end of the world; that people developed the habit of writing not only the traditional petitions and denunciations to the authorities but also, in a modern, revolutionary frame, their (often critical or subversive) opinions about the way things were being run,

invoking ideals of egalitarianism and workers' power and indicting elite privilege as a betrayal. "Hooliganism" was noted as something new on the Russian scene in the early twentieth century, but it became an even greater societal preoccupation in the 1930s and acquired some forms that seem specifically Soviet, notably individual outbursts (often excused after the fact by drunkenness) of public abuse of the regime or acts of gross disrespect to "sacred" objects like portraits and statues of leaders.

Criticism was not forbidden by the Soviet regime; on the contrary, it was encouraged in the Stalin period and after, under the rubric of "criticism and self-criticism," as long as it was criticism of the misdeeds of local officials rather than criticism of the Soviet system. (In fact, an administrator's "suppression of criticism" from the populace (*zazhim kritiki*) was a punishable act in itself.)<sup>5</sup> Criticism that was constructive and, above all, respectful was encouraged—criticism accepting of Soviet values. When criticism was disrespectful and irreverent, and when it was generalized rather than local, the authorities understood it as anti-Soviet and were likely to prosecute it as sedition.

For all the similarities between popular sedition in the Stalin and the post-Stalin periods, there were two very important differences. The first was the level of risk and the likely degree of punishment, which were far higher in the Stalin period. The second was that by the 1950s and 1960s, Soviet society was no longer as isolated from the outside world as it had been before the Second World War. In addition to a range of officially sanctioned forms of contact with foreigners and foreign countries, Soviet citizens could now listen to foreign radio—not without hindrances and discouragement, but also not fully illegally—particularly to stations like Voice of America that were specifically aimed at a Soviet audience from across the Iron Curtain. As we shall see, foreign radio was a highly significant source of anti-Soviet information and opinion for the critically inclined Soviet population, not just an entertainment medium. Skepticism about the Soviet press as a source of reliable information had already been prevalent among the Soviet public in the 1930s. Now an alternative information source, and to many an authoritative and credible one, was available.

In identifying the phenomenon of *kramola* for a non-Russian readership, we have borrowed the term "everyday resistance" from James C. Scott and the subaltern studies school.<sup>6</sup> "Everyday resistance" implies routine activity, different in kind from such major, often violent events as uprisings and mass demonstrations. Our attention, like

Scott's, is focused on subaltern talk, actions, and habits of mind, in a context where power ("them") and the powerless ("us") are sharply distinguished and a subaltern critique of power is common currency among "us." But the Soviet version is interesting not only for the ways it fits Scott's model of everyday resistance but also for the ways it differs. Scott uses the term "hidden transcripts" to describe the discourse of subalterns out of hearing of their masters (in contrast to the discourse used by subalterns to address their masters).<sup>7</sup> That genre of everyday resistance is represented here, but what is striking about the Soviet version is how often anti-Soviet speech and actions were *not* hidden and *not* directed only at other subalterns but rather flung in the faces of the masters—or, at any rate, at their backs. This was subaltern conversation all right, but it was subaltern conversation that the masters were meant to hear; it was a defiant thumbing of the nose at one's betters. Why else write and send to the authorities anonymous letters denouncing the regime's misdeeds? Why bother to distribute a handful of leaflets that might or might not be read by passersby but would certainly be read by the KGB when prudent passersby handed them in? Why drop abusive notes to the authorities in ballot boxes at election time unless one's aim was (non-subaltern) communication? Why make obscene gestures to portraits of leaders if not in a kind of conversation with them?

Kramola, in short, is not fully *kramola* unless the regime is listening.

## The Context: Soviet Society and Government after Stalin

As Soviet history goes, the three decades between Joseph Stalin's death in 1953 and Leonid Brezhnev's in 1982 were strikingly benign. The traumas of revolution, collectivization, and crash industrialization lay in the past, as did the pervasive and arbitrary terror of the Stalin period. A terrible war—known to many around the world as the Second World War and to Soviets as the Great Patriotic War—was also in the past, leaving a legacy of suffering but also immense pride in Soviet victory and the translation of the Soviet Union from prewar pariah into one of the world's superpowers.

To be sure, the new superpower existed in a state of "cold war" with its chief ideological rival, the United States, and its European allies, causing apprehension among the population as well as the political leaders. Still, Soviet society was not nearly as cut off from the West

as it had been under Stalin. Cultural openness to the West was a watchword of the Khrushchev period (1953–1964) despite the regime’s continued suspicion of Western ideological influence, exemplified by partial jamming of foreign radio stations. The intelligentsia appreciated increased foreign contact, but ordinary people seem to have had a mixed attitude: appreciation of foreign radio, on the one hand, and suspicion of Khrushchev’s foreign trips and resentment of Soviet financial support for the socialist bloc and the Third World, on the other.

Stalin’s heirs took some striking measures to redress the evils of the Stalin period. Immediately after his death in 1953, prisoners were released en masse from the Gulag, and the huge convict-labor empire that had grown up in the 1930s and 1940s began to be dismantled. If the first batches of released prisoners were mainly criminals, political prisoners started to emerge within a few years, and an individual rehabilitation process was established to readmit them to Soviet society. At the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956, Nikita Khrushchev criticized the evils of Stalinism—selectively, and under the rubric of cult of personality—in his famous Secret Speech, which was actually not secret at all, for it was read out and discussed in workplaces all over the Soviet Union. The Great Purges of the immediate prewar years were part of what was condemned, with emphasis on the “loyal Communists” who suffered. Although the costly and unpopular collectivization of peasant agriculture at the beginning of the 1930s was not repudiated, “excesses” in implementation were now admitted.

The Soviet Union still had a ruling party headed by one man,<sup>8</sup> but the nature of the dictatorship had changed since Stalin’s time. Stalin ended up by executing his major political opponents,<sup>9</sup> and it is hard to imagine him exiting the political scene himself by any route but death (although, in the event, his death seems to have been natural). In the post-Stalin period, the leaders preferred less violent means of achieving transfer of power. True, in the tense transition of 1953, the new “collective leadership” got rid of one of its members (Lavrenty Beria, the secret police chief) by summary execution after a kangaroo court trial, but that was the last such incident. When Khrushchev parted company with the Anti-Party Group in 1957, the press blackened the names of its members, but Viacheslav Molotov, Georgy Malenkov, and Lazar Kaganovich remained at liberty and, in some cases, still in relatively responsible positions, albeit far from the center of power. And when Khrushchev himself was deposed, the Party’s Central Com-



mittee handled the removal in a more or less democratic manner; he was neither arrested nor banished from Moscow but simply forced out of political life and into retirement.

After the revelations of the Twentieth Party Congress, no Soviet citizen could remain in ignorance of the secret police who had terrorized citizens in Stalin's time, nor of the existence of the Gulag "archipelago" of prison camps. The painful and contentious topic of repression—exile, imprisonment, slave labor, execution—was out in the open and impossible to bury even in the early Brezhnev years, when there was mild backtracking on de-Stalinization. But the dismantling of Gulag brought its own difficulties, such as an increase in street crime and problems in reintegrating millions of former prisoners. Popular attitudes toward de-Stalinization were more ambiguous than those of many intellectuals. Not only were ordinary people upset about the social consequences of the sudden mass release of prisoners, many also retained a respect for Stalin and the nation's achievements under his rule. We should never make the mistake of thinking that the tenor of the subaltern critiques of the Soviet regime was necessarily liberal: in fact, it was more likely to be egalitarian ("cut down the tall poppies"), Stalinist, nationalist, or millenarian, to list only the most common variants.

The post-Stalin period saw a shift back to legal (rather than arbitrary administrative) methods of punishment, so Soviet citizens accused of sedition went through the standard judicial procedures in a procuratorial legal system: preliminary investigation, gathering of evidence and interrogation, court hearings with a calling of witnesses (but usually without defense counsel), and the possibility of appeal after the verdict. Since the new regime no longer practiced widespread arbitrary terror against the population, people were less frightened of the secret police than they had been under Stalin, particularly the young generation.<sup>10</sup> There was increasing clarity about the limits of acceptable behavior—and therefore diminished risk of involuntarily breaking "the rules of the game." At the height of the Stalinist terror, someone could be arrested and declared an enemy of the people "for nothing," as popular parlance had it.<sup>11</sup> In the post-Stalin period, by contrast, that essentialist concept of enemies, implying not just deviant acts but alien identity, was no longer in vogue. If a worker was charged with anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda in the Khrushchev period, that worker had probably in fact defied the regime in some way (regardless of the rights and wrongs of prosecuting for such offenses).

Similarly, if an intellectual was called in to the KGB for a “prophylactic” discussion, the targeting was not random but related to actual expressions and actions of dissent.

Perhaps the most significant change in the decades after Stalin’s death was the dramatic rise in the living standard of the population. In the Stalin period—a time of general privation, when all available investment went to defense and heavy industry—all consumer goods, from food to galoshes to housing, were in chronically short supply. From 1953, all of Stalin’s heirs recognized the necessity of raising the standard of living, and Khrushchev took major steps to achieve this, notably through massive construction of residential housing. Khrushchev’s aspirations were even more ambitious: he talked of catching up with and surpassing the West in living standard, even of achieving Communism—which he associated with abundance—within twenty years. This rash claim was the subject of much ironic comment in popular conversations, and it probably also raised expectations to a point where they were bound to be disappointed. The documents in this book are full of complaints about goods and services. Nevertheless, the improvement in living standards over those in the early 1950s was real and substantial.

The rapid urban growth of the 1930s had produced a housing crunch that left the average Soviet town dweller living in a space of 6.5 square meters (and many had much less) on the eve of the Second World War. Khrushchev’s housing program brought this up to 10 square meters—and millions were able to move out of crowded communal apartments into separate single-family apartments.<sup>12</sup> Health care, as measured by the availability of doctors, increased dramatically: compared to the immediate prewar figures, there were more than three times as many doctors for every ten thousand people in 1965 and five times as many by 1976.<sup>13</sup> Old age and disability pensions, available only to a lucky few under Stalin, reached a much broader population after Khrushchev’s reforms: the number of recipients of social welfare jumped from not much over a million on the eve of the war to fourteen million in 1965.<sup>14</sup> Over approximately the same period, the average length of life of Soviet citizens rose from forty-seven years to seventy.<sup>15</sup>

In a comparatively short space of time, millions of citizens added three new items to their previously very short list of household possessions: television sets (32 percent of households had them in 1965 and 82 percent ten years later), refrigerators (17 percent to 77 per-

cent), and washing machines (29 percent to 76 percent).<sup>16</sup> This was not to say, of course, that citizens were satisfied with the availability and quality of goods. Complaints about shortages and the elite's privileged access to goods was a basic component of *kramola* right through this period, and a 1970s survey of Soviet émigrés found sharply lower levels of satisfaction with the supply of goods in the Soviet Union (meat shortages being particularly resented) than with any of the other basic aspects of life that they were asked about: jobs, housing, and medical care.<sup>17</sup>

In demographic terms, the Soviet population continued its relentless migration from countryside to town: an average of one and one-half million moved from village to town each year between 1959 and 1969, a number only slightly lower than the annual average in the peak years of the prewar industrialization drive.<sup>18</sup> Only a third of the Soviet population was urban on the eve of the war; the 50 percent mark was passed in the early 1960s; and the urban proportion continued climbing until it reached two-thirds in 1989.<sup>19</sup> Rapid increases in literacy and education levels matched the rise in urbanization. The 1959 population census showed (for the first time) that literacy was all but universal in the 9–49 age-group.<sup>20</sup> Still, almost a quarter of the urban population (and 40 percent of the total population) still lacked a full primary education that year.<sup>21</sup> But the shape of the future was evident in the age breakdown. In 1959, in the 65–69 age group, only about a fifth had finished primary school, while for the 30–34 age-group, the comparable figure was 90 percent—and half of them had also gone to high school or college.<sup>22</sup> The proportion of Soviet citizens with secondary or higher education more than tripled in the twenty years from 1939 to 1959, and it doubled again over the next thirty years: 64 percent of the population was educated beyond primary school in 1989.<sup>23</sup> The number of specialists employed in the national economy was three million in 1950; by 1977 the figure had risen to twenty-five million.<sup>24</sup>

The Khrushchev period was an era of reform, when considerable changes occurred both domestically and in the Soviet relationship with the outside world, stimulating a certain amount of popular unrest and a relatively high level of seditious behavior. By comparison, the Brezhnev period (1964–1982) was placid: “stagnation” is the term used for it now, but in the 1980s, what impressed Western observers most was its stability, in both the political and the social realms. Political scientists were struck by the Soviet regime's success in managing rising con-

sumer expectations, containing dissent, and (in contrast to Western efforts) avoiding any major challenge from the youth counterculture.<sup>25</sup> Still, there were problems, some of them increasing. Crime was a pre-occupation, starting with the crime wave of the 1950s that followed the release of millions of prisoners from the Gulag.<sup>26</sup> Alcoholism was rising. Young people, increasingly less responsive to the regime's mobilizing message, were being seduced by the bright lights of the West and by Western popular culture. Within the intelligentsia, there was disappointment that the utopian hopes of the early Khrushchev period had not been realized. "Second economy" private enterprise, which Khrushchev tried to keep criminal and Brezhnev more or less tolerated, grew exponentially; and official corruption increased along with it.

While some Western observers of Soviet society saw signs of significant democratic revival and challenge to the regime in the dissident movement, others emphasized its isolation, elite character, and lack of popular support. Soviet citizens were basically apathetic politically, one observer concluded: full of complaints about shortages but uninterested in democratic change and inclined to funnel their dissatisfaction into individual asocial behaviors like stealing, alcoholism, and absenteeism.<sup>27</sup> Researchers in the Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System had reached similar conclusions from their interviews with refugees in the 1950s, finding "little concern with 'civil liberties' per se, . . . little pressure toward a democratic form of government," and, paradoxically, "only a relatively small amount of disaffection and disloyalty" despite a "high level of dissatisfaction and discontent." They concluded that "there is scant evidence for the view that more than a very tiny part of the population would, except under conditions of extreme crisis, take appreciable risks to sabotage the regime or to aid Western democracy."<sup>28</sup>

These conclusions are still reasonable. Looking at the new archival material presented here, however, we might be inclined to qualify "political apathy." Certainly, few Soviet citizens, including inveterate grumblers and whiners, appear to have seriously contemplated a change of political regime or taken practical steps to achieve it. They were not interested in civil liberties and did not consider themselves to have political agency in a Western sense. At the same time, their anti-Soviet grumbling, complaints and intermittent outbursts of defiance, not to mention occasional conspiratorial "playing at revolution," were themselves political acts. Kramola was popular politics, Soviet style.

## Popular Sedition Characterized

The essence of sedition was the expression by an individual of “hostile” attitudes toward the Soviet regime and its leaders. In the early post-Stalin period, as under Stalin, expression of a hostile attitude was prosecuted as a counterrevolutionary activity under Article 58 of the Criminal Code. Article 58-10 dealt with anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda by individuals, and Article 58-11 (less frequently used) with such activities by groups. In 1966 the now notorious Article 58 was replaced as a vehicle for prosecuting anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda by a new article of the criminal code, 190, which made it a criminal offense “to disseminate ideas that discredit the soviet political and social order” (Article 190-1), as well as specified a new crime, defiling state emblems and flags (Article 190-2). As before, a separate chapter (190-3) set forth charges against organizing or participating in group actions that disrupted social order.

Various behaviors provoked prosecution under these headings. In the 1950s the most common was the behavior labeled anti-Soviet speech, which typically meant making anti-regime statements in a public place, often when drunk. Some of these disturbances led to arrests by the regular police; in other cases, the offense was made known by a denunciation from an eyewitness. (Earlier, telling anti-regime jokes—a popular practice in which most citizens engaged—might sometimes have warranted an Article 58 charge, but in the post-Stalin period, jokes alone were not prosecuted.) Disturbing public order could be dealt with, at the discretion of the prosecutors, on the lesser charge of hooliganism; and this became the general practice in the 1960s, when prosecutions for anti-Soviet speech alone, without exacerbating circumstances, practically ceased. In the Brezhnev period, when the milder Article 190 replaced the old Article 58-10, insulting acts committed against state flags and emblems made their first appearance as a separate category. Insulting the flag—which seems to have been particularly popular in the Baltic states and other newly acquired territories—was a close relative of a form of disrespect familiar in Soviet Russia since prewar days: defacement or mockery of portraits and statues of leaders.

Writing letters abusing the regime and its leaders or sharply criticizing their policies was the next most frequent ground for prosecution in the 1950s. Such letters to authorities accounted for 22 percent of “anti-Soviet” prosecutions in 1957. Most (though not all) of the let-

ters were unsigned or were signed with a false name, but the KGB was often successful in discovering the real author. This form of seditious activity is particularly interesting, since it involves not only disrespectful criticism of the authorities but an attempt to communicate that criticism directly to its objects, albeit not in terms that the authorities were likely to accept. For criticism in a signed or unsigned letter to be prosecuted, it had to be "malicious" (*zlostnyi*), that is, written from a hostile (anti-Soviet) point of view and directed against the system as a whole (or the leader who personified it). For example, a letter that called the attention of higher authorities to abuses committed by local officials (embezzlement, failure to pay pensions or wages on time) was generally considered to be helpful criticism, part of the healthy, regular process of "criticism and self-criticism" in Soviet society. It was also permissible for citizens to make polite suggestions for policy change ("prices on bread should be lowered," "meat distribution should be improved"), as long as they were careful to maintain the rhetorical assumption that the regime had the people's welfare at heart. Criticism became malicious and prosecutable only when insulting phrases were used ("as you would expect from this gang of thieves in the Kremlin") or when generalizations about intent were made ("the government is out to screw the working man").

Preparation and distribution of leaflets came next in frequency (13 percent of prosecutions in 1957). Their content ranged from "slandereous" criticism of the regime's domestic policies (wages, taxation) and foreign policy (Hungary in 1956) to calls to overthrow the Soviet government and take vengeance on Communists. The appearance of the leaflets on streets or bulletin boards—or the handing in of leaflets by passersby who had picked them up—was the trigger for investigations into their authorship by the KGB, which, as in the case of anonymous letters, were often successful.

Possession of anti-Soviet literature accounted for 8 percent of prosecutions in 1957. The authorities seem normally to have become aware of anti-Soviet literature as the result of a house search—in other words, as a by-product of an investigation triggered by something else.

These "anti-Soviet" behaviors did not exist in isolation from proper "Soviet" behaviors but rather were often their flip side. Letters to the authorities are a case in point. Citizens were encouraged to write to the authorities, asking for help with individual problems, complaining about bureaucratic shortcomings, denouncing misdeeds of local officials, and expressing their opinions on issues of the day; and these let-

ters were valued as sources of information and tokens of the close democratic relationship between the people and the government. All government and Party agencies, as well as newspapers, received large numbers of such letters. The newspapers rarely printed them but instead regularly forwarded them to the appropriate authorities for action and periodically summarized their contents for the information of the Party leaders.<sup>29</sup> In the summaries, a clear distinction was made between “positive” letters and “negative” ones, the former being welcomed and meriting a reply, the latter (usually anonymous) being potential targets of prosecution as anti-Soviet.

Dropping notes into the ballot boxes at election time was another practice that could be either positive or negative. Elections were festive events in the Soviet Union, with a general atmosphere of bonhomie; and it was not uncommon for voters to write friendly, appreciative notes to the political leaders and drop them in ballot boxes along with their votes. “Good on you, dear, great Russian man!” wrote one Moscow voter to Khrushchev in the Supreme Soviet elections of 1962, while another, a pensioner, sent a “big vote of thanks for providing for my old age.” Other notes contained respectful requests—for example, for lower prices on children’s clothes and increase in teachers’ pay. According to counts made in two precincts, about 80 percent of the notes stuffed into ballot boxes were appreciative, 10 percent contained respectful requests, and 10 percent were hostile, expressing “unhealthy, backward moods.”<sup>30</sup>

One category of anti-Soviet behavior that obviously had no positive counterpart was the organization of conspiratorial groups professing revolutionary aims. Yet even here we find a curious relationship with the orthodox Soviet world, for these groups were often explicitly modeled on the Bolsheviks’ pre-1917 history as an underground revolutionary party, about which every Soviet citizen was taught in compulsory classes on Party history and Marxism-Leninism. “We decided to create a party but didn’t know how,” one would-be conspirator told investigators, adding that the problem was soon solved: “I bought a little book, Lenin’s *How to Begin* . . . and we organized a party.” Such conspiratorial endeavors were not uncommon, but what is remarkable about them, almost without exception, is their lack of seriousness. Such organizations typically had only a few members, and those members made no real attempts to recruit others; they talked about revolution—writing manifestos and rules, choosing code names, devising secret protocols, and forming factions (just like the old Bolsheviks)—

but made no concrete plans and committed no acts of violence (or any acts at all, for the most part). Often the protagonists were schoolboys “playing the game of revolution,” as one of them put it; but, even when the organizations had adult members, their revolutionary conspiracy was essentially romantic and “childish,” as Solzhenitsyn said retrospectively of the activities that led to his arrest and charges under Article 58-10 and 58-11 during the war.<sup>31</sup>

In contrast to dissidence, which was the domain of intellectuals, the popular sedition discussed in this book was a predominantly lower-class urban activity, committed primarily by the uneducated. As Kozlov tells us in his introduction, most people prosecuted for anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda had only a primary education, if that, and according to a breakdown compiled by the Procuracy of the USSR in 1957, almost half of them were blue-collar workers. But the most interesting aspect of this breakdown is the category discreetly labeled “other,” into which 15 percent of those prosecuted fell. “Other” turns out to have meant persons without a fixed occupation, something that officially did not exist in the Soviet Union, where unemployment had supposedly been eliminated back in the early 1930s. Nevertheless, such people existed in fairly substantial numbers,<sup>32</sup> a high proportion being ex-convicts released under the amnesties of the 1950s who were unable or unwilling to find regular employment. Of the “others” prosecuted on anti-Soviet charges in 1957, two-fifths had previous convictions—in other words, were former prisoners.<sup>33</sup>

Former prisoners were both a serious social problem in the 1950s and 1960s and a major source of popular sedition. The mass releases of prisoners under the amnesties were implemented with only the most minimal bureaucratic follow-up to ease the prisoners’ return to normal life; as a result, prisoners commonly emerged from the Gulag without the documents needed to obtain employment or residence permits.<sup>34</sup> Local authorities were, as usual, obstructive and lazy, as well as wary of the former prisoners’ troublemaking potential. In the mid-1950s the regime became concerned at the number of unemployed, undocumented marginals in society and introduced “anti-parasite” laws to remove them from the cities.<sup>35</sup> No wonder such people, multiply mistreated by the regime, were particularly prone to insult it in word and deed. The connection between ex-prisoners and sedition becomes even stronger if we add the relatives of ex-prisoners and former exiles, especially their children, who shared or inherited their grievances. Many of them are represented in these pages.



Men were more likely than women to commit anti-Soviet acts, which is not surprising given that men also predominated in the Gulag and the ex-convict population and were also much more prone to drunkenness.<sup>36</sup> Drink is a pervasive motif in sedition cases; and it was becoming an ever-more-serious social problem in the USSR. According to one calculation, the supply of state-produced vodka doubled in the course of the 1960s and 1970s, consumption of home brew appears to have increased at a similar rate,<sup>37</sup> and Kozlov writes of an “epidemic” of drunkenness by the end of the 1970s.<sup>38</sup> This trajectory, however, was different from that of sedition (or at least its prosecution), which tended to diminish rather than increase over the period studied here. But even at the beginning of the two “epidemic” decades—when anti-Soviet outbursts fueled by drinking and subsequently prosecuted were more common than later—urban drinking was at a level undreamt of before the war. A sociological survey of the personal budgets of urban workers in the first half of 1963 showed that the proportion of their income spent on spirits was twice as much as a comparable group had spent in the 1920s.<sup>39</sup>

Because prosecutions involving non-Russian nationalist movements were not included in the database for this volume, the material presented here does not allow too much generalization about the distribution of seditious behavior among different ethnic groups. Of the total Soviet population, 55 percent were ethnically Russian, according to the 1959 census, and about the same proportion (56 percent) lived in the Russian Republic.<sup>40</sup> In our sample, the most serious anti-Soviet offense—forming underground groups—is distributed between Russians and others in much the same ratio. Russians, however, were more prone to write anonymous letters and engage in anti-Soviet speech and actions when drunk, whereas non-Russians took the lead in flag desecrations (this activity was especially characteristic in the Baltic states and Western Ukraine) and the distribution of leaflets.<sup>41</sup>

Both the severity of punishment and the frequency of prosecution changed over the thirty years covered by our study. In the Stalin period, ten-year sentences for “anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda” were standard; and even when victims had served out their terms in the Gulag, they might not be free to return to their earlier life but only to live in exile in a distant part of the Soviet Union. In the Khrushchev period, six to seven years (without subsequent exile) seems to have been the average, with some sentences as short as a year. Prosecutions were running at a level of almost one thousand a year in the early

Khrushchev period but dropped down to a quarter of that number in the first half of the 1960s and a tenth after 1966,<sup>42</sup> when punishment for such offenses was generally replaced by “prophylaxis”—that is, calling offenders into the KGB for “conversations,” in which they were warned to watch their step.

When charged with anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda, the excuse that came naturally to the lips of Soviet citizens was drunkenness. Many people also cited their irreproachable biographies (real or invented) to demonstrate their essentially “Soviet” identity or, on a less lofty plane, claimed that witnesses were lying or exaggerating because of personal grudges. Illiteracy was another familiar excuse (“How can I be anti-Soviet if I’ve got only two years of schooling?”); and those with a good sense of Soviet norms were likely to emphasize that the problems they had criticized were local (“I have nothing against the Soviet system, only against shortcomings in the management of the lumberyard”). A few tried legalistic arguments—for example, that they had written but not disseminated the writing that was allegedly anti-Soviet. Some young defendants were cheeky: “As a Komsomol [Union of Communist Youth] member, I know that I have the right to protest something if I don’t like it,” said one critic of Soviet actions in Hungary in 1956, while another denied that his group could be considered anti-Soviet, since “Soviet power” had long been usurped by the bureaucracy. None of these excuses cut much ice, although drunkenness and illiteracy, along with youth, were sometimes accepted as mitigating circumstances. A more promising strategy, especially for the young and those without a previous record, was to admit error, apologize, and promise to be a good Soviet citizen in the future.

## Subversive Sentiments: A Comparison with Stalin’s Times

The year of Stalin’s death, 1953, was a watershed in Soviet history. Still, life did not change radically overnight. The continuities are particularly evident in the realm of popular culture, including what we might call the popular conversation of sedition, meaning the things that people said when they felt like abusing the regime. The common forms of seditious behavior were much the same under Stalin as under Khrushchev, despite the greater dangers associated with them in Stalin’s time. Public outbursts of rage, when people cursed the regime and attacked busts and portraits of the leaders, were as familiar in the

1930s as in the 1950s and 1960s, except that in the 1930s it was Stalin's portrait on which angry drunks scribbled obscenities, and later it was Khrushchev's. The repertoire of desecration was wide in both periods: people were prosecuted for pulling down portraits, cutting them up, poking them with sharp objects, throwing ink, vodka, or rocks at them, attacking them with hammers, and cursing and spitting at them, as well as drawing on them and writing anti-Soviet graffiti.<sup>43</sup> The only unfamiliar gesture of defiance reported from the Khrushchev period was that of the man who first showed his penis to the portrait hung above his bed in the dormitory and then farted at it—but this description almost certainly reflects changes in police reporting style rather than behavior. Certainly it seems close in spirit to the behavior of a Russian peasant, outraged by collectivization in the early 1930s, who got drunk during a visit of the state procurements brigade and, "mounting his horse backwards with his face to the tail, rode through the village jerking the horse's tail and crying 'That's how we ought to deliver procurements.'"<sup>44</sup>

The hope that war would come and liberate the population from the Soviet regime was another familiar motif.<sup>45</sup> The seditious writer of 1958 who thought it was "better to live under Americans and Germans" and looked on foreigners as potential saviors of Russia was just developing the thought of his counterparts in the 1930s, who at different times expressed hope for rescue by the Pope, the English, the Americans, Hitler, the League of Nations, and the Japanese.<sup>46</sup> Apocalyptic rumors were prevalent both in the Stalin period and the 1950s. Collectivization sparked a particularly passionate outburst in the early 1930s, with collectivizers rumored to be messengers of the Antichrist coming to put "the Devil's mark" on peasants who signed up.<sup>47</sup> But in the late 1950s, the theme was also common in the popular conversation of sedition, though with a more elaborated theology involving various beasts from the Book of Revelation, which suggests a specifically sectarian origin. (Jehovah's Witnesses, who were major targets of Khrushchev's antireligious campaign, were particularly interested in Armageddon.) There was a new twist to the apocalyptic theme in the Khrushchev period, however, because of Khrushchev's promise that the achievement of Communism was at hand. "Earlier, they promised us a kingdom beyond the grave, and now it's Communism beyond the grave."<sup>48</sup>

The resentment of privilege that fueled the Bolshevik Revolution later became a pervasive theme in Soviet popular culture, especially

that of the working class. “Tall poppies” always needed to be cut down, regardless of whether they were the “capitalist bourgeoisie” (in 1917), “bourgeois specialists” (in the 1920s), or Jewish elite members (in the late Stalin period).<sup>49</sup> These targets were officially sanctioned, more or less, unlike another perpetually popular target: Party bosses and Soviet officials. Here the rhetoric of the 1930s closely resembled that of the 1950s and 1960s: bosses had become a “caste”; the Party had “got too big for its boots”; Communists “live like lords”; a class society had been created with Communists at the top, like the old nobility, and “us ordinary mortals” at the bottom.<sup>50</sup>

Playing at revolution might seem the last thing anyone in his or her right mind would have done in the Stalin era. Yet it happened, both before and after the war, presumably for the same reasons as in the 1950s and 1960s—namely, that it was a form of revolutionary romanticism that the Soviet system unwittingly encouraged. Sometimes it was childish playacting in the most literal sense, like the “counter-revolutionary game” organized in the mid-1930s by a Leningrad twelve-year-old: he played Grigory Zinoviev (recently sentenced to death as a counterrevolutionary), allocating the parts of Leon Trotsky, Sergei Kirov, and Kirov’s killer to his young friends.<sup>51</sup> In the late Stalin period, a number of small counterrevolutionary groups were organized by young people and unmasked by the MGB (precursor of the KGB);<sup>52</sup> and the dissident writer Andrei Sinyavsky (Abram Tertz) gave a memorable fictional account of such a group, organized by an idealistic schoolboy in 1952–1953 with an agenda of world revolution and true socialism, participation in which lands four in the Gulag.<sup>53</sup> We find some similar examples, from both before and after Stalin’s death, in this book (“In the summer of 1951, [we] were playing a political game in which each of us chose a code name”; “We were ‘playing the game of revolution,’ so to speak, in that period of our lives”).

Not only adolescents played the dangerous game of revolutionary conspiracy. This book contains a number of examples of such behavior by adults, too. The strange insouciance of some of our popular seditionists is similar to that of Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who was already in his mid-twenties and serving as an officer in the Soviet Army in 1944, when he engaged in correspondence with a friend, also an officer, that included an exchange of classified information on their locations (in code to deceive the military censors), abuse of Stalin (from a “true-Leninist” position), and discussion of the intention to work for political change after the war and find other like-minded people to

join them.<sup>54</sup> It is hardly surprising that, when finally discovered, this correspondence earned him an eight-year sentence.

“True Leninism” was often contrasted with the current degenerated mores of the Party, whether in the Stalin period or later, with emphasis on the abandonment of Leninist norms and the replacement of the dictatorship of the proletariat with a dictatorship of Party bureaucrats. This was, of course, an old Trotskyist criticism of Stalin’s regime, as well as the central point of the newer Marxist critique made famous in the West by the Yugoslav socialist Milovan Djilas in the 1950s,<sup>55</sup> but there is no indication that the popular conversation of sedition within the Soviet Union was influenced by them or any other intellectuals’ formulations. Khrushchev’s Secret Speech of 1956 and the de-Stalinization campaign that followed gave the “true Leninist” critique temporary legitimacy—but the leaders started to backpedal before too long and perceive the critique as “hostile,” which indeed is how it often looks to an outside observer. “I am an old Party member. I used to be proud of my membership. But for more than thirty years, the Party has been degenerating, and there are more philistines, careerist types, bureaucrats, and simply swindlers among its members.”

For some of the “hostile” critics of Stalinism in the 1930s, anyone whom Stalin called an enemy of the people, from Hitler to Trotsky, became ipso facto a friend, leading some Russian peasants to hail Trotsky (with remarkably little historical justification) as a friend of the peasantry, and leading sectarian Christians to pray for the soul of the executed Zinoviev, a Jewish atheist.<sup>56</sup> A similar thing happened in the 1950s, when Khrushchev broke with his former allies and fellow members of Stalin’s Politburo, Molotov, Kaganovich, and Malenkov. Although they were labeled the Anti-Party Group, this did not stop many grumblers from discovering that, after all, these “comrades in arms of Stalin” were the true revolutionaries (“Molotov and the others were dismissed from their posts for caring about the people”; “Molotov and Malenkov are old Party men, they have done a lot for the people, but they’ve been crushed like bugs”).

The popular subversive conversation of the Khrushchev period introduced new motifs, not just repetitions or elaborations of old ones. The theme of Khrushchev the clown was qualitatively different from popular abuse of Stalin, which usually represented him as a blood-thirsty tyrant. Belittlement of Khrushchev seems to have become a national pastime by the early 1960s. He was a joke, a phony, a fat man living in opulence, a boaster, a loudmouth, a drunkard, and an idiot

—“Ivan the fool on the throne.”<sup>57</sup> People mocked him as a “corn peddler” (*kukuruznik*) for his schemes to plant corn in the Virgin Lands. They called him an impostor (*samozvanets*) and found him lacking in the gravitas appropriate to a ruler. “Khrushchev, you idiot, go away. The people despise you.”

A ground for bitter criticism of Khrushchev was that he went swanning round the world to satisfy his own ego and, on top of that, was sending food and other goods to foreigners while the Soviet people went without. The latter was not a wholly new charge: we find precursors in the 1940s, when people complained that bread was being sent to Finland (1941) and Bulgaria and Yugoslavia (1946–1947) and invariably added, “while our people sit starving.” But criticisms with this theme rose to unprecedented heights under Khrushchev, prompted by resentment of what was perceived as a subsidy of the “people’s democracies” of Eastern Europe and aid to the developing Third World. The sentiment was expressed particularly winningly in a subversive poem written in Russian fairy-tale style in the mid-1960s:

Then Nikita started to fly like a bird  
 Around foreign countries  
 And wherever he went, he gave a gift:  
 So-and-so would get a palace,  
 Another a little factory,  
 Here they got wheat, there a little steamship—  
 Thus he robbed his own people  
 So that all this other rabble could eat.<sup>58</sup>

The Hungarian revolt of 1956 generated new seditious conversations. Some of the comments were sympathetic, characterizing the uprising as a fight against dictatorship and for freedom or a workers’ revolution and asserting, contrary to official propaganda, that “in Hungary, it wasn’t counterrevolution but revolution.”<sup>59</sup> But there was also grumbling that food aid was still going to Hungary despite its insubordination (“there was a rebellion in Budapest, but our bread gets sent there”), and the most common type of seditious reference to Hungary was in fact simply a threat: Look out, Soviet rulers, or this will happen to you, too.<sup>60</sup>

This last motif of bloody retribution was particularly characteristic of subversive statements by prisoners and former prisoners, which points up a broader contrast between the sedition of the Khrushchev era and its counterpart in the 1930s. In the 1930s, the seditious voice

we most typically hear is that of embittered ex-Communists, attacking the party that had cast them out<sup>61</sup> with the tools they had acquired as Party members. By the 1950s, prisoners, ex-prisoners, and former exiles, as well as their children, are a tangible presence in the popular conversations of sedition. The tone of their conversations tended to be more violent and vengeful than that of other “subversives”; and in addition, they had their own particular issues, notably the evils of the Gulag empire, a topic seldom raised in seditious conversation by those who had not experienced it. “In the Soviet Union forty million people are kept in prisons and camps,” one ex-prisoner claimed in 1957, “and it’s the Communists, the Cheka, prosecutors, and judges who are to blame. Every second one of them should be hanged; that way there will be no mistakes.”

## Foreign “Voices” and Dissident Intellectuals

The popular conversation of sedition of the Khrushchev and Brezhnev periods differed in one very important respect from that of the prewar Stalin period: its participants were listening to foreign radio. In the 1930s, the Soviet population was effectively isolated from information sources about the outside world other than the Soviet media, which presented a harrowing picture of Dickensian poverty, rampant crime, and political terror conducted by jackbooted Fascists. Their audience may often have reacted skeptically,<sup>62</sup> but they had no way of checking. The information cordon sanitaire was undermined during the Second World War, when millions of Soviet soldiers had a first-hand look at Europe and were able to observe that, despite severe war damage, the standard of living was substantially higher than in the Soviet Union. Two wartime allies, Britain and the United States, also had permission to publish Russian-language monthlies and distribute them in the Soviet Union for several years in the 1940s.

Then came the crucial information breakthrough: shortwave broadcasts from foreign stations. The BBC External Service started broadcasting to the Soviet Union in 1946; Voice of America was on the air beginning in 1947 (its name provided Russians with a new collective term for foreign radio, the “Voices” [*Golosy*]); Radio Liberty, Deutsche Welle, and others followed in the 1950s. Despite jamming, the broadcasts were accessible to anyone who had a Spidola shortwave portable radio, produced by the VEF factory in Latvia in ever increasing numbers.<sup>63</sup> “Millions were regular listeners by the mid 1960s. Jam-

ming was pursued, though not consistently, as the Khrushchev regime was promoting international contact in the cultural realm as well as trying to limit the political impact. But even in large cities—where these efforts were focused—its success was limited; much of the country received foreign broadcasts freely.”<sup>64</sup> Amateur radio clubs mushroomed, and a monthly magazine, *Radio*, “targeted fans of radio technology and regularly published articles and circuitry designs explaining how to build one’s own shortwave receivers.”<sup>65</sup>

These stations had a clear Cold War agenda and were staffed by Russian émigrés with their own brand of anti-Communism. But they broadcast pop music and nonpolitical programs, too, not just news and commentary: Willis Conover’s jazz programs on Voice of America became legendary in the Soviet Union. Indeed, it is often claimed that Soviet listeners tuned in to the Voices for Western popular culture and were indifferent to the ideological content. In the view of the émigré sociologist Vladimir Shlapentokh, Soviet citizens were incapable of assimilating information from the Voices because it was so dissonant with what they were used to from the Soviet media, so they remained immune to the Voices’ Cold War message.<sup>66</sup> Donald Raleigh drew a similar conclusion from his oral history of a school in the Volga city of Saratov: “Members of the Class of ‘67 who listened to foreign broadcasts did so because of their fascination with Western music, or because it gave them something to boast about among their peers.”<sup>67</sup> These reports may reflect how people remembered listening, or what they said to each other in nonseditious conversations at the time. The materials in this book, however, suggest a different story. Reading these materials—even granting that they come to us through the medium of a Soviet institution (the Procuracy of the USSR) that was perhaps inclined to overestimate the impact of foreign radio—we find it hard not to conclude that the Voices represent one of the great success stories in the history of propaganda.

Procuracy investigators probably often asked persons under investigation for sedition whether they listened to foreign radio. Denial would have been prudent, but a surprising number admitted it, generally unapologetically, and even elaborated on the point. People cited the Voices for specific information on such matters as Stalin’s death, politics in the Kremlin, and the Hungarian uprising and used them as a source of authoritative criticism of the Soviet system. “He told me that the American radio reported that we have an unstable government and that you can only find out the truth through their broad-



casts,” one witness in an anti-Soviet case testified. Defendants readily acknowledged their debt to their foreign stations, no doubt partly to deflect blame, and some spoke of it almost as an addiction. “I developed a need to listen to foreign radio stations. They were expressing exactly the same views as the ones I had formed. I began listening to foreign radio stations on a regular basis and gradually came to the conclusion that I had to fight for my beliefs, actively stand up for them.”

The prominence of the foreign Voices in the popular conversation of sedition is all the more striking when compared with the almost complete absence of references to potential sources of subversive information closer to home: samizdat and the dissident movement, both of which were largely confined to the intelligentsia. Of all the dissident intellectuals, only Solzhenitsyn gets a few mentions in the documents and testimony in this book, and then mainly from students. Popular sedition and intellectual dissidence apparently had almost no connection with each other: it is as if the world of the dissident movement, so vividly known in the West, simply did not exist for ordinary Soviet citizens, even subversive ones.

The dissident movement was born of Khrushchev’s Thaw—a brief spell of cultural liberalization—and its partial reversal in the second half of the 1950s and early 1960s. The movement’s social milieu was the intelligentsia, a peculiarly Russian category that, since the mid-nineteenth century, has connoted not simply an educated class but those members of the educated class who think critically about things, specifically about the political regime, imperial or Soviet, under which they live. The gulf between “the intelligentsia” and “the people” has always been great in Russia, despite the traditional aspirations of the former to “serve” the latter, to speak for them and defend their interests against the state. Ordinary Russians have sometimes followed the intelligentsia’s leadership, but they have more often seen its members as part of a Westernized, privileged elite—more “them” than “us.”

Commentators have described the dissident movement in the Khrushchev period as a product specifically of the countercultural, bohemian, Western-looking world of writers, actors, and musicians that emerged in Moscow and Leningrad within the intelligentsia in the wake of the Thaw.<sup>68</sup> For dissident intellectuals of the 1960s and 1970s, the Western orientation had a very practical aspect: Western newspaper correspondents in Moscow were their conduits to the outside world, where their critiques of the Soviet system had much more im-

pact than they did within the Soviet Union. Insofar as nondissident Russians were aware of the dissident movement at all, they generally regarded the dissidents' connection with foreign journalists with distaste, as a kind of betrayal of their homeland.

There was, of course, some overlap between popular sedition and intellectual dissent, primarily in the student milieu. But the dissidents and the popular seditionists basically did different things. Dissidents wrote serious intellectual manifestos and sent them to the West; practitioners of popular sedition, when not engaging in what Soviet authorities called hooligan behavior, wrote abusive anonymous letters and sent them to the authorities. Dissidents talked of political rights; popular seditionists complained about high prices and mistreatment at work. Both were interested in freedom, but the dissidents tended to use the term *svoboda*, a philosophical concept, whereas the popular seditionists wrote of *volia*, a condition of not being hemmed in. Popular seditionists, but not dissidents, were preoccupied with inequality; they were inveterate denouncers of privilege. For dissidents, Czechoslovakia in 1968 was a major issue of principle, but popular subversives seem largely to have ignored it.

That the conversation of popular sedition shows so little influence from the dissidents is a little puzzling, especially since the foreign Voices were beaming dissident writings back as part of their propaganda effort. Perhaps the lack of influence is partly a matter of chronology: the sources for this book are much richer for the 1950s and 1960s, when the dissident movement was still comparatively undeveloped, than for the 1970s. Still, the popular prejudice against dissidents as children of privilege who hung around foreigners was probably often shared even by people with their own grievances against the Soviet system, and the genuinely foreign Voice was probably preferred to the ersatz version.

This book is a translation of V. A. Kozlov and S. V. Mironenko's book, *Kramola. Inakomyslie v SSSR pri Khrushcheve i Brezhneve 1953–1982 gg. Rassekrechennye dokumenty Verkhovnogo suda i Prokuratury SSSR* (Moscow: "Materik," 2005) (without chapter 9, which deals with dissidents). The documents come from archives of the Supreme Soviet and the Procuracy of the USSR, which contain thousands of files on persons prosecuted for anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda from the 1950s to the early 1980s. Vladimir Kozlov and his staff at the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF) made

a database of 2,955 individual cases and 531 group cases; the group cases had approximately 1,900 participants. For the purposes of the book, they excluded cases involving religious sects and the nationalist undergrounds of the Baltic states and Western Ukraine. Army cases are also excluded, for they were prosecuted by another authority. Most material relates to the late 1950s and the early 1960s—the high point of popular sedition and of the state’s concern about it in the post-Stalin period.

The English-language book contains an introduction by Kozlov, which is a shortened and slightly edited version of the one published in the Russian edition, as well as this introduction by the American editor. The separate chapters are introduced by Kozlov and his collaborators, Olga V. Edelman and E. Yu. Zavadskaia, who provide, besides their opening commentaries, chronicles of sedition cases (“From the Procuracy Files” sections of some chapters), capsule biographies of anti-Soviet authors (chapter 7), and sketches of anti-Soviet organizations (chapter 8). In addition to the notes from the Russian edition, this book includes some explanatory and clarificatory notes for English-language readers, written by Andrew Janco, and a short glossary of useful terms; the notes and the glossary are at the end of the book. The translation is by Olga Livshin, with assistance from Sheila Fitzpatrick and Andrew Janco.

Our transliteration is a modified version of the Library of Congress system. The ending *-ii* in proper names has been rendered *y* (as in Lunacharsky) in the text. Proper names beginning with a *ia* or a *iu* are spelled *ya* and *yu* (Yury rather than Iury); female names ending in *-iia* drop the second *i* (Natalia rather than Nataliia). The letter *ë* is given as *yo*.

When place-names (cities and regions) are mentioned in the text, we give the republic in which they are located (Ukraine, Uzbekistan, etc.) in parentheses; if there are no parentheses, the cities or regions are located in the Russian Republic. Similarly, when autonomous republics and regions are mentioned, we give their republican location, unless it is the Russian Republic, in parenthesis. *Oblast’* is translated as “region,” *raion* as “district.”

Many Soviet place-names changed, often more than once. In the documents, we give the name in use at the time the document was written; if it is likely to be unfamiliar (as in the case of the Urals city of Molotov, previously and currently Perm), we give the more familiar name in a note.

## The Meaning of Sedition

VLADIMIR A. KOZLOV

IN AUGUST 1974, the émigré journal *Posev* published an interview with the Russian poet Alexander Galich, who had just emigrated from the Soviet Union.<sup>1</sup> Galich was asked, among other questions, about the Soviet dissident movement: “The Western press commonly uses the term ‘dissidents.’ Do you think this an appropriate term?” Galich replied that he did not like either the word “dissidence” or the term more commonly used in the Soviet Union at the time, “nonconformism” (*inakomyslie*). As an alternative, the poet proposed the French term *résistance*.<sup>2</sup> Galich added an interesting thought about a “silent *résistance*”: that hundreds of thousands of people stood behind the active dissidents. Without them in the background, Galich stated, nonconformist thought could not exist.

Unlike Galich, I believe that we do not need to be all that critical of the word “nonconformism” or substitute another word, such as *résistance*, for what many call dissidence. These words are foreign borrowings and can distort our understanding of a distinctly Soviet phenomenon. However, Galich’s statement points to a real problem. The poet recognized, it seems, that terms like “nonconformist” and “dissident” are highly specific to a particular time, space, and social context. They identify a small group, mostly from the Moscow intelligentsia, who were engaged in semilegal activities aimed at protecting human rights and distributing the unofficial manuscripts called samizdat.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, there were many other kinds of social

and cultural phenomena, lacking names of their own, for which the terms “nonconformist” or “dissident” are obviously not appropriate. It would be difficult to apply these terms to a worker who was unhappy with his paycheck, got drunk, and called Stalin a son of a bitch, Khrushchev a pig, or Brezhnev an idiot. Likewise, traditional underground activities, such as distributing leaflets or mailing anonymous letters, are difficult to call dissidence. Nor does the term fit underground Maoist, Fascist, or Stalinist organizations. The human rights activists of the 1960s and 1970s disapproved of “playing at conspiracy” (*podpol'shchina*). They did not see these activities as comparable to their own work; if they called them dissident, they, at the very least, had serious reservations.

Interestingly, S. I. Ozhegov, in his *Dictionary of the Russian Language* (1953 edition)—where he defined a “nonconformist” (*inakomysliashchii*) as a person having a different way of thinking—considered the word archaic.<sup>4</sup> The dictionary was approved for publication one week after Joseph Stalin’s death. Stalin’s cruel era had given rise to new and harsher words for those who had alternative ways of thinking, such as “enemies of the people,” an expression that entered popular speech immediately after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. The late tyrant had apparently left his successors a society so thoroughly weeded by purges and repressions that nonconformism and nonconformists could not exist. When the era of “liberal Communism”<sup>5</sup> dawned after Stalin’s death, Soviet people could never have imagined that fifteen years later, the word “nonconformism” would become pervasive and even popular, standing for a new (reborn?) social phenomenon.

Nonconformism was the self-chosen name of a local movement composed mostly of members of the Moscow intelligentsia. It is impossible to give this movement a clear ideological label, because every member contributed so much that was individual. Yet beyond the boundaries of this appealing concept of nonconformism lay something much broader, the thing Galich tried to define, very imprecisely, as silent *résistance*. I would argue, however, that the archaic Russian word *kramola* describes it better.

The closest word to *kramola* in English is “sedition.” But *kramola* carries many culturally specific meanings: Vladimir Dahl’s dictionary offers “incitement, mutiny, sedition, treason, and deceitful schemes [*lukavye zamysly*].”<sup>6</sup> Although the word was not common in the Soviet Union in the 1950s–1980s, its historically negative connotation in some contexts (“deceitful schemes”) mirrors the Soviet state’s mistrust

of its subjects and their thinking. Kramola is not the name of a particular nonconformist group. Rather, it is an idea that reflects the traditional opposition in Russia between the state and the people, as well as the mistrust shown by the state and its supporters for their real or imaginary opponents. In Russia, plurality of thought, which is natural and acceptable in any democratic country, became sedition because of the state's intolerance of diversity of thought. Anything that went beyond the boundaries of Soviet political culture was interpreted as treason or sedition, and suspicious or potentially rebellious "deceitful schemes" fell into the same category.

The state's attitude toward sedition, like the state's treatment of nonconformism, was compatible with its political pragmatism. After all, what threatened the Soviet government was not a particular alternative mode of thought but the potential danger of the uncontrolled statement of *any* ideas—even if the ideas were completely Marxist. In practice, the Communist state tolerated no variations of ideology or shades of meaning. It did not explain or justify its approval or disapproval of various ways of thinking, nor did it specify the standards that it used to distinguish between "friendly" or "unfriendly" ideological formulations.

To confirm that permitting "deviations" from Party ideology was fatally dangerous for the regime, we need look no further than the collapse of Communism in the USSR. Communism crashed, not because of liberal anti-Communist criticism, but because the state permitted criticism as such. By doing so, it opened itself to blows from liberals and socialists, monarchists and egalitarians—groups with diametrically opposed political views that were constantly at odds with one another but that strove with all their might to make their mutual negation legal, in other words, to destroy Communism as a special type of bureaucratically organized party-state.

Not surprisingly, people who were arrested and tried for their views and actions in the post-Stalin era (a seemingly liberal time) often held diametrically opposed political views. These people were united, not by anti-Communism or their criticism or opposition to the state, but rather by the state's attitude to *kramola* as such. The Soviet state took a quasi-religious approach to nonconformism. It viewed dissent as a heresy against the one and only interpretation of the Truth (*Istina*) at any given moment. This interpretation was enshrined in lists of heroes and enemies approved by the Politburo, "good" and "bad" historical events, and even approved or condemned scientific discoveries.

This is why the State Archive of the Russian Federation, GARF (specifically the records of the Supreme Court of the USSR and the Procuracy of the USSR), contains records of anti-Chechen statements made by Russians from Grozny (Chechen-Ingush republic) as well as anti-Russian statements made by Chechens. It contains prosecutions for “manifestations of anti-Semitism” as well as “Zionist propaganda,”<sup>7</sup> Communist (“revisionist”) criticism as well as Fascist criticism of the Soviet government, and liberal attacks on Communism as well as Maoist, Trotskyite, and Stalinist charges that the Soviet state had succumbed to “bourgeois degeneration.” The same articles of the Soviet criminal code served as a basis for the conviction and imprisonment of both enthusiastic defenders of “true Leninism”<sup>8</sup> and the proponents of monarchy, supporters of a “capitalist renaissance,” and those who rejected the Communist dictatorship for its “dacha capitalism”<sup>9</sup> and the privileges that it granted its bureaucracy.

When one spends a lot of time reading the documents in the archive, it becomes clear that ideological motivations played a role in these prosecutions, but perhaps not the defining role. How can we say that Soviet courts and police aimed to suppress anti-Communist beliefs if we find that pro-socialist and Marxist beliefs that deviated slightly from the ruling ideology were also subject to prosecution? The prosecutions were meant to establish “ideological discipline,” to encourage people to think—or at least act—in line with policies of the Central Committee. As the bare minimum, dissenters were expected to keep silent.

If the state was indiscriminate in the targets of its repression, many of its opponents and critics were just as arbitrary in choosing the form of their opposition. In many cases, the form was a matter of chance, and the dissenters’ views and ideas were highly eclectic. Legal, organized, and conscious opposition had been defeated in the 1920s and had not reemerged legally or even illegally. The exceptions were certain nationalist underground organizations on the Soviet empire’s periphery and, to some extent, the dissident movement. Until the mid-1960s, however, the majority of the regime’s critics could shift easily from orthodox Communist views to monarchism, paradoxically combining any beliefs. The important point for both the state and its opponents was the very fact of confrontation, not ideological conviction.

## The Temptation of “Dissident-Centrism”: Russian Historiography of the 1990s

The vast majority of post-Soviet publications and the bulk of the research on nonconformism cover what I will call “dissident-centrism.” The works evince little interest in equally significant—if not more significant—instances of kramola, of popular resistance to the regime. The authors view the entire history of post-Stalin sedition and popular resistance before the 1960s as “underdeveloped dissidence” or the “gestation of an open social movement.” All forms of anti-regime activity that coexisted with the dissident movement are either seen as part of this movement or simply ignored.

Among “dissident-centric” works we may count Ludmila Alexeyeva’s well-researched study *Soviet Dissent: Contemporary Movements for National, Religious and Human Rights* (first published in 1984 in the United States but not available to readers in Russia until 1992).<sup>10</sup> Other works that privilege the dissident movement include survey articles about nonconformism written by the dissidents themselves or those who were close to them.<sup>11</sup> Among recent works that have been written outside Russia and that somewhat broadened the horizons of our understanding of Soviet nonconformism let me note Vladimir Shlapentokh’s monograph *Soviet Intellectuals and Political Power: The Post-Stalin Era*.<sup>12</sup> However, the “dissident trend” continues to predominate. Researchers have even found the “first human-rights organizations” in the Russian Civil War era—making an anachronistic use of a relatively specific term.<sup>13</sup>

Initially, most historians confined their studies of nonconformity to the dissidents and a handful of Moscow and Leningrad intellectuals close to them. Khrushchev’s (1953–1964) and Brezhnev’s (1964–1982) regimes were very successful at concealing information about their secret opponents. The dissidents were the first who managed to declare their presence and ideas openly to the nation and the world; they even wrote own history. But the lives and fates of the great majority of nonconformists remained hidden in secret archives. Only now are we beginning to learn about the actual scale and evolution of various forms of popular protest against the regime. Only now do we recognize that “anti-Soviet expressions” were numerous and astonishingly diverse and that a significant number came from ordinary people, not intellectuals.

Without access to crucial sources, historians were forced to rely on



memoirs, newspaper articles, political essays, and oral narratives. For example, Geoffrey Hosking, the author of an excellent survey of Soviet history, had to rely only on a memoir written by Vladimir Bukovsky<sup>14</sup> about his meeting in a special psychiatric ward with an inmate who was there because of a letter that he had written to the Central Committee, “demanding a thorough investigation of those who served as Stalin’s accomplices in his crimes.”<sup>15</sup> Today we can cite dozens (or possibly hundreds) of credible examples of such statements. The same can be said about the history of underground organizations in the 1950s and 1960s.

“Anti-Soviet statements” made by “ordinary people” in Khrushchev’s time have been all but forgotten. Although the existence of liberal and socialist-democratic ideas among Moscow and Leningrad intellectuals was known in the West, other forms of “anti-Sovietism” sank into oblivion. These included attacks on Khrushchev from Stalinist and Maoist positions, nationalist underground movements in Russia and the Soviet republics, and Fascist youth organizations. Very little research has been done on the increasing unpopularity of the “populist” Khrushchev in the first half of the 1960s. The strike in Novocherkassk during the summer of 1962 and its tragic aftermath,<sup>16</sup> became a symbol of this unpopularity but was only one of numerous expressions of discontent, including terrorist threats against Khrushchev.

Since 1991, more research on popular resistance has been done in Russia than in the West; it is, after all, the country where this resistance took place, and it contains the most archival sources. Following the first few naive and rather superficial attempts to produce “generalizations” and “overviews” of resistance,<sup>17</sup> Russian historians began to familiarize themselves with the sources and produce more or less systematic research and popular studies. Memorial, a society established for the study and protection of human rights in Russia and the former Soviet Union, has become a major center for research on Soviet political repression, including the post-Stalin period. Scholarly volumes published by Memorial include several highly professional studies of repression in the late 1950s and early 1960s.<sup>18</sup> Work commenced on the collection of documents of participants in the human rights movement.<sup>19</sup> At the same time, archival documents declassified under the presidential decree “On the Declassification of Legislative and Other Documents That Served as the Basis of Mass Repression and the Infringement of Human Rights” (June 23, 1992) filled the pages of

the popular media and professional journals. The peak year in terms of number of publications on popular resistance was 1992, when the government was preparing for the so-called Trial of the Communist Party.<sup>20</sup>

Publications in the early 1990s naturally focused on the most famous names and events. Persecution of the most celebrated nonconformist thinkers and defenders of human rights<sup>21</sup>—Andre Sakharov and Elena Bonner,<sup>22</sup> Alexander Solzhenitsyn,<sup>23</sup> Pyotr Grigorenko,<sup>24</sup> Mstislav Rostropovich and Galina Vishnevskaya,<sup>25</sup> among others<sup>26</sup>—received particular attention, as did the campaigns of “ideological processing,” when intellectuals were humiliated, intimidated, and pressured to renounce their beliefs (Alexander Nekrich<sup>27</sup> and Joseph Brodsky,<sup>28</sup> for example), the baiting of the editors of the journal *Novyi mir*,<sup>29</sup> the surveillance and manipulation of renowned Soviet cultural figures,<sup>30</sup> and famous open protests, such as the rally in defense of free speech that took place at Moscow’s Pushkin Square in December 1965.<sup>31</sup>

The first significant step beyond “dissidence-centrism” came with the publication of internal Central Committee documents and KGB reports on Soviet people’s reactions to various political events.<sup>32</sup> The attitudes of the intelligentsia and university students were of particular interest to researchers,<sup>33</sup> but documents were published on other topics as well, including the situation in the army<sup>34</sup> and expressions of opinion by “ordinary people.”<sup>35</sup> Documents on the state’s strategies and tactics in its struggle with nonconformism and sedition were published only sporadically.<sup>36</sup> Publications of documents from individual underground organizations of the 1950s–1980s were similarly rare and haphazard.<sup>37</sup>

Not until the mid-1990s did professional research on the history of nonconformism based on new archival documents start to appear.<sup>38</sup> Historians engaged in this research were primarily interested in dissidents and the freethinking intellectual *frondes* of Moscow, Leningrad, and other big cities, as well as underground youth and student organizations. There was also interest in the opinions of the Soviet population and various social groups.<sup>39</sup> But seditious sentiments and statements by “ordinary people” remained almost entirely unexplored. The social and psychological portrait of critics of the regime who came “from the masses” (that is, were not intellectuals) was blurry and tended to be subsumed under the abstract concept of “the people” (*narod*). The behavior, tactics, speech patterns, ideological leanings,

and life paths of such people were as little known to historians as they were to the Soviet intelligentsia of the post-Stalin era. Intellectual dissent belonged to a different sphere than did the poorly articulated popular criticism of the regime, which was sometimes focused and purposeful but more often a spontaneous reaction to some irritation or event.

“The people” neither left us memoirs nor created myths about themselves. They did not emigrate to the West; they did not—and, in reality, could not—write their own histories. They came out of the dense mass of “common people,” and when they were released from imprisonment, they returned to this mass and dissolved in it completely. Some of these people disappeared without a trace in labor camps or labor colonies. However, this segment of the population made up the overwhelming majority of those charged with the crimes of anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda in the 1950s–1980s.

Popular criticism of the ruling regime reflects historical patterns of Russian anti-state opposition. Although this criticism was incoherent and eclectic, and both egalitarian and patriarchal in orientation, the ideas expressed played a role in the collapse of Soviet Communism equal to, if not greater than, the role played by intelligentsia dissidence. As refined as the dissident movement’s ideas may have been, they were incomprehensible to the masses. Yet the political popularity of Mikhail Gorbachev, first secretary and then president of the country from 1985 to 1991, waned under the pressure of popular discontent, and the same dissatisfaction not only exerted a considerable influence on post-Gorbachev democracy but continues to influence the contemporary political system. In the background of most Russian oppositional movements alive today we find enduring ideological and psychological constructions steeped in the dislike of bureaucracy, primitive egalitarianism, nationalism, a longing for a paternalistic relationship between the state and the people, and a naive faith in the immediate “improvement of life” according to a plan worked out in advance.

To summarize, there is a whole stratum of social and cultural reality, manifestly important in contemporary Russian politics, about which we know virtually nothing. In this book we have tried to broaden the usual perspective on the history of the relationship between the people and the state in the era of “liberal Communism.” We have not treated the popular (traditional and archaic) forms of opposition as mere “embryos” of the dissident movement, nor do we see the participants of open mass opposition as precursors of the dissi-

dents. To do so, we believe, would be to make the same mistake that Soviet historians made in their interpretation of the Russian revolutionary movement. As loyal Soviet subjects, these historians saw Bolshevism as an ideal and a culmination. They judged all other political movements (whether predating Bolshevism or concurrent with it) only in terms of their degree of correspondence to Bolshevism, their “highest benchmark.” In their histories (no matter how ridiculous they seemed to schoolchildren and college students in the 1970s), everyone but Lenin had misunderstood something: the Decembrists,<sup>40</sup> Alexander Herzen (whom the Decembrists had “awakened”),<sup>41</sup> the populists, the Socialist Revolutionaries.<sup>42</sup> For Soviet historians, it was better not even to mention nonrevolutionary, conservative, or tradition-minded trends in political thought, as if they were somehow indecent.

In this book, we try to place all forms of opposition to the Communist regime in their historical context. Instead of making generalizations, we will attempt to reproduce the messy complexity of real life, which knows no complete or perfect “embodiments” of political ideas.

## Archives of the Procuracy of the USSR as an Encyclopedia of Soviet Sedition

Fortunately for us, the Soviet state took care to document the activities of its seditious critics. Throughout the years of “liberal Communism,” thousands of files accumulated in the archives. Historians found it difficult to learn their way around these institutional documents, which were declassified only with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, and work through them quickly, so these documents were not part of the archival publishing boom of 1992–1996. No one took much interest in writers of anonymous anti-Soviet letters, authors of strange and grandiose treatises “on improving life,” or naive members of provincial underground movements. E. Yu. Zavadskaia and I tried to gather more or less complete information on the most significant manifestations of sedition in the archives of the Central Committee in the former Central Party Archive, the Russian State Archive of Social and Political History (Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv sotsial’no-politicheskoi istorii, or RGASPI). We were able to put together a concise but relatively complete catalogue of KGB memoranda and internally circulated information on actions against various forms of nonconformism. Some of these documents are reproduced in this

book. But we could not help feeling that the information we had was inadequate. Our documents had been selected by high-ranking police officials, not only for their political significance but also for bureaucratic reasons that only they knew. In the mix, we found overviews that were rich in statistical information but skimpy on information about specific incidents and actual people. Only about ten to fifteen individuals who had been kept under special surveillance showed up in these files, and the image presented was not so much of sedition as of a police construct of sedition.

Work on the compilation of a database for a history of nonconformism in the era of “liberal “Communism” continued at the State Archive of the Russian Federation. The director of the archive, Sergei V. Mironenko, joined us, as did Olga V. Edelman. It was then that we learned about an extensive resource on the history of sedition and seditious thought: documents from the Procuracy of the USSR’s Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security.<sup>43</sup> It is hard to imagine that any other set of documents would have allowed us to piece together as complete a picture of sedition in a relatively compact form.

To make the documents that we have collected for this book available to readers, our group reviewed more than 70,000 cases from the Procuracy of the USSR for the years 1953–1985. This took three years. We found 5,000 cases of prosecution for seditious activities and writings (*kramola*). (These included some cases that are not discussed in this book, notably those involving religious sects, such as Jehovah’s Witnesses, Baptists, and Adventists, and those involving the remnants of nationalist underground movements in the Baltic republics and Western Ukraine). We created an electronic database of cases, from which we selected examples that were both vivid and typical.<sup>44</sup>

So that the reader can appreciate the representativeness of the sources used, let me cite several figures. According to KGB data, 8,124 people were convicted between 1957 and 1985 for committing anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda and for spreading false information about the Soviet state and society.<sup>45</sup> Our database contains 2,955 individual cases and 531 group cases, involving a total of approximately 1,900 individuals.<sup>46</sup> Thus, we have information on 5,000 people involved in *kramola*, or about 60 percent of the total number convicted.

Most of the documents published here originate from the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR. What kinds of cases are these, and what kinds of

documents do we have for these cases? Following Order no. 85 of the prosecutor general of the USSR, "On Methods for Procuracy Investigations of State Crimes" (issued on August 1, 1956, on the basis of a decree of July 28, 1956, of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, "On the Jurisdiction of Cases Concerning Crimes against the State"), the department was responsible for overseeing cases involving crimes against the state that went through the central offices of the KGB. Investigations in the regional departments of the KGB were under the supervision of prosecutors in the various Soviet republics, autonomous republics, and regions.<sup>47</sup> These procuratorial agencies worked exclusively on cases involving civilians who had committed crimes against the state. In other words, the documents of the oversight department contain very little information about seditious activities and writings in the Soviet Army, which was under the jurisdiction of the Military Procuracy of the USSR.

Not all information on state crimes cases in the second half of 1950s reached the Procuracy of the USSR. Only prosecutors at the republican level were required to write special reports "on *every* crime against the state that had been committed" (my emphasis) and report on the outcome of every case that was adjudicated. The prosecutors of regions and autonomous republics were expected to report about such crimes to the prosecutors of their respective republics. They were required to send a copy of the report to the Procuracy of the USSR only with regard to particularly important cases, such as those concerning treason, terrorism, sabotage, or anti-Soviet agitation.<sup>48</sup> As a result, the richness of the archive of the Procuracy of the USSR notwithstanding, it does not contain materials on the oversight of all cases investigated by the regional departments of state security for the second half of the 1950s. There are gaps in the data gathered in connection with prosecutions and forwarded to the center by local prosecutors, but some of these were filled retrospectively, after appeals from those convicted and their families. The appeals were filed with the Procuracy of the USSR, the offices of the upper levels of the Soviet government, and the Central Committee.<sup>49</sup> In addition, resolutions and reports on the work of regional procuracies are available for some of the cases for which a special report was not filed.

Information on cases of anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda is more complete for the second half the 1960s. According to new instructions from the Procuracy of the USSR (No. 13/51, dated June 15, 1968, and No. 13/138, dated March 7, 1973), the prosecutors of re-

publics, autonomous republics, and regions were required to send immediate special reports to the Procuracy of the USSR on arrests relating to criminal cases initiated by the organs of state security. For particularly important cases, they were even required to report by special telegram, following up by mail with detailed written accounts.<sup>50</sup> It is worth noting, however, that before the 1960s, those accused of crimes against the state were, in practice, almost always arrested on a warrant issued by the prosecutor. The practice of taking “prophylactic measures” (that is, giving official warnings) became more frequent in the 1960s–1980s.<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, because the authorities were pushing for a reduction in the total number of criminal prosecutions at this time, the archives of the Procuracy of the USSR contain considerably fewer prosecutions for nonconformity in this period than in the preceding years. In the great majority of cases, the KGB did not send detailed information to the Procuracy of the USSR on the “anti-Soviets” (*antisovetchiki*) to whom they had given official warnings, because the prophylactic measures did not require procuratorial sanction. It was enough to tell the prosecutors that such measures had been taken.

In addition to the special reports on cases initiated on account of anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda, the archives of the Procuracy of the USSR contain copies of indictments and verdicts, protests from the prosecutor general and his deputies, as well as preparatory resolutions on the protests, and appeals from those convicted and their families, as well as prosecutors’ responses to the appeals. The archives also contain actual “seditious” texts (manuscripts, leaflets, and anonymous letters), usually in the form of quotations and excerpts and only rarely in the original.

Those who organized the storage of court documents and legal proceedings were not worried about the interests of future researchers: their main concern was the ideological security of the regime. Thus, a number of directives forbid citation of anti-Soviet statements in legal documents. We know, for example, about a particular order from the Court Collegium of the Supreme Court of the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic (RSFSR) for Criminal Cases, issued in 1959, that strictly prohibited “quoting actual anti-Soviet statements in a verdict.”<sup>52</sup> According to the memoirs of O. A. Dobrovolsky, a KGB investigator, the procedure for drafting reports required “seditious thoughts to be reported indirectly, for example: ‘the person under investigation, named so-and-so, spoke as if there were no democracy in the USSR.’”<sup>53</sup> When seditious texts and statements were quoted in doc-

uments sent to the Procuracy of the USSR from the provinces, high-ranking Procuracy officials often added marginal comments to the effect that “one shouldn’t indicate the last name [of Party and state leaders criticized] in these reports.”<sup>54</sup>

Surprisingly, this kind of censorship was first applied to documents that were *not* classified (court verdicts, for example) and was applied only later, in the 1960s and the 1970s, to secret internal documents. In Brezhnev’s time, the realm of ritualistic taboos broadened, reflecting a halfhearted bureaucratic attempt to create a cult of personality of “the leader.” Documents from the Soviet Procuracy’s oversight department relied increasingly on vague labels like “anti-Soviet,” “reformist,” “revisionist,” and “politically harmful” and avoided concrete details. These practices make it extremely difficult to identify the ideological leanings of “anti-Soviets.”

## The State and Its Opponents: The Dynamics of the Conflict (I)

After Stalin’s death, the Soviet judiciary renounced the ridiculous assumption that the confession of the accused was the “pinnacle of all evidence.” This assumption, which evokes the Inquisition, had opened the door to repression and widespread disregard of the law. In the mid-1950s, the Procuracy began to require its investigators to collect the testimony of witnesses, expert reports, and material, written, and other basic evidence. The investigators were supposed to take into consideration the possibility that an admission of guilt might be motivated by the desire of the accused to conceal a more serious crime, or it might be a response to moral pressure, or simply the result of someone failing to understand the substance of the charge because of illiteracy.

After 1953, various special councils that had been used in place of the normal courts were abolished—for instance, a special council that operated under the auspices of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Moreover, the “exceptional measures” used for investigations and trials in cases of sabotage, terrorist acts, and subversive destruction were eliminated.<sup>55</sup> These innovations were an important step in a new direction. Extrajudicial prosecution of sedition had given rise to widespread disregard of the law and abuses of power. Just one example is sufficient to demonstrate what kind of danger this type of prosecution represented. In 1953, after Stalin’s death, a B. D. Lifshits was arrested for saying, “I hope he rots!” The prosecutor of the Central Procuracy of



Transportation came to the following conclusion after familiarizing himself with the “evidence”: “There are no witnesses in Lifshits’s case. The material evidence is clearly insufficient to send the case to court. Reports of secret police surveillance cannot be used in a court trial. On this basis, I find that the case should be investigated by the Special Council under the auspices of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.” In other words, “There is no evidence, but Lifshits should be jailed.” And he could be. Fortunately for Lifshits, a new era was dawning. His case was sent to the Special Council, but on September 23, 1953, the investigator closed the case.<sup>56</sup>

After the decree “On the Jurisdiction of Cases Concerning Crimes against the State,” issued on July 28, 1956, the procedures for issuing convictions and verdicts were put in order. Political cases, including those with the most common charge—anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda—were to be heard in civil courts, which in 1957 dealt with 94.6 percent of all counterrevolutionary cases,<sup>57</sup> compared with 50 percent in 1956, 21.4 percent in 1952, and 12.3 percent in 1947.<sup>58</sup> The other cases were heard by “special courts,” which included military tribunals.

In Stalin’s time, the discovery, during a house search, of a few books, brochures, or even newspaper articles written by “enemies of the people” was sufficient cause for dire punishment. Under Khrushchev, the Soviet judicial system began to view the keeping of anti-Soviet literature somewhat more liberally. If it could not be proven that a person had distributed the literature, the system could not establish “counterrevolutionary intent,” and a criminal case could not be prosecuted.

In the first years of Khrushchev’s term, a typical error in classifying a crime—reflecting, no doubt, the repressive inertia of the regime and its servants—was to prosecute common disorderly behavior under an “anti-Soviet” article. The accused, generally drunk, “allowed themselves to express opinions”—in public places or, if they had already been detained, at police stations—that were classified without adequate grounds as anti-Soviet agitation. Formally, the justice system had to present evidence of “counterrevolutionary intent” to justify such a charge, and the Procuracy of the USSR demanded “evidence of the expression of . . . anti-Soviet sentiments at other times.”<sup>59</sup> Yet a rowdy drunk and hooligan who got a black eye at the police station and called the policemen Fascists for this now had the chance to spend a few days in jail rather than serve several years for “anti-Soviet agi-

tation,” a sentence that was commonplace under Stalin and in the early Khrushchev period.

The Soviet system and its punitive authorities took “special care” of what they considered to be “counterrevolutionary organizations.” The post-Stalin interpretation of Article 58-11 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR<sup>60</sup> (and the corresponding articles of criminal codes of the Soviet republics, inasmuch as there was no general criminal code for the Soviet Union) was no more liberal than it had been. Committing a crime as a group was considered to be an aggravating circumstance under Article 47, paragraph (c), in the Criminal Code of the RSFSR, and this was naturally extended to all types of offenses. Under Khrushchev, the mass fabrication of cases involving counterrevolutionary organizations stopped, but Article 58-11 was still widely used.

“It is not necessary for a counterrevolutionary organization to have a formally articulated charter, membership cards, and the like,” the Procuracy of the USSR considered. The main issue was that “those accused *realize* that their actions are directed against the Soviet state, and that they are acting together because of their shared beliefs and to facilitate their criminal goals” (my emphasis).<sup>61</sup> Every organized activity that was “meant to prepare for or commit counterrevolutionary crimes” was considered to be evidence of the creation of a counterrevolutionary organization. Given that the law did not define the concept of a “counterrevolutionary organization” at all, the Soviet justice system had a completely free hand in classifying this kind of state crime.

Some changes took place in the classification of terrorist acts, however, which were another type of crime against the state that was considered to be particularly dangerous; terrorist acts were prosecuted under Article 58-8 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR. To classify violent acts (murder, physical injury, torture) committed against representatives of the regime as terrorism, it was now necessary to prove “counterrevolutionary intent.” In contrast to the 1930s and 1940s, when the usual practice was to consider any violent act against an official a terrorist act, under Khrushchev the justice system acknowledged the possibility that such crimes might have a “personal or everyday character,” and tried to avoid treating the beating of a collective-farm chairman by a jealous husband as a crime against the state.

The broad interpretation of “terrorist act” that was prevalent under Stalin was encountered more rarely in the second half of the 1950s, al-

though from time to time, the Procuracy of the USSR remained true to its Stalinist roots.<sup>62</sup> In only three out of fourteen terrorist cases reviewed by the Supreme Court of the USSR in 1957 were the defendants convicted of specific actions. The rest were accused of committing a terrorist act by “expressing ‘terrorist intent’ orally or in written form.”<sup>63</sup>

The justice system under Khrushchev restored a more or less normal order for basic procedures pertaining to investigations, the issuing of verdicts, and appeals for court cases concerning counterrevolutionary crimes. When a prosecutor’s objection was reviewed in a court of second instance, the court was required not only to analyze the appeal but also to review the entire case, regardless of the content of the appeal—that is, to uncover any other possible breaches of the law that might lead to a reversal of the original conviction.

These and many other changes and corrections in legal practice involving prosecution of “counterrevolutionary crimes” created the legal basis for rehabilitation of hundreds of thousands of people wrongly convicted under Stalin. They also helped to shorten the sentences or grant amnesty for those political prisoners whom the Soviet justice system continued to consider guilty. Thousands of people were released from labor camps.

Yet how much did the new trends in the Soviet justice system affect new victims of political repression? In Khrushchev’s time, the authorities only “restored” the letter and spirit of the harsh Soviet laws against all oppositional activities that had existed even before Stalin. The real meaning of Khrushchev’s liberalization was that, unlike in the 1930s and 1940s, now people could forecast the legal consequences of their actions. The government now made it understood what a nonconformist person could be prosecuted for, and under what circumstances. The chances that a person could go to prison for anti-Soviet statements became smaller and smaller, but in Khrushchev’s time they were still far from zero. While the “rules of the game” for the state and the people became more predictable, the nature of the regime did not change. Stalinist legal practice, which aimed to convert ordinary incidents into extraordinary crimes, was dependent on complete intimidation to achieve the desired result. Neither loyalty nor keeping one’s mouth shut could guarantee survival. No one knew the rules that would ensure safety in that twisted world.

With the practice of “lawful repression” in the Khrushchev period and afterward, investigators chose explicit goals, specified the legal

outcomes of various actions, and, accordingly, restored relatively clear guidelines for social behavior. Now people knew what they “could” and “could not” do. It was this (and nothing else) that created the subjective feeling of greater freedom. The state abused the law less, but the law did not become fairer. The norms of “socialist legality” were restored, but legality itself continued to be “socialist”—which amounted to harsh and contradictory. Freedom of speech and the right to gather in public and organize meetings had been codified in the Constitution of 1936. In reality, however, these rights were canceled by Article 58 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR and corresponding articles in the criminal codes of other Soviet republics dealing with “counterrevolutionary crimes,” and, as before, the punitive measures specified in these articles were equaled in severity only by the measures for the most serious criminal offenses, such as murder and rape.

The mere expression of any views that deviated from the views approved by the Communist ruling circle was interpreted in the 1950s, as before, as a dangerous crime against the state. Under Khrushchev, the judicial system stopped the practice of imprisoning innocent people, but the warped Stalinist concept of a person’s “guilt” before the state remained. The state did not do anything to broaden the space for expressing alternative views, but it eliminated the risk of prosecution for statements and actions that remained within the boundaries of the permitted. Ordinary people who were loyal to the regime, dutiful bureaucrats, cultural figures who were ready to follow the conventions of socialist realism, “creative Marxists” who were taught in the Party schools and who did not go beyond official interpretations of ideology—that is, the absolute majority of the population—could now breathe a sigh of relief and even allow themselves to express some harmless criticisms. To take a few steps beyond the boundaries of the permitted was now a much smaller risk, especially when the steps were accompanied by the observance of Communist rituals and the necessary “bow” to the truth of socialism. Now such a risk was acceptable; risk taking was a game that people could play with the system. If you knew how to read political signals and clues correctly, and if you managed to pull back in time into the area designated by the Communist regime as acceptable, the game did not have to result in imprisonment. This new approach could be seen as liberalization only in contrast with Stalinist terror, when even loyalty to the state provided almost no guarantees and, to quote an old joke, life was like an overcrowded trolley in which “half the people are sitting and half

are shaking.” In Russian, the verb “to sit” is also a colloquialism for “to serve time.”<sup>64</sup>

Significantly, the state never sought to make the “rules of the game” completely clear. There was a certain amount of blurriness about legal boundaries, which created a zone of risk for individuals and kept them in a state of tension and heightened anxiety. Potential opponents of the system remained fearful and suspicious. Fuzzy boundaries allowed the regime to unleash repression against a particular social group whenever doing so was felt to be necessary.

Although those with direct responsibility for overseeing the legal system pursued greater judicial clarity, they did not find support in the political leadership. On December 8, 1958, a deputy chief prosecutor of the USSR, D. E. Salin, who was in charge of the oversight of investigations by the organs of state security, sent the draft of a manual, “Procuracy Oversight of Cases Pertaining to State Crimes,” to one of the other deputy prosecutors, P. I. Kudriavtsev. Somebody (probably Kudriavtsev) used a red pencil to scribble “general comments” on the first page, suggesting that the text be edited so that it conformed to changes in the legislation, that unnecessary details be struck out, that the introduction be rewritten, and so on. Kudriavtsev had clearly approved the manuscript, although he suggested that it be condensed into a set of “methodological instructions.” Above Kudriavtsev’s comments, the chief prosecutor, Roman Rudenko, wrote, “Even better, don’t publish this manual at all.”<sup>65</sup> Rudenko met with Salin and, giving no further explanation, ordered that the brochure not be published. After the meeting, the baffled deputy noted on his cover letter as an aide-mémoire, “R.A. thinks that it is not necessary to publish a manual on cases pertaining to state crimes, because there is no need for such a manual”<sup>66</sup>—in other words, we shouldn’t publish it because, well, we just shouldn’t. On April 16, 1959, all thirty-seven copies of the manual that had been printed on a hectograph were destroyed “by burning.”<sup>67</sup> Only one copy was kept; it was immediately given a “secret” classification and filed away.

I am not aware of the chief prosecutor’s reasons for prohibiting publication of the manual. After all, the provincial organs of the Procuracy were constantly making errors, large and small, ranging from the inaccurate classification of a crime to failure to follow proper procedure in reporting the initiation of a state-crime case. Perhaps Rudenko simply did not like the manuscript, but it is more likely that the seasoned politician, who had climbed up the ladder in Stalin’s time, thought

that publication of any document regulating procedures for cases pertaining to state crimes would only tie state officials' hands and, if the political situation changed, might limit the possibility of interpreting the law in a way that would be advantageous to the state.

A particularly important innovation in the era of "liberal Communism" was a gradual decrease in the number of people prosecuted for and convicted of "choosing the path of anti-Soviet activity." Instead, the justice system increasingly applied mild pressure on potential opponents by taking "prophylactic measures." Usually that meant summoning a person under suspicion of engaging in an anti-Soviet crime to the office of state security for a "conversation," during which an official, acting in a familiar "fatherly" but intimidating way, laid out the potential consequences of persisting in whatever activity had prompted the summons. Afterward, the person was required to sign a note stating that he or she had been warned.

This measure was applied as early as the mid-1950s. It became official after Nikita Khrushchev's speech at the Twenty-first Party Congress in 1959, when the concept of "prophylactic measures" was mentioned in public for the first time. The new policy was presented in the context of "societal pressure" on people who had committed crimes but posed no danger to society. At the end of the 1950s, the regime, which was having to deal with an unprecedented increase in the number of misdemeanors (petty theft and disorderly conduct), made a reasonable decision: not to fill prisons and labor camps with petty criminals and thereby turn correctional facilities into "schools for crime." Political prisoners, considered to be more dangerous than common criminals, were therefore isolated from other criminals, giving them every chance to make contacts, establish networks, and share experiences in what might be called a real "school for revolutionaries." As a result, someone who entered prison as a naive and romantic fighter for justice and "true socialism" might become an experienced underground operator, having added a sense of personal injury and the experience of being a "social outcast" to his or her original motivation for undertaking an anti-Soviet activity.

The state's logic was simple. Why harden opponents in prisons and labor camps, or drive people into a corner from which return to a normal existence (or, more exactly, reconciliation with the regime, real or feigned), was impossible? Why not, instead, convert adversaries into people who still had a chance to reenter normal life by demonstrating loyalty to the regime and repudiating their seditious activities? Such

people would be intimidated by the prophylactic measure taken, but they would not lose their hope of being reestablished in society; they would see the sword of Damocles hanging over them, but they would know that they had a chance of avoiding it. Fear of punishment can be a far more effective “preventive measure” than actual punishment. The Party, the Komsomol, and trade unions—the so-called Soviet public (*obshchestvennost'*)—would cooperate with state security in the new prophylactic approach to dealing with “unhealthy political leanings.” To increase the effect, individuals might be expelled from the Party, the Komsomol, or the university, or fired from their jobs.

While using prophylactic measures to fight sedition, the state also bolstered its image by claiming that the construction of socialism was already “basically complete.”<sup>68</sup> The new social order was presented to the world in all its beauty as an example for all other nations. It had to embody, if not heaven on earth, then at least a respectable version of Dante’s Purgatory. In an interview with a reporter from the United Press on November 19, 1957, Khrushchev said: “The number of criminals in the USSR has diminished significantly. Our police and our justice system deal mostly with disorderly conduct and ordinary crime. Political crimes are now rare in our country. In the last few years, most of the people justly punished for anti-Soviet activities have been foreign agents who infiltrated the Soviet Union.”<sup>69</sup> Everything in this statement was untrue. A surge in prosecutions for anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda took place in 1957, contradicting Khrushchev’s assertion of the “rarity” of this type of crime. The hint about “foreign agents who infiltrated the Soviet Union” was simply a brazen falsehood: from 1956 to 1957 no one was convicted of espionage in the USSR.<sup>70</sup> Nevertheless, once such a statement was made (and it was made repeatedly), the authorities had to make sure that reality had some correspondence to its ideological image.

The myth about Khrushchev as a “liberal” (a myth that, as we have seen, he helped create), like the myth about Brezhnev as a “conservative” (which was popular among the Moscow and Leningrad intelligentsia), is still accepted as a self-evident truth in the historiography but is in urgent need of revision.

In 1996 the Russian journal *Istochnik* published a document from the Archive of the President of the Russian Federation that was probably drawn up in 1988<sup>71</sup> by KGB chairman Viktor Chebrikov on orders from Mikhail Gorbachev. That document is the source of the data for table 1, which reflect a surge in the number of political repressions

TABLE 1. Convictions under Articles 70 and 190 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR, 1956–1987

Years	Number of People Convicted			Average Number Convicted Per Year
	Article 70*	Article 190†	Both Articles	
1956–1960	4,676	—	4,676	935.2
1957	(1,964)	—	(1,964)	(1,964)
1958	(1,416)	—	(1,416)	(1,416)
1961–1965	1,072	—	1,072	214.4
1966–1970	295	384	697	135.8
1971–1975	276	527	803	160.6
1976–1980	62	285	347	69.4
1981–1985	150	390	540	108
1986–1987	11	17	28	14
Total	6,543	1,609	8,152	245.8

Source: Calculated according to *Istochnik* 6 (1995), p. 153.

\* Article 70 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR concerned “anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda.”

† Article 190, added to the Criminal Code of the RSFSR in 1966, made it a crime to disseminate ideas discrediting the Soviet political and social order, defile state emblems and flags, and organize or participate in group actions that disrupted the social order. Before 1966, these offenses were sometimes prosecuted under other rubrics, such as “anti-Soviet agitation” and “hooliganism.”

in 1957–1958: the number of people convicted of anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda in these two years amounts to 42 percent of the total number convicted during the entire thirty-two years of “liberal Communism.” This increase in repression, which occurred after the Twentieth Party Congress,<sup>72</sup> is at odds with the myth about Khrushchev’s “Thaw.” Some scholars have already noted the surge.<sup>73</sup> Elena Papovian has pointed to the egregious contradiction between the stereotypes of the “Thaw” and the data we now have. In her article about the use of Article 58-10 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR, which deals with anti-Soviet and counterrevolutionary propaganda and agitation, she comments, “Most people who have no expert knowledge of modern history are surprised when they hear of repression in the second half of the 1950s.”<sup>74</sup>

The surge in repression obliquely reflects profound transformations in Soviet society.

In 1957–1958, the exposure of the cult of personality at the Twentieth Party Congress and the hints of a “thaw” led many to embrace



illusions about the future of the Soviet society. At the same time, a large proportion of the population had trouble digesting the new interpretation of the recent past. These two reactions were complicated by two events of contradictory political significance: the Soviet suppression of a popular revolt in Hungary,<sup>75</sup> an occasion when the Soviet state flexed its Stalinist muscles, and the expulsion of the most “extreme” Stalinists from the ruling circle. Most of these leaders—Viacheoslav Molotov, Lazar Kaganovich, Georgy Malenkov, and “Shepilov, who joined them”<sup>76</sup>—were perhaps not much more “extreme” than Khrushchev, but they posed a danger to him. The interaction of these factors, which reflected serious contradictions within the Communist ruling circle, had the effect of activating all potential opponents of the regime, from “true Marxists” and “liberals” to nationalists and Stalinists.

The suppression of the Hungarian revolt caused many people to express disapproval. Protests came primarily from educated romantics of both the Marxist and “proto-liberal” type. They expected the state to take logical and consistent steps toward “true Leninism” or toward some abstract notion of “freedom.” The dismissal of Molotov, Kaganovich, and Malenkov, those “loyal Leninists and Stalinists,” provoked a burst of “popular Stalinism” and engendered a general spirit of discontent among the common people, who were unhappy with their living conditions and had the egalitarian and anti-bureaucratic inclinations that were traditional in Russia.<sup>77</sup>

The rise of oppositional sentiments in 1957–1958 caused the state to wonder who was resisting the regime and why. In May 1958, the Supreme Court of the USSR made a survey of local judicial practice in cases of counterrevolutionary crimes.<sup>78</sup> The study was based on a representative sample of all cases prosecuted in 1956–1957, except for cases prosecuted by military tribunals. These cases composed 59.9 percent of the total number of prosecutions. The Supreme Court also examined statistics on court cases across the Soviet Union. The conclusion was alarming, but not acutely so: although the number of people prosecuted for counterrevolutionary crimes had dropped sharply, reaching its lowest point in 1956, in 1957 it had risen abruptly, to 2,498. Nevertheless, as the bureaucrats in the Supreme Court reassured each other, “the proportion of all crimes that fall into this category remains insignificant at 0.3 percent.”<sup>79</sup> On the whole, the officials explained the reasons for the rise accurately, although they did not go into detail. First, they linked the rise in the number of persons con-

victed of anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda (84.5 percent of all convictions for “counterrevolutionary crimes”) to “a reaction of unstable and hostile elements of society to events in Soviet foreign and domestic politics, in particular the revolt in Hungary and the exposure of the harmful effects of the cult of personality.” Second, officials related the rise in the number to the “increased activity of the organs of state security, the Procuracy, and the courts in prosecuting and convicting hostile elements after the issuing of the letter from the Central Committee on December 19, 1956, ‘On the Increase of Political Work with the Masses and Prevention of Attacks from Anti-Soviet and Hostile Elements.’”<sup>80</sup>

The mounting number of anti-Soviet crimes indirectly reflected changes in Soviet society. The greatest increase in dissatisfaction with the status quo in the Soviet Union occurred in the very class on which the government usually put its hopes: the workers. In 1957, the proportion of workers among those convicted grew rapidly, reaching almost 50 percent of the total. By contrast, white-collar employees and particularly peasants remained quiescent in this period. The catchall category of “others” (which including peasants who did not work on collective farms, craft workers, and people without fixed occupation) was consistently well represented among those convicted, disproportionately to the percentage of those types in the population (table 2). In 1957, according to other archival data, the percentage of such marginal elements among those engaged in “anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda” was high (15.7 percent). More than a third of these convicted marginal people (39.4 percent) had previous convictions, mostly for nonpolitical crimes, and 1.1 percent were firm opponents of the regime, people who had been convicted in the past for anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda and had been arrested again after their rehabilitation.<sup>81</sup> The majority of those convicted of “anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda” were not members of the intelligentsia (official statistics did not note intellectuals as a separate group, subsuming them instead under the blurry category of “white-collar employees”). Rather, the majority came from the “underground” of popular politics.

Most of those who engaged in anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda were individuals (91.3 percent of those convicted), while 6 percent acted in small groups (two–three people), and 2.7 percent belonged to larger organizations. The state believed that these people were “malicious slanderers of the Soviet system,” because 62.6 percent of them had managed to engage in “multiple malicious actions” before their ar-

TABLE 2. Convictions of Counterrevolutionary Crimes by Social Group, 1954–1957 (%)

<i>Social Group</i>	1954	1955	1956	1957
Workers	33.9	30.1	32.9	46.8
White-collar employees	20.3	24.9	24.1	18.3
Collective farmers	16.7	18.5	13.4	9.9
Others*	29.1	26.5	29.6	25

*Source:* Compiled according to GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 5080, l. 6.

\* Peasants who did not work on collective farms, craft workers, and people without a fixed occupation.

rest, and only a third had been caught after the first instance. However, an analysis of the most widespread forms of anti-Soviet activity in 1956–1957 is at odds with this conclusion, as we can see in the following table. It shows forms of anti-Soviet activity as a percentage of the total number of convictions for anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda:

Making oral counterrevolutionary statements	57%
Writing anti-Soviet leaflets	13%
Writing letters with anti-Soviet content	
anonymous letters	19%
signed letters	3%
Keeping and distributing anti-Soviet literature, including diaries, poems, lyrics copied by hand, and other anti-Soviet manuscripts	7.7% <sup>82</sup>

More than half of those convicted (57 percent) were imprisoned simply for making anti-Soviet statements, perhaps during a conversation. In other words, although they were critical of the regime, they did not engage in any deliberate anti-Soviet activity. Another 3 percent of “malicious slanderers” were naive people who criticized the state in their letters and signed the letters because they believed that there was nothing criminal in their criticism. Of those convicted, 7.7 percent were charged with “keeping and distributing anti-Soviet literature,” which is to say, for nothing serious. We can conclude that only authors of leaflets and anonymous anti-Soviet letters (32 percent of all those convicted) opposed the state deliberately.

In other words, in the mid-1950s the state still took the traditional harsh approach to sedition that had been mocked by the satirist Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin<sup>83</sup> in the previous century and reached its

apogee under Stalin. Not only actions but also styles of thinking were subject to punishment. Soviet police officials were always ready to put people in jail for “incorrect thoughts,” because a word uttered against the regime was terrifying in a quasi-mystical fashion. The Soviet mythological consciousness endowed these words with the power of spells and curses.

What kind of words were so terrifying, and what power did they have “to shake the foundations” of Soviet society? Of the oral and written “anti-Soviet statements,” 33.7 percent were general criticisms of the “Soviet government and the constitutional principles of the socialist state (the Soviet democracy, collective farming, the rights and freedoms of Soviet citizens),” and 13.5 percent were responses to the “exposure of the harmful consequences of the cult of personality” (in other words, de-Stalinization). The state did not distinguish between those who believed this exposure did not go far enough and those who believed it to be excessive or unfair. The main issue was that both groups went against the will of the Party bosses, who had already told the people the current “correct” way of thinking on the matter. Another 27.3 percent of those convicted denounced particular Party resolutions in the domestic political sphere, 8.2 percent reacted “incorrectly” to the revolt in Hungary, 8 percent expressed anti-Soviet thoughts on religious grounds, and 9.3 percent made “bourgeois-nationalist counter-revolutionary statements.”<sup>84</sup>

When people communicated seditious thoughts in conversation, they used substantially sharper language than they did in their written expressions. Of the oral communications cited, 28.8 percent were “slandorous statements using obscenities toward the Party, the Soviet government, and its leaders,” and 12.3 percent were “terrorist threats” against Communists. Oral reactions to the events in Hungary were also characterized by a spontaneous sharpness (28.4 percent). Other statements made in conversation were simply normal grumbling about foreign and domestic politics.<sup>85</sup>

The majority of those who distributed anti-Soviet leaflets—an activity that required a commitment to a goal and a large amount of work—were young, educated men. More than half of them (58.1 percent) were under twenty-four, which was more than double the representation of this age-group in all convictions for anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda (24.4 percent). A comparison of levels of education gives an even more vivid picture: 44.8 percent of the people who distributed leaflets were students, as compared to only 4.6 percent of all those con-

victed of anti-Soviet offenses. In 1956–1957, most leaflets were handwritten (in sixty-four incidents out of seventy-one included in the Supreme Court’s analysis). A typewriter was used in two incidents, and in three incidents leaflets were printed in West Berlin by the central union of postwar émigrés from the USSR (Narodno-trudovoi soiuz, or NTS).<sup>86</sup> Usually, leaflets were posted in public places or scattered throughout the workplace. Scattering leaflets on the street was an absolutely pointless activity, and young people did not do this often.<sup>87</sup>

What did people criticize? The Supreme Court analyzed 108 cases involving distribution of unsigned anti-Soviet letters in 1956–1957. Of the 112 people prosecuted in these cases, 32 had previous convictions (a much higher proportion than among the “leaflet” distributors).<sup>88</sup> The most popular topics in these letters are listed in table 3. At the top are attacks on the foreign and domestic policies of Party and state.

TABLE 3. The Most Popular Topics in 108 Unsigned Anti-Soviet Letters Sent to the Authorities in 1956–1957

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Percentage of Letters with That Topic</i>
Attacks on the foreign and domestic policies of the Party and the Soviet government—specifically, on the events in Hungary, interactions with other countries in the socialist camp, tax policies, salaries, pensions, the current state of Soviet agriculture, and nationality policies	27.2
Slander of the living conditions in the USSR and praise of the way people live in capitalist countries	16.6
Call to overthrow the Soviet government, sabotage its policies, and massacre Communists; attacks on the legitimacy of the Party’s leading role	14.6
Insults of and threats to Party and state leaders, as well as major figures in the Soviet state and society	14.6
“Vicious attacks” on Soviet democracy	14.6
Other anti-Soviet statements and musings	8.6
Calls for the secession of Ukraine and Belorussia from the USSR and the transfer of Carpathian Ruthenia to Hungary	3.3

*Source:* Compiled according to GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 5080, l. 30.

*Note:* The topics are those formulated in a reference issued by the Supreme Court of the USSR. Some letters concern more than one topic, so the percentages do not total 100.

The end of the 1950s saw a relative softening of punitive policies. Khrushchev's ruling circle began to search for new, more effective, and less brutal means of suppressing dissent. "Prophylactic measures" were applied more frequently. Many of the nonconformists identified in the early 1960s were not brought to trial. For example, out of 385 political criminals who were exposed in May–January 1964, most—225 (58.4 percent)—received only an official warning.<sup>89</sup> The figures are still much higher they would be during Brezhnev's time, but the trend is already quite clear.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the justice system conducted a review of 1957–1958 verdicts that had been hasty or violated "socialist legality." The state was attempting to right past wrongs—to the dismay of several officers of state security. They believed that they had ardently followed the "general line" formulated in the secret letter from the Central Committee of December 19, 1956, "On the Increase of Political Work with the Masses and Prevention of Attacks from Anti-Soviet and Hostile Elements." Now the court system and the Procuracy of the USSR were casting doubt on the quality of their work.

On November 30, 1960, the chairman of the KGB for the Ukrainian Republic, Major General V. Nikitchenko, sent a frustrated letter to the chairman of the KGB, Alexander Shelepin. The general complained about the lack of a unified policy for the organs of state security, the court system, and the Procuracy. He also lamented that in reviewing verdicts issued during the active campaign against sedition in 1957–1958 (following the events in Hungary), the Procuracy of the USSR had reduced sentences, dropped cases for lack of proof of a crime, or changed charges of anti-Soviet activity to charges of "hooliganism" and other ordinary criminal offenses.<sup>90</sup>

Shelepin forwarded copies of Nikitchenko's letter to the Supreme Court and the Procuracy of the USSR, asking them "to work out a unified perspective on the issue and perhaps provide a common set of guidelines."<sup>91</sup> But the Procuracy stuck to its guns. After reviewing the cases that were the source of concern to state security, Procuracy officials asserted that the investigations had been conducted poorly: "Not all the circumstances were investigated [. . .], and during interrogations of both the accused and the witnesses, incorrect questions were posed." In many of the disputed cases, not all relevant circumstances had been taken into consideration. Rather than bow to the KGB, which until recently had been omnipotent, the Procuracy proposed to

“inform the prosecutor of the Ukrainian Republic about the defects in his procuratorial oversight”—in other words, to punish him for blindly approving resolutions prepared by the investigators from the organs of state security. The conflict between the institutions was ultimately defused.<sup>92</sup> The efforts of certain high-ranking KGB officials to break out of the cage of “socialist legality” with respect to the political repression of dissenters had failed.

## The State and Its Opponents: The Dynamics of the Conflict (2)

Brezhnev came to power at the end of 1964. The event was marked by “a slight increase in anti-Soviet activity by some individuals,” as the chairman of the KGB, Vladimir Semichastny, phrased it.<sup>93</sup> This increase, however, was inconsequential and short-lived. The important thing was not the increase in seditious activity in the Brezhnev period but the qualitative change. The traditional forms of underground and secret anti-Soviet activity, with their basically Soviet political vocabulary, were now relegated to a secondary position. In the foreground was a new type of completely legal oppositional activity—and one that found a broader audience and sphere of influence. Unlike the underground organizations of the 1950s and early 1960s, which generally criticized the regime from Marxist and socialist viewpoints, the new opposition aroused Semichastny’s indignation by “going so far as to advocate the idea of restoring capitalism in our country.” The revolutionary romanticism of underground figures who wished to “repair” socialism was becoming a thing of the past. As he noted, nihilism, discontent, and apoliticism were common among university students in large cities. Students exhibited “indifference toward social and political issues and the revolutionary history of our people” and “used the struggle with the cult of personality as a pretext for irresponsible criticism.”<sup>94</sup>

A new era was beginning: the era of the ideological crisis of Soviet Communism. While some of Semichastny’s observations are naive and somewhat inept, he was correct to perceive that the real threat was not the formation of new dissident groups, which were as small as ever, but rather the wide diffusion of a spirit of oppositionism among the intelligentsia. In his attempt to understand what was happening, he labeled almost all forms of cultural life of the early 1960s as “anti-Soviet” and sharply criticized the “harmful line” of the journal *Novyi*

*mir*. The surfacing of criticism probably appeared more dangerous to him than the emergence of particular dissident groups; after all, the organs of state security knew how to deal with them. (The baffled Semichastny even reassured his bosses about this issue, saying that there was no reason to talk about “growing dissatisfaction with the existing regime or serious plans to create an organized anti-Soviet underground.”)<sup>95</sup> However, his report did not omit the important fact that the ties between some dissenters and the creative intelligentsia<sup>96</sup> had grown stronger. Rather than keeping a low profile, the dissenters made their thoughts and principles widely known to freethinking members of the intelligentsia. Those in this new intellectual milieu were influential and difficult to isolate or to silence.

The state was also alarmed by the emergence of a semi-organized nationalist opposition, which wielded even greater intellectual influence than the dissident intelligentsia. Unlike the ideas of the Moscow intellectuals, nationalism could potentially appeal to a wide variety of people, go beyond the limits of a moral and intellectual critique, and have a direct influence on politics. It was no accident that Semichastny began his report to the Central Committee with an announcement of the arrests of twenty Ukrainian nationalists whose views and writings “were familiar in varying degrees to many members of the intelligentsia (over one thousand people).”<sup>97</sup> This number accounted for only those people whom the investigators knew about; the number of people who were aware of the group was probably far greater.

When discussing this confrontation between the state and intellectuals, we should note what has been called the “conservative turn” in ideology within Brezhnev’s ruling circle. The political essence of the partial rehabilitation of Stalin in the second half of the 1960s was rather different from what the historiography usually claims. Mass demonstrations in favor of Stalin marked the beginning and the end of the Khrushchev era, and the last of them, which took place in Sumgait in 1963, was a particularly grass-roots affair.<sup>98</sup> Furthermore, popular criticism of Khrushchev often came from a Stalinist perspective. Brezhnev, Khrushchev’s successor, was surely responding to these and similar “signals” when he distanced himself from Khrushchev’s criticism of Stalin. His decision was not only an attempt to strengthen the regime by criticizing Khrushchev but also a concession to “popular Stalinism,” which was more an attempt to give voice to popular discontent than an expression of heartfelt loyalty to “Stalin’s legacy.” Stalin’s rehabilitation disappointed many members of the intelligentsia



and was one of the reasons that the dissident movement thrived at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s. At the same time, this move away from criticism of Stalin neutralized the much larger group of ordinary people who were dissatisfied with the Khrushchev regime. By advocating an “objective and balanced” evaluation of Stalin, Party leaders chose the lesser of two evils. They angered the intelligentsia but appeased potential opponents among common people, bolstering their policy in the most concrete manner by handing out material benefits to the population at the end of the 1960s and in the 1970s.

The intellectual elite did not accept the “pro-Stalin” turn in ideology. They associated this change with new limitations on freedom of expression, which was already narrow enough. The new group of non-conformist thinkers who emerged refused to confine their struggle with the regime to the underground; they overcame the guilt complex that had tormented many of their predecessors and, in an unprecedented move, announced their intention to dissent legally.

The state had to hurry to finish the “modernization” of repressive politics that had begun under Khrushchev. But the first organized protest, which took place in December 1965 in Pushkin Square, in the center of Moscow, caught the government off guard. A few days later, on December 11, Semichastny formulated in a report to the Central Committee what he saw as the essence of the new “problem.” In connection with the increasing frequency of “anti-Soviet displays” in the last few months of 1965, including open “politically harmful activities,” he noted that “sometimes, as happened in Moscow, things went so far that some of the young people handed out what they called ‘civic appeals’ and marched in groups with their demagogic banners on Pushkin Square. *Formally speaking, these actions do not constitute a crime.* However, if we do not suppress these escapades, someday we will have to prosecute, which is hardly a good idea” (my emphasis).<sup>99</sup>

A way out of the situation needed to be found. The unsuccessful political improvisation of local authorities was not a model to follow. The tactics in Leningrad, where in 1964 they had convicted the poet Joseph Brodsky for leading “a parasitical way of life” rather than for engaging in “anti-Soviet activities,” proved a dead end. Actually, Brodsky had not pursued anti-Soviet activities, but he had managed to irritate the regime anyway. The judicial “experiment” with “the parasite Brodsky” was almost certainly not well received in Moscow. The following comment occurs in the oversight records of the Procuracy of the USSR: “We don’t know how accurate this shorthand report is, but

if it is accurate, this fact confirms the court's bias and lack of objectivity and its haste in meting out punishment to Brodsky."<sup>100</sup> The same file contains several protests against the Brodsky verdict by the Procuracy of the USSR and a memorandum by chief prosecutor Roman Rudenko, chairman of the Supreme Court Alexander Gorkin, and KGB chairman Vladimir Semichastny recommending Brodsky's early release.<sup>101</sup> The state's first efforts to prosecute nonconformists in a new way were clearly a flop.<sup>102</sup>

In the struggle with new forms of opposition, the regime's first objective was to change the "rules of the game." If it could not use the articles in the criminal code on anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda to prosecute a whole range of activities that clearly expressed hostility toward the regime, then the activities had to be classified as crimes against administrative order. On September 16, 1966, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR issued a decree adding Articles 190-1, 190-2, and 190-3 to the Criminal Code of the RSFSR; similar articles were added to the criminal codes of the other Soviet republics. Article 190-1 made it a criminal offense to "disseminate ideas that discredit the Soviet political and social order." In practice, this meant that dissenters could be prosecuted for any critical statement they made. The only limitation (albeit a conditional one) was that the offender had to be prosecuted for disseminating "thoughts" and not for just uttering them. In other words, the regime left ordinary "big-mouths" alone.

In reality, Article 190-1 (as well as other changes to the criminal codes in 1966) was at odds with the Soviet Constitution: changes to the criminal code had to be approved by a session of the Supreme Soviet, rather than by a decree from its Presidium. This inconsistency gave the dissidents, who demanded repeal of the "administrative decree," a basis for defenses and appeals. (Article 190-1 was repealed during the perestroika years with a decree issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR on September 11, 1989.) The 1966 decree also made it a criminal offense to defile state emblems and flags (Article 190-2). Under Khrushchev, defilement had been classified as hooliganism, provided that no "anti-Soviet intent" had been found.

In dealing with the protests in defense of the Constitution, the state attempted to apply Article 190-3 ("Organization of or Participation in Group Actions That Disrupt Social Order"). The article specified punishment not for group actions as such but for their consequences: the flagrant violation of public order, insubordination to public officials,

disruption of public transportation, and disturbing the functioning of state or public institutions and enterprises. But it did not quite legalize punishment of all the marchers in a given protest who relied on their constitutional right to hold meetings and demonstrations. According to Article 17 of the Fundamentals of Criminal Law of the USSR, participants in group actions were not liable to criminal prosecution. They could be dealt with only by social pressure.

Ultimately, the Soviet state found a solution to the changed political situation that was quite significant for a regime that had relied on terror, repression, and intimidation throughout much of its history. (The last time these tried-and-true heavy-handed strategies had been used was in 1957–1958, giving rise to many of the regime's future problems.) In the mid-1960s, after Brezhnev came to power, the Soviet justice system made the systematic use of "prophylactic measures" its main tactic in dealing with the widening milieu around the dissidents. The prophylactic measures were supposed to deprive principled opponents of the regime of their natural sphere of social interchange instead of filling labor camps with people who could learn nonconformist thought and methods of taking action from each other.

The show trials of oppositional writers and defenders of human rights (Andrei Siniavsky and Yuly Daniel, Alexander Ginzburg, Pyotr Yakir and Viktor Krasin) became an important weapon against dissent. The trials were accompanied by meticulously prepared media campaigns that allowed the state to earn certain political capital, discredit the intelligentsia opposition in the eyes of ordinary people, and intimidate intellectuals. Once again, the regime laid down the "rules of the game." In a report written on May 14, 1974, the head of the oversight department, Solonin, noted that the investigators in the case of Yakir and Krasin "did an excellent job." "Not even one of the violations of Yakir and Krasin that the prosecution cited was disproven during the trial," Solonin wrote. "I believe that this case can serve as an example to all the investigators in the organs of state security on how to work with this category of criminal case."<sup>103</sup>

In the second half of the 1960s, the state strengthened its domestic surveillance budget considerably. The KGB dramatically increased its activities: in one year, 1967, it recruited 24,952 agents, a number amounting to 15 percent of all agents and twice the number of all dissenters "uncovered" that year.<sup>104</sup> A simple calculation shows that the KGB had approximately 166,000 agents by the end of the 1960s—far fewer than would be needed to fit the stereotype of omnipresent secret agents watching Soviet people, but enough to control the social strata

and groups that were potentially dangerous for the regime. The legend of the all-seeing eye of the KGB and its total monitoring of everyone's behavior had a restraining influence on many of the discontented, in any case.

Though closely watched by the KGB, intimidated by "ideological processing," and isolated from the people, the intelligentsia opposition tried to revitalize the waning dissident movement. Its leaders were under surveillance, however, and its "recruits" and new sympathizers were immediately subject to "prophylactic" treatment and effectively cut off from the leadership. In April 1969, the chairman of the KGB, Yury Andropov, reported to the Central Committee that "Krasin and [Pyotr] Grigorenko, the inspirers of antisocial actions, continue to seek opportunities to encourage their sympathizers' harmful activities and widen their circle of supporters." He said that they had suggested asking the authorities for permission to "create a society for the protection of human rights" and, without waiting for a response, had decided to set up so-called steering committees in Moscow, Kiev, and Leningrad and publicize this widely through samizdat. Yet the KGB chairman also noted tactical inconsistencies among the leaders of the human rights movement:

Grigorenko believes that the fewer of them there are, the more aggressive they should be, and that the only way for them to survive is by continuous attacks; he thinks of them as partisans who should maintain themselves as partisans do, by constant raids. If they are silent or reduce the intensity of the pressure, they will be crushed. Krasin, in contrast, believes that "a central Russian movement exists. However small or miserable it may be, it does exist. . . . Besides the heroism and self-sacrifice that are the foundations of all this, our movement is open and legal. It is a movement that does not rely on the traditional methods of underground organization, conspiracy, subversion, attempts to overthrow the government, and the like. It has its own ethical principles. Openness [*glasnost*'] is its main principle and major weapon. . . . Demonstrations are not yet an effective form of opposition; they tend to be hysterical. As long as only twenty, thirty, or forty people attend a demonstration, this is not a real demonstration: it takes a thousand people to make up a real one. For the time being, written protests are our only officially approved form of opposition; they have even been sanctioned by the state."<sup>105</sup>

Having rejected underground methods and taken its stand on openness and legal or semilegal forms of struggle, the dissident movement found itself in a difficult situation. On the one hand, it had succeeded

in substantially enlarging the ideological arena of criticism of the regime. On the other hand, the movement's lack of secrecy made it easier for the KGB to keep an eye on its members. While the human rights movement was an exceptionally significant and influential cultural phenomenon of the 1970s (far more so than the political underground), it suffered from an organizational vacuum and a lack of formalized connections within the movement. Unlike in some East European countries, where ideas became the ideological backbone of powerful social movements (in Poland, for example), liberal dissident ideas in Soviet Union failed to reach a wider audience; and toward the end of the 1970s, the movement fell apart. KGB reports of the time contain mention of the "remnants of the 'struggle for human rights.'" <sup>106</sup>

The movement declined not simply because of Andropov's acumen as a policeman but also because it arose at a time of symbiosis between the people and the regime. Eventually the people's trust in the regime wore out: because of deepening economic problems, the government could no longer buy the loyalty of the "silent majority" by pumping money that was not backed up by material goods into the consumer sector. By that time, however, the dissident movement was too weak to take advantage of the new situation.

In addition, because dissidents were only the visible tip of the hidden "anti-Soviet iceberg," they could not (and did not attempt to) organize all the various forms of oppositional activity. Like the rest of the population, they did not know about most of it, and even if they had known, given their anti-underground principles, they would scarcely have wanted to link up with such dubious "conspirators."

The decline and subsequent near cessation of criminal prosecutions of dissenters in the 1960s does not mean that the amount of traditional seditious activity decreased proportionately. On October 11, 1972, KGB chief Andropov and chief prosecutor Rudenko reported to the Central Committee on the number of participants in "politically harmful groups" who had received official warnings. From 1967 to 1971, the KGB uncovered 13,602 participants in 3,096 groups. <sup>107</sup> On average, 2,720 people per year were identified and warned. If we compare government responses to sedition in the mid-1950s, when the KGB almost always arrested and prosecuted all those who spread anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda, the level of oppositional activity in the population in the first Brezhnev years actually looks quite high—even higher than at the time of the 1957–1958 surge in repression.

We could even speak of signs of a serious, if short-lived, crisis in the relationship between the people and the regime, especially since workers still predominated among those convicted of anti-Soviet crimes.<sup>108</sup> However, Andropov's approach to persecution for seditious activity gradually proved effective, and oppositional activity declined. A memorandum issued on February 12, 1976, on the Procuracy's work in 1975 and the status of its oversight of investigations by the organs of state security noted that only 484 people had received warnings in 1975, and of these, only one was subsequently prosecuted.<sup>109</sup>

At the end of the 1970s, we begin to see renewed signs of popular dissatisfaction. If in the heyday of the Brezhnev era (1969–1977) not a single significant mass disturbance was reported, the first symptoms of a new wave of civil unrest appeared in 1977 and 1981. Disorders swept across Novomoskovsk (Tula region), and ethnically tinged disturbances were directed against the police in Ordzhonikidze (North Ossetian autonomous republic).<sup>110</sup> The epidemic of alcoholism that gripped the Soviet Union at the end of the 1970s was another sign of social crisis. Liquor consumption had doubled since 1960. Two million people were registered as alcoholics. In 1978, the police detained about nine million people for drunkenness, and more than six million were sent to sobering-up centers.<sup>111</sup> There was more than enough fuel for a new upsurge of mass protests.

For a while, the state managed to contain the new wave of unrest, but law enforcement officials anticipated that it would grow. Rudenko, the aging chief prosecutor of the USSR, bombarded the Central Committee with memoranda on crime. The organs of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) stocked up on the tear gas, Cheremukha-10, that was meant to stop "rampaging and rowdy behavior" on the part of individuals and prevent them from using weapons.<sup>112</sup> Since 1972, tear gas had been used only in prisons and camps, but in 1976 the MVD asked the Central Committee for permission to use it outside places of imprisonment.

Looking ahead, we should note that after Brezhnev's death and before Gorbachev came to power, the curve of civil unrest rose. In the second half of 1984 and the beginning of 1985, after two relatively calm years, two large-scale disturbances took place within six months, one of them stemming from an ethnic conflict in Dushanbe (Tajik Republic). In the second half of 1985, the Procuracy reported disturbances among trainloads of new army conscripts, which had not occurred for a long time. The issue was serious enough to warrant a

special discussion at a meeting of the Secretariat of the Central Committee.<sup>113</sup>

It was becoming increasingly clear that neither administrative nor police measures, nor even “bribing” people with material goods, was succeeding in overcoming this complex society’s tendency to generate various forms of dissatisfaction. Periods of active or latent conflict punctuated the Brezhnev era, providing indirect evidence that “stagnation”<sup>114</sup> was not socially viable as a form of government or as a way of life. As the USSR entered a new era, it was poised on a gunpowder barrel with a lit fuse in its hands.

The proliferation of crisis-like events and the resurgence of popular dissatisfaction with the regime took center stage, pushing the human rights movement to one side. The forces that surfaced now were far less intellectual than the old ones, and considerably more active and dangerous. Beginning in the late 1970s, KGB reports to the Central Committee concentrated increasingly on “nondissident” sedition: underground organizations, terrorism, the rebirth of underground nationalism in the periphery of the state, and the development of Russian nationalism in Russia. The “remnants” of the suppressed human rights movement were of less concern to the KGB.

In the same period, there was a “clotting” of popular antigovernment actions, which now concentrated around such vital issues as salaries, living conditions, and shortages of food and consumer goods. These antigovernment actions were the first indications that efforts to assuage the people with money that was not backed up by goods had reached a dead end. Instead of “symbiosis” and purchased loyalty, this policy was potentially leading to the same kind of widespread discontent and popular protest that had destroyed Khrushchev’s legitimacy and authority.

Beginning in the late 1970s, the ideologists of underground and semiofficial Russian nationalism became ever more active. Unlike the liberal dissidents, they could pull at the national heartstrings and manipulate the nationalist prejudices of disgruntled people. Attacking the state for being insufficiently Russian could rally far more popular sympathizers and supporters than the liberal ideas of the human rights movement. Any attempt to publicly discredit the “Russian Right” could backfire against the government. The nationalists, after all, did not speak of an alien notion like “restoring capitalism.” Using refined demagogic schemes, they spoke of patriotism and the preservation of national treasures. Sometimes they offered simplistic arguments—for

example, things were bad because the country was ruled by Jews—and even supported them with so-called statistics that had a big impact, even among devoted Communists. (I remember quite well that as late as Gorbachev's time, someone who worked for the Central Committee laid out, in a private conversation, cynical plans for the use of the "Russian Idea" by Communist organizations in the RSFSR. All these "intellectual exercises" were laced with a healthy dose of vulgar plebeian anti-Semitism.)

The tone of the March 28, 1981, KGB report to the Central Committee on the spread of what was called Rusism (*rusizm*)<sup>115</sup> was very similar to that of comparable documents from the 1960s, when the secret police encountered a new form of opposition (the human rights movement) and, with anxiety and concern, were doing their best to understand their new adversary. KGB chairman Chebrikov wrote:

Recently, a new tendency has emerged in Moscow and a number of other cities among certain members of the scientific and artistic intelligentsia, who call themselves Rusists. Under the guise of defending the Russian national tradition, they are actually engaging in anti-Soviet activities. This tendency is actively stimulated and supported by foreign ideological centers, including anti-Soviet émigré organizations and the bourgeois mass media. Foreign clandestine services see this as an opportunity to infiltrate and subvert Soviet society. . . . There is evidence that our enemies see these individuals as a force capable of conducting anti-Soviet activities on a new basis. It should be emphasized that these activities are taking place in other more important milieus than among the so-called defenders of human rights, who have been defeated and discredited in the view of popular opinion. When we study the "Rusists," we can see that the number of their sympathizers is growing, and despite their diversity, they are taking an organized form. The great danger is that outright enemies of the Soviet system are concealing their subversive activities under the guise of "Rusism"—which is empty talk about the need to preserve Russian culture and relics for the "salvation of the Russian nation."

In general, the "Rusism" of the early 1980s cannot be considered a particularly serious movement, but it was a distinct social *mood*, dangerous for the state and relatively novel in the context of the Soviet regime, with its internationalist claims. If we view "Rusism" alongside the growing nationalism on the periphery of the Soviet empire, it becomes clear that the Communist ruling circle of the late 1970s and early 1980s was faced with a far greater threat than the traditional ac-



cusations of “bureaucratic degeneration,” the betrayal of “Lenin’s cause,” and the liberal and rights-based criticism of the Party coming from angry Moscow intellectuals.

## A Note on the Structure of the Book and the Documents Published

In the post-Stalin period, conversations on political topics during lunch breaks, at parties, on public transportation, and at train stations were a common element of everyday life. Not many people were likely to follow all the political turns of the regime or changes in the state’s evaluation of particular figures and events, so almost every Soviet citizen capable of uttering even a few sentences on a political topic or cursing a Party leader could potentially be accused of anti-Soviet thought for comments made in the course of finding out or purveying news. Under Khrushchev and Brezhnev, millions “chattered,” but—we can say thankfully—only dozens or at most hundreds of people were imprisoned for anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda each year. And under Brezhnev almost no one was jailed for idle talk.

The first two chapters of this book are devoted to “chattering”, to the shared anti-state sentiments expressed by people living in the Soviet Union. There we discuss “seditious” language, traditional forms of rebellion against the government, and the spontaneous public disturbances related to specific political events.

Subsequent chapters follow the development of activities considered “seditious” as they grew more conscious and coordinated and as people spent more time thinking about them and, to some extent, doing them. We begin with old forms of sedition, such as the “defiling” of Party leaders’ portraits. Unlike anti-Soviet “chattering” or anti-state joke-telling, such acts required people to be inventive. Then we discuss various forms of open protest by individuals (“he marched in the streets with a homemade banner,” as the phrase goes), as well as leaflets and other anonymous means of agitation. Some of the agitation documents exist as a single copy; others were copied in large numbers. Messages on election ballots, discussed in chapter 4, were a peculiar form of anonymous agitation.

The last two chapters are about authors and groups. We tell the stories of obscure “anti-Soviet writers” whose works were not widely distributed in samizdat. They wrote treatises, stories, letters, and notes on how to “improve life,” the evils of the Soviet system, and similar

topics. And we present some underground organizations. They were the most developed form of oppositional activity before the start of the dissident movement. In many cases, the groups began when their members drafted various programs, charters, oaths, and the like, some of which are included here.

Each chapter follows a chronological order. In some chapters, to provide insights into each form of seditious activity, we include a chronicle of incidents from the Procuracy of the USSR's files.

A Russian compiler's commentary introduces each chapter. The commentaries are meant to establish the political and cultural context for each form of sedition.

Given the hugeness of the topic and the limitations of length, we did not include documents on the history of nationalist (ethnic) opposition movements on the fringes of the USSR, the history of religious sects and movements, or certain other antigovernment activities (for example, attempts to cross the national border illegally or to flee the country).

The anti-Soviet documents published in this book come from Procuracy memos (*spravki*) and prosecutors' resolutions (*zakliucheniia*) or were appended to cases as copies. Some of the copies are handwritten, others typewritten; in some instances, they are certified as genuine by the court or the Procuracy. Most of the appeals from convicted persons, their families, or attorneys that are preserved in the Procuracy files are originals, but the prosecutors' appeals are copies (the originals were sent to the court). The verdicts and conclusions of the court, as well as indictments and investigators' statements on opening or closing cases, are copies, the originals of all these documents having been kept in the investigation files and the court files. The reports of provincial procuracies and the various documents produced by officials of the Procuracy of the USSR are originals; we were sometimes even able to find rough drafts or outlines of these documents.

Wherever we reproduce a copy or an original of a particular document, we identify it as a handwritten original, a typewritten and certified copy, an uncertified photographic copy, or another type of document. The absence of such information means that the document is quoted from the Procuracy's oversight materials or from a copy of a court document appended to them. In chapter 4, where we reproduce leaflets and anonymous notes that were placed in ballot boxes as well as comments written on ballots, we provide such information in notes.

Sometimes the Procuracy staff added ellipses to show where they

made omissions, in reproducing witness testimonies, for example, or avoiding the illegal repetition of anti-Soviet sentiments or leaders' names. Where the editors of this book omitted words, the ellipses are in brackets: [. . .]. Editorial additions to the text, such as the spelling out of abbreviations and the deciphering of illegible passages, are also in brackets, as are other editorial comments on the text, such as "illegible," "word missing," and "*sic*." Of the comments and instructions written on the documents we have reproduced only those that are essential for understanding certain events; bureaucratic housekeeping notes made on the documents are not included.

We have corrected most of the obvious typographical and spelling errors, as well as accidental omissions of words, but occasionally we have reproduced spelling errors and syntactical irregularities to convey the character of a document's author.

Information about defendants and persons under investigation is given in endnotes, linked to the first mention of the accused. We chose information that gave a sense of the accused as a person: age, place of residence, education, profession, membership in the Party or lack thereof, previous convictions (including any convictions pertaining to political crimes), and additional information that we considered it important to note (service in the war, repatriation to the USSR from prisoner-of-war or displaced-person camps in Europe after the war, names of relatives who had been repressed, etc.). If such information is not given, it was missing from the Procuracy records.

## Stalin Is Dead!

JOSEPH STALIN'S death, which was a significant event both in real-life politics and in popular mythology, marked the beginning of a time of relative liberalization in the Soviet Union. But the social and political significance of the death was far greater than historians and the Russian general public may have then realized. The circumstances of the death itself, at Stalin's dacha in early March 1953, gave rise to legends, and over the years, oral tradition made the deaths by trampling that occurred in the crowd at the ceremonial farewell to the Leader into a Khodynka-style massacre.<sup>1</sup> And that was really all that has been known about the popular reaction to Stalin's death.

The documents published in this chapter give the hidden story of the "national farewell to the Great Leader." When rumors about Stalin's illness and death spread across the USSR, they ruined the lives of many people who, according to information from the secret police, had the wrong reactions to this "tragedy of the century" (the state's words). Andrei Siniavsky's<sup>2</sup> autobiographical novel, *Good Night!*, written in 1983, after Siniavsky emigrated to Paris, describes his reaction to the news: he met with a friend, the two locked the door behind them and gave each other a hug, and then they left without a word being said.<sup>3</sup> People had to be careful even when expressing sadness for fear that they might say something wrong. It was possible to blaspheme against the sacred figure of the Leader either by showing joy at his death or by expressing the hope that life would get better, or even by speaking clumsily without sacrilegious intent.

Soon the dead dictator would be accused of countless sins. The people's love for him and the adulation of his name would be called a cult

of personality (the term bewildered many people), and textbooks on the history of the Party would come to include a few semi-critical pages about abuses of power and mass repression in the 1930s and the “excesses” of collectivization, deportation, and ethnic purging. (Later on, half of this hasty vilification would be removed from the textbooks in order not to impede the project of “building socialism” or upset the “progressive part of mankind.”) To those who had reacted “inappropriately” to the death of the Leader, however, these future admissions of wrongdoing would bring little comfort, for they had already been found guilty and had served part of their prison terms.

The uplifting image of the people’s farewell to the Generalissimo<sup>4</sup> that state propaganda created in the spring of 1953 did not make its way into Soviet history textbooks. What remained were legends and vague recollections that many people had reacted to the event as a personal drama. As one of those convicted wrote later in an appeal, describing what was the basis for popular Stalinism, “For as long as I can remember, Stalin was the first secretary of the Central Committee. All of our accomplishments in times of peace and in times of war, all our art and ideological upbringing, were linked to Stalin’s name. Allow me to say that it was not only I who felt this way. When Stalin died, I saw tears in many people’s eyes. These tears were not for show; the emotion came right from the bottom of their hearts.”<sup>5</sup>

People feared a new Time of Troubles.<sup>6</sup> They were afraid that when the “Great Party Leader” was gone, the Soviet people would become “victims of imperialists and warmongers.” Yet they also had mundane concerns. They worried that Stalin’s successors would fight for power and that the skirmishes in the Kremlin would result in new purges and further suppression of seditious activities. Many people (especially Muscovites) still remembered those anxious March days when Stalin died.

At the end of the 1960s, a poet read a narrative poem about Stalin’s death at the Moscow State University writers’ club. I recall one line from that poem: “Our fathers are standing at attention in their pajamas.” The line captures the feeling of everyday life fused with politics. You can “stand at attention in your pajamas” by your bed—not in uniform at an official meeting—only if the matter touches you personally. I myself never had the urge to stand at attention because some politician had died: such deaths never moved me or my postwar generation.

Memoirs about the days preceding and following Stalin’s death have begun to appear only in the past decade or so.<sup>7</sup> The central themes of these memoirs are the feeling of anxiety that gripped everyone, the

need to find a way to express one's feelings about the unique tragedy, and the stampede of mourners that occurred while Stalin was lying in state. It was dangerous to spread rumors about that event. A. A. Tsivilev, for one, paid dearly for describing it sarcastically in conversation: "When the coffin with the body was displayed in the Hall of Columns at the House of Soviets, everyone wanted to take a look. After all the commotion, they picked up two truckloads full of galoshes and took them away to sell them."<sup>8</sup>

It is tempting to see the deaths in the crowd symbolically—as Stalin's bloody farewell to his people. In reality, however, the stampede resulted from nothing but the usual incompetence of the authorities and disorderliness on the part of the people who had come to see Stalin's body.

Transitions of power were always painful for the Party elite, and this time was no exception: the state cranked its meat grinder a few times, sluggishly, as though by force of habit, just as a reminder to people to watch their step. The victims—that is, the people who were punished for "hostile statements" after Stalin's death—are the heroes of this chapter. They forgot the "safety precautions" necessary for life in a police state and expressed a simple and sober thought: "A dog's death for a dog." They did not bother to state the pros and cons of the era that had just ended or to analyze the situation in any complicated fashion.

Yet, when reading the documents published here, we must avoid creating a "countermyth." Although it used to be widely believed that Stalin's death caused the nation to grieve, these documents could be read to show the opposite: as revealing contempt and a prevailing joy about the demise of a dictator.<sup>9</sup>

That reading would be complete mistaken.

Even a superficial glance at the texts in this chapter shows that the reaction was quite different. Some vigilant people considered animosity toward Stalin to be terrible blasphemy. Others felt that it was inappropriate to celebrate birthdays, drink vodka, laugh, or flirt with women even a few days after Stalin's funeral. Such sanctimoniousness, which often gave rise to denunciations, was much more prevalent than was vulgar abuse of the departed. Almost all the people mentioned in this chapter were loners, individuals who stood up against the right-thinking "collective" and were seen by the silent majority as renegades, outlaws, and enemies who had to be punished.

To denounce others was considered inappropriate, even as the state encouraged people to do so. But what was veiled or hidden in adults'

interactions was seen openly among teenagers. Larisa Ogorinskaia, eighteen years old, who attended seventh grade in Lvov (Western Ukraine), said, “Let him rot!” during a solemn meeting and was immediately beaten up by her schoolmates (see document 7). The state treated her much more severely than it treated teenage bullies: she was sentenced to ten years’ imprisonment for this single phrase. But fortunately for her, a new era had begun. On June 17, 1953, she was rehabilitated as part of the populist effort to “restore justice,” the kind of effort that so often follows a change of regime in Russia. (Those who criticized Khrushchev in the mid-1960s had a similar destiny. Attacks on the fallen leader could no longer be considered criminal, since the Party had taken on the same fault-finding task. Many of Khrushchev’s most vicious critics were released from prison or were not charged if their cases had not yet come to court. Now, positive comments about Khrushchev were considered to be a crime.)

Negative statements about Stalin that were made in 1953 reflect the entire spectrum of popular nonconformism of the 1950s. They included folklore-like legends about how “a dog’s teeth” fell out of the tyrant’s mouth after his death as well as sophisticated intellectual musings about the future, recollections of the “good life” before collectivization as well as vulgar abuse blaming the people’s suffering under Stalin on the Jews.

The documents published here offer a window into people’s everyday lives. We will accompany people who appear in this chapter to a birthday party and witness a fight between neighbors; we find ourselves at a small train station and in the crowd at a meeting; we go to a post office, a bank, and a high school and even peek into a bar. After all, these minutiae of ordinary life are no less important for understanding Soviet history than information about the familiar abuse of power in the Soviet Union and the harshness of the judicial system, which reacted to Stalin’s death with new arrests and repressions.

And so let us begin at a key moment: Stalin’s death.

Commentary by V. A. Kozlov

## From the Procuracy’s Files: 1953

*March 4*

While loading component parts for frame buildings onto a boat in the Don River, the collective farmer Belousenko told others that he had

heard on the radio that Stalin had had a stroke and was now very ill. In response, the collective farmer G. M. Gladkikh said: "They should cut his ear off and drain the blood out." He added: "When they cut a goat's ear off, the goat stays alive."<sup>10</sup>

In conversation about Stalin's illness, F. I. Stepanova, an unskilled worker from Riga, said: "It'll be better when he's dead. . . . He never did any good, only organized the collective farms."<sup>11</sup>

After learning that Stalin was ill, the prisoner F. N. Lobachev cursed him and said, "Maybe he'll die—life will be easier then." From the end of 1951 on, Lobachev was always abusing the Soviet government, Stalin, and the collective farms. He said that it was no use to wait for an amnesty, for there were prisoners working at all the major construction sites, and only the Americans would be able to free them after they defeated the USSR.<sup>12</sup>

On March 4, 1953, A. S. Trus, a miner from the Kemerovo region, said to a friend: "You know, the leader of the Party and the Soviet government is about to kick the bucket. That's good: we've had enough of him making fools out of us." On March 10, he said that there should be a war, and that the Soviet people didn't make a lot of money and everything they earned was taken away from them to cover the recent loan.<sup>13</sup> "They say that Americans humiliate their prisoners," he went on, "but that's not true: on the contrary, it's here in the USSR that they humiliate people—and not just prisoners of war but the entire Soviet people." Under interrogation, he testified that he had been angry at the Soviet state ever since partisans shot his mother and sisters. (Trus was Belorussian; during the war, he served in the German army.)<sup>14</sup>

A. P. Semenov, unemployed, with a criminal record, and living, without a registration,<sup>15</sup> in the Tula region, had engaged in anti-Soviet conversations before March 4, 1953. A witness stated that on March 4, she saw a man sitting on the train tracks and "started talking to him about the misfortune that befell us, that is, about the illness of the Party leader. When I asked this citizen, 'Have you heard about the illness of the leader of the Soviet people?' the citizen sitting there, whose name, which I now know to be Semenov, responded spitefully—'The sooner (he named the Party leader) dies, the better'—and then laughed. In response to these vile words, I called Semenov a scoundrel. Before making his vicious remark about the leader, he performed a religious ritual: that is, he made the sign of the cross."<sup>16</sup>

On March 4, L. V. Biezais, a Komsomol member and a motor me-



chanic in Vilnius (Lithuanian Republic), said to her colleagues: "One of Stalin's arms and one of his legs are paralyzed; he is about to croak," and on March 6, she announced that "Stalin has croaked." In January 1953, she said that life was better in Latvia before the Soviets.<sup>17</sup>

While discussing Stalin's illness with coworkers, V. A. Patsevichus, a radio technician from Kaunas (Lithuanian Republic), said: "The wind just blew out of the Kremlin, he got ill, and there's no one to treat him . . . all the good doctors are in jail!"<sup>18</sup>

On March 4, E. F. Moiseev, a mechanic from Novosibirsk, "spoke inappropriately" about Stalin: "What can we do from way out here? We can't put our hands under his bottom."<sup>19</sup>

M. D. Sapunov was a worker at an oil field in North Ossetia (Russia) and a Komsomol member. On March 4, during a radio announcement regarding Stalin's illness, when a female coworker was in tears, he laughed and said, "So what? He's sick. They'll appoint someone else in his place." He also said to another coworker: "So what if he croaks; we all get it in the end."<sup>20</sup>

V. A. Sergienko, a Cossack living in North Ossetia, was a former kulak<sup>21</sup> with a previous conviction for stealing collective farm property. "In connection with the illness of the leader of the people, he cursed him with obscene words and said in a mocking tone that 'he probably doesn't have a big enough ration; they should slaughter the goat Nikita [Khrushchev] so that he'll have a better diet.'" He also said that Stalin had "dragged him around the universe," "all the way to Kolyma."<sup>22</sup> In 1950-1953, he cursed the collective farms and praised individual farm ownership.<sup>23</sup>

During Stalin's illness, F. G. Stepanov, an accountant from Lvov (Ukraine) and a Party candidate, said to his coworkers that the book *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*<sup>24</sup> had been written by scholars and that Stalin had only put his name on the cover, and that if Stalin died, we should not worry, "as if he's some sort of genius. It's all right, things will change for the better without him"; "What do I care if he dies: it's not like they will give us more money"; "On the other hand, when you and I die, there won't be any famous doctors; we'll be in some hospital and they'll just ignore us." He also asserted that bourgeois countries are more civilized and have better living conditions, that after Stalin's death, many people who fell from grace under his leadership (for example, the military commander Zhukov)<sup>25</sup> would reappear, and that Stalin should have followed the example of Nicholas II<sup>26</sup> and abdicated.<sup>27</sup>

*March 5*

On March 5, G. Burkhanov, a Tatar from the Tashkent region (Uzbek Republic), began drinking vodka at his friends' apartment while his friends discussed Stalin's illness. When someone criticized him for drinking, he said: "Let him [Stalin] croak. I'll take his place"—and uttered an obscenity. Burkhanov also said that "the leader of the people just sat around while others fought in the war for him; just look at me: I am disabled, but they don't even pay me a pension." A witness (Russian by nationality) said that Stalin had always taken care of the people, citing her husband, who was also disabled and received a pension, as an example. Burkhanov then started punching her, saying that all Russians should be shot.<sup>28</sup>

F. N. Panfilov, a ticket collector on a train, said to a coworker at the Kursk train station in Moscow regarding Stalin's death that the top spot is never empty and that there are probably candidates for his position who might not be worse than Stalin. Before that, in 1948–1953, he used to criticize Soviet Party leaders and collective farming, saying that life was better abroad, and so on. He also listened to Voice of America programs and told people what he had heard.<sup>29</sup>

After learning that Stalin was gravely ill, N. D. Sychev, a Komsomol member and a machine operator in the Kuibyshev construction administration, said: "Since comrade Stalin had an abnormal urinalysis, then perhaps comrade Stalin had an STD—perhaps he had caught something like the clap."<sup>30</sup>

*March 6*

On March 6, A. G. Kirzunov, an artist without a fixed place of residence, without employment, and with a criminal record, got drunk at a snack bar and asserted: "The Georgian tsar is dead; now there will be a Russian tsar, and we'll show you."<sup>31</sup>

A. N. Monov, an elderly foreman from the Upper Volga region, formerly a Party member, with a previous conviction under Article 58, stopped the workers in his workshop from going to a meeting to mourn Stalin, saying, "We should work; there will be lots more meetings like that." He also said, "Stop sniveling," to a female coworker who was crying. At the moment when the Party leader was being buried, he decided to announce the new shift schedule. In 1952–1953, he engaged in anti-Soviet conversations.<sup>32</sup>

In 1951, F. P. Kosaurikhin, unemployed and with a criminal record, a resident of Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, said that it was Zhukov and not Stalin who had played the decisive role in the victory over the Nazis. On March 6, while drunk near a liquor kiosk, he cursed Stalin and recited anti-Soviet poetry.<sup>33</sup>

On March 6, G. D. Briakhne, a woodworker from Tiraspol (Moldavian Republic), “insulted Stalin.” “He came into his shop at the factory singing some kind of song. When some of the workers pointed out that it was a day of mourning and he should not be singing, Briakhne uttered obscenities, adding that they’d find somebody else to take the place of the dead Party leader,” and, regardless, there would still be collective farms.<sup>34</sup>

V. N. Lutsevich, a resident of the Ashkhabad region (Turkmen Republic), cursed Stalin while she was drunk. After hearing that Stalin had passed away, she said, “Good riddance.”<sup>35</sup>

On March 6, Z. E. Levin, a Party member and an assistant manager of the Moscow ring railroad, was part of a conversation about how many people were going to the Hall of Columns and how hard it was to get there. He said: “Our people are compassionate. Even when a real bastard dies, they still convey their condolences to his family—and this, after all, is a Party leader.” According to another version, Levin said, “It comes as no surprise that people are going: even if a dog gets run over by a car, people gather to watch; and this is the funeral of a Party leader. “The same day, he passed on the rumor that “comrade Stalin’s son is not his own, he [the son] drinks too much vodka, and his wife complains to comrade Stalin, so they put him in the guardhouse”<sup>36</sup>

The same day, V. I. Sokolova, a middle-aged teacher from the Gorky region, reported the content of a Voice of America program on Stalin’s death to her colleagues in the staff room and spread the rumor that Stalin had been poisoned by his physician. In addition, in March 1952, she “distorted Soviet history” during a lesson, stating that in 1928, when they were building the complex of papermaking enterprises, they brought in machines and specialists from America.<sup>37</sup>

On March 6, S. V. Vasiliev, a railroad worker from the Murmansk region, dropped in at the apartment of his brigade leader and heard the news of Stalin’s death. He took off his hat, slapped it against the floor, and said: “The Party leader is dead; now we’ll all be free; they’ll disband collective farms and give the land to the peasants.” At work the next day, he stated: “So, our dear father is dead, but bread won’t be

any cheaper." On March 9, at the moment when Stalin was being buried, all the workers stood up and took off their hats. Vasiliev, to the contrary, covered his face with his hat, making the young women standing nearby laugh.<sup>38</sup>

A. T. Ivanov was a projectionist from Chardzhou (Turkmen Republic). When Stalin appeared on the screen during a film showing on the day of Stalin's death, Ivanov shouted: "Hooray for Stalin's death!" (He was drunk.)<sup>39</sup>

In the days of Stalin's illness, B. S. Ustin, a prisoner, said that if Stalin did not die, then he (Ustinov) would jump out the window. Then he suggested that they drink to the happy occasion of Stalin's death. On March 6, when workers were nailing Stalin's portrait to the wall of the administrative office of the transit prison, Ustin came up to them and said, "Just look what (obscene expression) you are putting up!" In 1941, he had said that he would drink to his motherland but not to Stalin; in 1952, he had asserted that Stalin stole Lenin's works and then passed them off as his own, that there was no flour in stores because the country was not governed properly, that it was Stalin's fault that the war wasn't carried to its conclusion in 1945, and that we should resume the war and deal with America once and for all "so that our children can have a peaceful life."<sup>40</sup>

Learning of Stalin's death, G. I. Nastasiuk, a collective farmer from Moldavia, said: "I wish it wasn't just Stalin who died, but that all the Communists would die off in the next three days; then we wouldn't have collective farms." The next day, when someone said that those who wanted to go to Stalin's funeral could get free tickets to Moscow, Nastasiuk responded: "Let the devils go look at him." In preceding years, 1949–1952, he used to curse the collective farms, stating that peasants were paid nothing for their work, that Stalin managed the country badly, and that in the spring there would be war with the Americans, and the Soviet government would fall.<sup>41</sup>

N. D. Filiunin was a mechanic at a machine-tractor station in the Penza region. After the announcement that Stalin had died, tractor drivers at the station's workshop started talking about what materials would be used to make his coffin. Filiunin said that it should be made of "rotten pine planks: I. V. Stalin did not deserve a decent coffin; in the afterlife, he will meet up with Lenin, K. Marx, and Engels, and they'll drink to their reunion." He spent the rest of the day singing obscene popular songs. In October 1953, he cursed the collective farms.<sup>42</sup>

On the day of the funeral, A. N. Tarasova, a switchboard operator

at the Leningrad seaport, said to a coworker: "Why are you crying? Is it your son that died?" Witnesses also quoted her as saying, "One person was ruling, now someone else will." On March 7, she asked if she could turn off the radio, which was turned up to full volume, stating: "I am tired of listening to this hogwash. I have a headache."<sup>43</sup>

### *March 7*

N. V. Popov, with no fixed occupation or place of residence, was singing songs in the ticket hall of Manzovka train station on the Primorsky railroad (Primorsky region). According to witnesses, when someone said to him, "Come on, old man, don't sing—the whole country is going through a rough time: comrade Stalin died," Popov responded: "I told comrade Stalin that he would live as long as he lived, and that's exactly how it turned out." After this, he swore at "the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Komsomol."<sup>44</sup>

M. F. Nepomniashchikh, a mechanic from Salekhard, went to a birthday party. One of the women present said that these were days of mourning and they shouldn't drink. Nepomniashchikh said that "we have a government, and it's headed by a newly-appointed leader, but why did they choose him and not someone else; and then he gave the name and answered his own question: 'He was a Jew, and Jews have a hard time in the USSR,'" citing the "doctors' plot as an example."<sup>45</sup>

While at a party, I. P. Parmanovsky, a driver from the Amur region, said about Stalin's death, "A dog's death for a dog."<sup>46</sup>

F. P. Petrov, a Party member and a foreman at a lumberyard in Chuvashia, was drunk during a radio announcement about Stalin's death and began cursing the Party leader. According to a witness, during the radio program dedicated to the event, he also "began to hit on her" and "asked her to marry him." When she said this was disgraceful behavior at such a time, he started swearing at her.<sup>47</sup>

I. F. Prihodko, leader of a tractor team from the Rostov region, showed up drunk at his dormitory, took a bottle of vodka out of his pocket, and said to those present: "Let's drink to Stalin—to Stalin's death! Let's thank him for building a hundred and ninety thousand concentration camps for us." As he spoke, an announcement was made on the radio regarding the composition of the new government. Prihodko said that they were divvying up power.<sup>48</sup>

Sh. Sh. Shaimardanov, a disabled war veteran from the Bashkir Republic of the RSFSR, was drunk and made a ruckus in the home of his

neighbor. He made an obscene comment about Stalin's death and added, "That's not bad: there will be one fewer Communist."<sup>49</sup>

### *March 8*

While drunk at a teahouse, N. A. Krylova, an unemployed resident of the Gorky region, "saw a newspaper with a photo of comrade Joseph Stalin's funeral and started kissing his image, saying that there aren't any others like him in the Soviet Union and calling the rest of the people in the government saboteurs. When Krylova was reprimanded by those present, she beat up one of the women."<sup>50</sup>

A. Atabulaev, a collective farmer, an Uzbek, saw his neighbor in tears. "He asked sarcastically: 'You're crying about *this*?' and swore at the deceased Party leader, saying, 'Why didn't he die fifteen years ago? If he had died then, we wouldn't have these collective farms, and our lives would be much better.' He also said that better people die and no one weeps for them, so let him die like (here he compared the Party leader with an animal and swore at him)." On March 9, during the artillery salute, at a meeting dedicated to mourning Stalin on the central square of Stalinabad<sup>51</sup> (Tajik Republic), he exclaimed, "Shoot so that neither his coffin nor his bones remain! Let him suffer like we are suffering." Since 1937, he has "allowed himself to make anti-Soviet statements" in conversation.<sup>52</sup>

A. M. Brilon, a librarian, told her friends in the library of the Saratov Party committee what she had heard on a foreign radio program about the formation of the new Soviet government after Stalin's death.<sup>53</sup>

### *March 9*

After a meeting dedicated to mourning Stalin, A. F. Kichkina, a janitor from Stalino<sup>54</sup> (Ukraine), attempted to cut in line and buy a newspaper. After someone in the line to the newspaper kiosk objected, she said: "He died, and all of you will die too."<sup>55</sup>

S. P. Buzinov, a carpenter from the Moscow region, attended a meeting dedicated to mourning Stalin. Afterward he said: "I wish they had given us two hundred grams of vodka, at least; then we would drink to the memory of the Leader." He also told jokes about Stalin and Molotov.<sup>56</sup>

On the night of March 9, after a meeting dedicated to mourning

Stalin, Ya. I. Peit, an ethnic German collective farmer from northern Kazakhstan, who had a criminal record, tore down Stalin's portrait, threw it on the snow, and trampled on it. At his trial, he admitted that he had been completely sober and that after he had trampled on the portrait, he had said, "I'll never have to see you ever again." He also testified as follows: "I am unhappy with the Soviet state because I was forcibly resettled as an ethnic German and I often had to go to the commandant's office and re-register, and also because I was imprisoned for ten years."<sup>57</sup>

### *March 10*

N. F. Kozak, an electrician from the Lvov region (Ukraine), came up to look at a newspaper with a picture of Stalin lying in state that was up on the board. Some of the people around him said that even at seventy-three, Stalin looked youthful in his coffin. In response, Kozak swore and added: "As if he ate potatoes and sauerkraut or choked on dust, like you or me!?"<sup>58</sup>

### *March 11*

On March 11 and March 14, O. M. Skadaite, a librarian from the Vilnius region (Lithuanian Republic), told a joke about Stalin's death both at home and while visiting friends: "Before his death, the leader of the Soviet people and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union allegedly asked that his heart be buried in Georgia and his brain in Moscow, and that another body part be chopped into sixteen pieces, to be given each of the sixteen republics so that the people would remember him, and he wouldn't have died leaving nothing to the people."<sup>59</sup>

### *March 12*

P. I. Gradovsky was a driver from Odessa. On March 12, while at a construction site, he went up to some women who were looking at photographs of Stalin's funeral in a newspaper and said, "Why the (here he inserted an obscene word) are you looking at these pictures? Can't you see that the Party leader has kicked the bucket?" According to a witness, "All of us were outraged, and the store woman, who was there with us, [. . .] called him a pest. After this unpleasant incident, we went our separate ways and got back to work."<sup>60</sup>

*March 14*

N. P. Rashchupkin, a worker on a steamship from Minusinsk, went to visit a friend. He got drunk and responded to the news of Stalin's funeral with the following words: "He croaked, so to hell with him. He made it to the age of seventy-three, but we won't live that long. They just sit around, earning thousands of rubles and fattening their bellies while we here work day and night for one hundred rubles a month. . . . It's us that created the soviets, not them."<sup>61</sup>

*March 15*

On March 15, O. K. Lopatina, a collective farmer from the Bobruisk region (Belorussia), came home, where a party was taking place. "She was visibly drunk. As soon as she came into the room, she started dancing." Someone lit up a cigarette, took a newspaper from his pocket, and said, "Look at the pictures of comrade Stalin's funeral." Hearing this, Olga Lopatina shouted: "Stalin was our enemy, and he's dead," adding an obscenity.<sup>62</sup>

*March*

M. N. Kotov, a barrelmaker from Tula, said that he was happy about Stalin's death, since Stalin had "sucked the blood of millions of people." He also called Communists tramps. In 1951-1953, he cursed Party and state leaders and collective farming, praised life in tsarist Russia, and said that the Soviet regime would soon be destroyed.<sup>63</sup>

During Stalin's illness and at the time of his funeral, M. T. Sanzhikova, an elderly housewife from Kherson (Ukraine), said, "You see, it's true what the Bible says: that the red dragon will perish in the thirtieth year of his rule."<sup>64</sup>

N. E. Efremov, a prisoner, said after Stalin's death: "There will be a struggle for the top job, and this struggle will end in bloodshed. America will use this opportunity to declare war, catching them off guard and freeing our people from terrible suffering. . . . It's good that members of our government are dying: at least the collective farmers will be happy, since they earn nothing; they just record their work-days in a book, and that's it. The Jews have got us in a box; it just remains to close it. Life is better in America. No capitalist country has laws as harsh as ours. A lot of collective farmers are in jail for steal-



ing five or ten kilos of straw. Prisoners are fed better in America than here. Someday, a plane will come from America, they'll throw weapons down to the prisoners, and the prisoners will use these weapons to attack the administration. Stalin's wife was a Jew and she pushed Jews into all the leading positions in the government; after Stalin's death, the Jews are going to have a hard time." He praised Trotsky as a good orator.<sup>65</sup>

During the mourning for Stalin, I. Ya. Semiletov, a beekeeper from Tbilisi (Georgian Republic), said: "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away—so he croaked," and added that the flags of mourning were hung so that "his eyes would be closed." He thought that life in the USSR ought to change and that "capitalism ought to be restored." In 1950–1953, he said that a war was imminent and that the Soviet Union would be defeated; he told anti-regime jokes and said that collective farmers lived in poverty.<sup>66</sup>

While the nation was mourning Stalin, A. I. Kostiuinin, a carpenter from the Gorky region, told the following joke: "An old lady comes to Kalinin<sup>67</sup> and asks him for a pass to go abroad. Kalinin says, 'Why do you need to go abroad? You know, the grass is always greener on the other side.' The old lady says: 'That's it, exactly: I want to go where the grass is greener.'"<sup>68</sup> In 1952–1953, he said that Stalin's record in the Civil War was not as illustrious as it was pictured: "No one had even heard of Stalin at the time; it was Trotsky that the people followed. But then, when Stalin became our leader, they started to give him all the glory." He said that elections in the Soviet Union were just a formality: "It's all the same: the power will go to whomever the Party group appoints. We don't have a real democracy."<sup>69</sup>

### *April 12*

While drunk at home and in the presence of his tenants, A. A. Shamaev, a fisherman from Sakhalin, went up to Stalin's portrait, shook his fist at it, and said: "Come on, are you going to give me some money so that I can get a drink, or not?" Then he swore and said, "Today I drank some varnish; we shouldn't be drinking this poisonous crap—it's members of the government who should drink it," and "Stalin died: now we have one less selfish bastard." "He called the leader harsh and obscene names."<sup>70</sup>

*May 11*

In the waiting room of the train station of Khanzhenkovo village (Ukraine), M. E. Agaev, a priest from the Donetsk region (Ukraine), said: “Stalin sucked plenty of human blood in his lifetime; now he is lying in the soil and rotting.”<sup>71</sup>

*September*

On September 8, I. P. Belov, a collective farmer, was drunk while at the Golutvin train station of the Moscow-Riazan railroad. He stood by a beer keg and shouted: “Stalin—that leech—croaked, and people like him will croak, too.” In his defense, he stated that the waitress did not pour him enough vodka, and when he demanded that she fill his glass, she called a policeman, and they “started a case against him.”<sup>72</sup>

I. L. Skuratov, a railroad worker on the Amur railroad, said: “Here’s what I’ll do: I’ll fly to Moscow, go to the Mausoleum, poke out the eyes of that Georgian bastard (he said the last name of the Party leader), and urinate on his face.”<sup>73</sup>

## Documents

### • 1 •

#### Now There Will Be Discord and Power Struggles in the Central Committee

From a report by the Minister of State Security of the USSR, S. D. Ignatiev, to G. M. Malenkov, L. P. Beria, N. A. Bulganin, and N. S. Khrushchev on the reaction of soldiers and officers of the Soviet Army and its civilian employees to the news of Stalin’s illness. March 5, 1953.

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[. . .] An officer of the general staff of the Soviet Navy, a captain of the first rank: “Yes, it is terribly hard to believe that such a misfortune is upon us. We are placing our hopes on the Party, whose iron hand must prevent even the slightest attempt to sow discord in our ranks and among our people. We must be especially ruthless to our enemies.”

A civilian employee at the military base in the Moscow military district: “What a pity that he is so ill! I wonder if the Jews have anything to do with it.” [. . .]

A civilian employee of the general staff of the Air Defense Department of the Moscow military district: “Those ‘killer doctors’ are responsible

for comrade Stalin's grave illness. They must have given him poisonous medications that release their poison over time." [. . .]

The head of the cafeteria in the motorized infantry division, a petty officer: "He is very ill; in three days we can expect him to . . . Then we won't have anyone to complain to. Right now, if anything goes wrong, they say, 'We will complain to comrade Stalin,' and now we won't have anyone. Let's take the following example. Why aren't there any Jews in the collective farms? Why are they all in high-ranking positions? If Lenin were alive, there would be no Jews; he would have sent them all to Palestine.

"If Lenin were alive, we wouldn't have had a war, either. And there wouldn't have been any Jews if Lenin were still alive, while now they're suffocating us."

A typist of the general staff of the motorized infantry division: "I am worried. After he is gone, who will take his place? Who knows what the people are thinking? Maybe the person who assumes his position will turn out to be an enemy of the people. And what if there is a war? Now is the most risky time for a war, especially given that the winter is coming to an end and wars always begin in the summer. . . ."

A captain, senior controller of the special checkpoint at the Central Bureau of the Border Authority of the Ministry of State Security: "It seems to me that after the official announcement of comrade Stalin's illness, everything in our country just stopped." [. . .]

A soldier of the motorized infantry division: "I wonder who will be elected to comrade Stalin's position if he dies." [. . .]

A retired colonel, Jewish, a Party member: "Judging by the tone of this announcement, it's the end. Now there will be discord and power struggles in the Central Committee; the secretary of the Central Committee . . . [name omitted in the text of the document] will strive to appoint his close associates to leadership positions to ensure that he becomes the sole leader. We will see the same kind of situation as the one that took place during the struggle with the Left Opposition.<sup>74</sup> And our international standing and authority in international relations will also decline considerably. Take the countries with popular democratic regimes;<sup>75</sup> they will naturally be trying to get greater autonomy now and to free themselves of our tutelage. China is of particular concern, since it already had a strong sense of independence; it is hard to say how things will go now, especially given that the United States is doing everything to drive a wedge into our relationship with China.

"Vyshinsky had to speak about the Jewish issue in his report, which means that a campaign on this issue is taking place abroad.<sup>76</sup> Given what has occurred here, of course, we will have to make concessions in our foreign policy. Now Vyshinsky will have a hard time pursuing his policy of intransigence; he will have to make compromises, especially on the ques-

tion of Korea. Mark my words, the war in Korea will end within a month, and it will happen as a result of concessions from us.”

The head of the Air Defense Department of the Moscow military district, a senior lieutenant: “If [Stalin] dies, Russia will be cut into parts.”

The head of the club at an artillery base: “Good riddance.” (An order to document this and arrest him has been issued.)

A sergeant at an artillery brigade in the Prikarpaty military district, an ethnic Latvian: “No big deal.” (An order to document this and arrest him has been issued.)

An inspector in the political administration of the Prikarpaty military district, a lieutenant colonel: “I wonder if it’s worth treating him.” (An undercover investigation is under way).

A soldier serving at the armored artillery warehouse: “Stalin won’t make it, but that’s for the best. Just watch: things will change all of a sudden.” (An investigation is under way.) [. . .]

An officer of general staff of the air defense forces at the Ministry of Defense, a colonel: “Who will be the leader in his place? Everyone is very worried about this.”

A senior lab assistant at the Kuibyshev Military Engineering Academy: “A third world war may start sooner than expected. Things are moving toward a war, and here, it’s definitely a message.”

Minister of State Security, S. Ignatiev<sup>77</sup>

## • 2 •

### Shouldn’t You Be in Mourning, Too?

From the resolution of the assistant prosecutor of the Department for Special Cases of the Lvov region (Ukraine) on the case of L. I. Katrich. October 15, 1953.

[. . .] Lia Isaakovna Katrich, b. 1914 in Odessa, ethnically Jewish, with a secondary education, without a fixed occupation, living temporarily in the city of Lvov, where she was arrested on April 12, 1953, by the State Security Administration of the Lvov region and charged under Article 54-10, paragraph 1, of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian Republic.

These charges were brought against Katrich because on March 8 and 9, while the Soviet people were mourning the death of its leader, she gave voice to her anti-Soviet opinions (specifically, in connection with the death of the leader of the Communist Party and the Soviet government) to employees of the intercity telephone office in Lvov.

The fact that Katrich made anti-Soviet statements about the death of the leader of the Communist Party and the Soviet government was confirmed

by witness testimony both during the preliminary investigation and at the trial: [. . .]

Aleksei Petrovich Shipilov [. . .] testified as follows: "On March 8, 1953, at approximately 16:30, I was at the public telephone station of the Lvov Intercity telephone service, where my wife, Tatiana Semenovna Shipilova, works, and witnessed the following: Citizen Lia Isaakovna Katrich came up to my wife and, seeing that my wife was wearing a mourning ribbon on the occasion of Joseph Stalin's death, asked in a surprised and sarcastic tone: 'What are you in mourning for?' I was outraged by citizen Katrich's behavior and asked her, 'Shouldn't you be in mourning for our leader, too?' Making no reply, L. I. Katrich walked away from my wife.

"As a citizen of the USSR, I was deeply distressed by our loss. Accordingly, I thought it was my duty to take measures to detain L. I. Katrich." [. . .]

Vera Vladimirovna Andreeva testified as follows: "[. . .] On March 9, 1953, at approximately 8:30 a.m., Lia Isaakovna Katrich came to the public telephone office and ordered a call to the city of Proskurov. At just that time, the shift of the woman who had taken her order ended, and Shipilova came in to replace her. She was the woman whom Katrich insulted. When I heard that, I went up to Shipilova to find out what the trouble was. After I went up to Shipilova, Katrich said spitefully, in my presence: 'I hope you stay in mourning your whole life and shed tears for Stalin.'" [. . .]

On the basis of this evidence, the Lvov regional court found Katrich guilty on two charges of making anti-Soviet statements regarding the death of the leader of the Communist Party and the Soviet government. Lia Isaakovna Katrich did not admit guilt; she explained that she was on bad terms with the witnesses and that they gave false testimony for this reason.

The Supreme Court of the Ukrainian Republic heard an appeal in the case and ruled that the witnesses' testimony contained contradictions, and therefore the accusation was unproven.

On the basis of the above, I have come to the conclusion that the prosecution of Lia Isaakovna Katrich was fully justified, and that she was correctly convicted by the Lvov regional court under Article 54-10, chapter 1, of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian Republic.

However, given the judgment of the Supreme Court of the Ukrainian Republic that charges should be dropped, and given the fact that the Supreme Court of the USSR rejected the appeal of the chairman of the Lvov regional court to reverse that judgment, the regional procuracy did not send a protest about the judgment of the Supreme Court of the Ukrainian Republic to the Procuracy of the USSR.

Therefore:

IT APPEARS that legal action in this case should be stopped and the case FILE returned to the State Security Administration of the Lvov region for their records.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 40510, l. 3-6. Typewritten original.

### • 3 •

#### Stalin's Teeth Fell Out, and They Looked Like the Teeth of a Dog

From the resolution of the assistant prosecutor of the Department for Special Cases of the Moldavian Republic upon reviewing the case file of G. I. Karp following his appeal. November 27, 1953.

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Grigory Ivanovich Karp was born in 1882 in Chetyreny village, Ungensky district, Moldavian Republic, where he still resides; he is an ethnic Moldavian, literate, a kulak, not a Party member, , and without a fixed place of work. The accusation against Karp is that as a former member of the bourgeois Nationalist Peasants' Party [Tsaranists],<sup>78</sup> a kulak, and a person hostile to the Soviet system, he made slanderous remarks and gloated over the illness of the leader of the Party and the Soviet government—that is, committed an offense prosecutable under Article 54-10, chapter 1, of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian Republic.

On May 6, 1953, Grigory Ivanovich Karp was sentenced under Article 54-10, chapter 1, of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian Republic by the Supreme Court of the Moldavian Republic to ten years' imprisonment in a correctional labor camp, followed by a five-year suspension of voting rights. [. . .]

A review of the case shows that G. I. Karp's crime was confirmed by witness testimony during the preliminary investigation and at the trial. [. . .]

Under questioning, the witness P. V. Bulikan stated: "The main thing I want to tell you is that on March 4, 1953, at approximately 6:00 or 7:00 p.m., I was at the Chetyreny mill, and Grigory Karp (I do not know his patronymic) showed up at the mill drunk and in my presence, and in the presence of Konstantin Mikhailovich Gorinchei and other collective farmers, started to talk maliciously about what he had heard on the radio. He said that he had just heard that (here he named the Leader) had been paralyzed in his arm and leg. After this, Karp said for everyone to hear that his [Stalin's] teeth fell out and that they were like the teeth of a dog.

"After this, Karp went up to a group of people who had been waiting in line and started to express his dissatisfaction to them; I didn't hear exactly what he was talking about, but from a few phrases I heard, it was

about how they had lived very well before, and under (he named the leader of the Soviet Union), life had become worse, for he had taken everything away from them." [ . . . ]

The accused denied his guilt both during the preliminary investigation and at the trial.

On the basis of the above, I consider that the appeal should be dismissed. Therefore, according to Article 360 of the Criminal and Procedural Code of the Ukrainian Republic, I hereby resolve:

That the verdict of the Supreme Court of the Moldavian Republic issued on May 6, 1953, in the case of Grigory Ivanovich Karp should be upheld.

Given that our oversight responsibilities provide no grounds on which to protest the verdict of the Supreme Court of the Moldavian Republic, the appeal of Grigory Ivanovich Karp should be dismissed.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 41400, l. 6-10. Typewritten original.

## • 4 •

### A History Lesson after a Meeting for Mourning in Chita

The resolution of the prosecutor of the Department for Special Cases of the Chita region regarding the appeal in the case of G. A. Kazakova. May 29, 1953.

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Galina Alfonsovna Kazakova, b. 1923 in the Cossack village of Shimanovskaia, Amur region, an ethnic Russian and a citizen of the USSR, from a white-collar family. Before her arrest, she worked as a history teacher in School no. 4 of the city of Chita.

The court found that while Kazakova was working as a teacher in Girls' High School no. 4, she was guilty of conducting anti-Soviet agitation among her students.

During a history lesson on March 7, 1953, she allowed herself to slander the leaders of the Party and the Soviet government, expressing anti-Soviet opinions about them.

On April 20, 1953, the court of the Chita region sentenced Kazakova to ten years' imprisonment and three years' suspension of her rights under Article 58-10 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR.

On May 12, 1953, the Court Collegium on Criminal Cases, under the Supreme Court of the RSFSR, reviewed Kazakova's case, upheld the verdict, and dismissed the appeal.

In an appeal addressed to the secretary of the Central Committee of the Party, comrade Khrushchev, the father of the convicted, A. I. Kazakov, stated that he believed his daughter's crime to have been an isolated incident. He wrote that he, his wife, and his daughter, G. A. Kazakova, were

of irreproachable character before this incident and that he had been a Party member since 1924.

He concluded the letter with a request to drop the case.

From the documents of the case, it is evident that the appeal has no merit, for G. A. Kazakova committed a serious state crime.

In her capacity as a teacher, Kazakova engaged in anti-Soviet agitation of a slanderous character.

For example, on March 7, 1953, during a history lesson in grade nine (a), Kazakova made a slanderous attack on the leaders of the Central Committee and the Soviet government.

After school on the same day, in the presence of her students—Pakhomova, Tyrymova, Mikhailovskaia, and Shtein—in the Pioneer Room, Kazakova spread slanderous anti-Soviet ideas regarding one of the leaders of the Communist Party and the Soviet government.

Kazakova's guilt is confirmed by her admission of guilt and the testimony of the witnesses E. N. Tyrymova, G. S. Pakhomova, A. V. Zhukovskaia, A. A. Kotova, and N. S. Mikhailovskaia.

During the trial, E. N. Tyrymova, a ninth-grade student, testified as follows: "G. A. Kazakova was our history teacher. On March 7, 1953, during a history lesson that took place after a solemn meeting, she told us (both in response to students' questions and without prompting) that when comrade Lenin was alive, comrade Stalin occupied an insignificant position.

"Kazakova also talked about diplomats, saying that a diplomat is the kind of person whose actions don't fit his words; when he talks about peace, it turns out the opposite. She made the mistake of not saying that this is true only of diplomats of capitalist countries.

"When students asked her why Malenkov and not Molotov had been appointed chairman of the Council of Ministers, she answered in such a way as to suggest that Molotov had been dismissed from this position for incompetence, and that's why Malenkov was appointed. . . .

"We asked why Allilueva<sup>79</sup> had died so young, and she replied that she had been poisoned, through a special operation, as an enemy of the people so that she couldn't discredit comrade Stalin.

"Kazakova also told us that when comrade Stalin had been in exile, he'd had several wives and children." [. . .]

To the court's question, Kazakova answered: ". . . I fully admit my guilt. . . . When I was asked in the history lesson why comrade Malenkov and not comrade Molotov had been appointed to comrade Stalin's position, I replied that at some point comrade Molotov had ceased to cope with the job and was let go. . . .

"Then they asked me if comrade Malenkov would be called the Leader. I said that if he justified the people's trust, he would be. . . .



“I was asked why she (Allilueva) died so young. I said that she was poisoned as an enemy of the people so that she couldn’t discredit comrade Stalin. . . .”

On the basis of this evidence and according to Article 428 of the Criminal and Procedural Code,

I resolve:

That the verdict issued by the court of the Chita region on April 20, 1953, in the case of Galina Alfonsovna Kazakova be upheld, and with it the punishment determined by the court.

That the appeal of Alfons Iosifovich Kazakov be dismissed.

That oversight scrutiny of the case be halted and the case file returned to the Chita regional court.<sup>80</sup>

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 38002, l. 24–26. Typewritten original.

## • 5 •

### Millions of People Will Laugh, Not Cry

From the resolution of the assistant prosecutor of the Department for Special Cases of the Krasnoarsk region on the case of B. A. Basov. June 4, 1953.

B. A. Basov, b. 1939, literate, not a Party member, without previous convictions, worked as an X-ray technician at the regional hospital in Krasnoarsk. On April 11, 1953, the Krasnoarsk regional court sentenced Basov to ten years’ imprisonment and a three-year suspension of his rights.

On April 28, 1953, the Court Collegium on Criminal Cases under the Supreme Court of the RSFSR upheld the decision of the regional court.

The regional court found Basov guilty of making slanderous anti-Soviet statements about one of the leaders of the Communist Party and the Soviet government. Basov made these statements on March 5, 1953, while drunk in a liquor kiosk, in the presence of citizens Stepanenko and Muravyov.

Basov did not admit his guilt and testified that he had been drunk and remembered nothing. [. . .]

During the trial, the witness Stepanenko was questioned and gave the following testimony: “On March 5, 1953, I met Muravyov at the farmers’ market and we went to the liquor kiosk. Citizen Basov, whom I did not know, also came into the kiosk. Some of the customers began talking about the health of one of the leaders of the Party and the Soviet government, on which Basov commented: ‘Let him die. There will be dozens of people to take his job.’ Someone responded, ‘Of course there will be, but they won’t be like him, and millions of people will cry for him,’ to which

Basov responded: 'Millions of people will rejoice, they won't cry.' These words outraged those present, and Muravyov and I detained Basov." [. . .]

In his appeal, Basov says that he was convicted erroneously, that there were a lot of people in the kiosk where he drank, but not everyone was questioned, and that he did not make anti-Soviet statements. [. . .]

On the basis of available evidence and given that there are insufficient grounds for a prosecutor's protest, I would recommend declining the appeal of Boris Aleksandrovich Basov for a review of his case.<sup>81</sup> [. . .]

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 38248, l. 5-6. Typewritten original.

## • 6 •

### He's Dead, So to Hell with Him

From the resolution of the assistant prosecutor of the Department for Special Cases of the Latvian Republic, regarding the appeal of N. I. Chubarova for a review of her case. July 6, 1953.

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[. . .] Nina Ivanovna Chubarova, born in 1931 to a family of poor peasants, not a Party member, with five years of education at a village school, worked before her arrest as a head of storage at a military warehouse [. . .]. On April 9, 1953, the Riga regional court found Chubarova guilty of making a sharply anti-Soviet statement, together with an obscenity, about a leader of the Party and the Soviet government while in the workers' dormitory of the military warehouse [. . .] and in the presence of other warehouse workers [. . .]. Chubarova was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment, followed by a five-year suspension of rights.

Chubarova admitted her guilt both during the preliminary investigation and during her court trial [. . .].

On March 16, 1953, the witness M. A. Shametko gave the following testimony in the presence of Chubarova: "On the night of March 5, 1953, we girls—workers at the military warehouse [. . .] who lived in the dorm—got together in Room 17. . . . Late at night, at approximately one in the morning, the radio broadcast an announcement about the state of health of a leader of the Party and the Soviet government. When the radio announcer said that his health had gotten worse, Nina Chubarova, who was in the room, expressed a desire for the leader to die as quickly as possible, saying, 'Let him croak.' Outraged by this statement, I said to Chubarova, 'Have you gone crazy?' to which she replied, 'He's dead, Maxim, so to hell with him'<sup>82</sup> (adding an obscenity). There will be one less of them.' The same night, Chubarova said that on March 1, 1953, the day of the elections for the local soviets, leaflets were posted in the

city of Riga with slanderous statements about one of the leaders of the Party and the Soviet government.” [. . .]

In the appeal that N. I. Chubarova sent to the chief prosecutor of the USSR after her conviction, she did not deny that she had made a counterrevolutionary statement to the warehouse workers at her dormitory. However, she asked the chief prosecutor to reduce her sentence, arguing that the statement had come about because of her low level of literacy and the mediocre quality of political education offered at the military warehouse where she worked.

These arguments by the convicted are not sufficient for a protest (by the oversight department of the Procuracy) against Chubarova's sentence. [. . .]

On this basis, I consider that there are no grounds for the oversight department to protest the severity of the sentence imposed by the Riga regional court in Chubarova's case, for the sentence corresponds to the crime that she committed. Therefore, according to Article 428 of the Criminal and Procedural Code,

I hereby resolve:

That the appeal of the convicted person, Nina Ivanovna Chubarova, against the severity of the sentence imposed on April 9, 1953, as well as the recommendation of the Supreme Court of the Latvian Republic on the case, issued on April 28, 1953, be rejected. [. . .]

GARF, f. R-813, op. 31, d. 38414, l. 5-7. Typewritten original.

## . 7 .

Let Him Rot

From the resolution of the acting prosecutor in the Department for Special Cases of the Procuracy of the USSR on the case of L. M. Ogorinskaia. May 28, 1953.

On March 31, the Lvov regional court convicted Larisa Mikhailovna Ogorinskaia, b. 1935, a seventh-grade student, Jewish, not a Party or Komsomol member, to ten years of correctional labor in accordance with Article 58-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian Republic.

Ogorinskaia was charged with expressing animosity with regard to the demise of one of the leaders of the Party and the Soviet Union during a meeting for mourning at her school.

After her conviction, the Supreme Court of the Ukrainian Republic heard her appeal and, on April 22, 1953, upheld the verdict of the Lvov regional court of March 31, 1953.

[. . .] During the meeting devoted to mourning the demise of one of the

leaders of the Party and the Soviet Union, Ogorinskaia did, indeed, express animosity. What happened was the following.

During the meeting, Kiashko, a student at School no. 50, made a speech in which he stated, "Comrade Stalin gave us a happy childhood: although we live in an orphanage, we are clothed and educated." He went on to say that "comrade Stalin's death is a great loss for the Soviet people. Comrade Stalin died at 9:50 a.m."

At this time, Ogorinskaia, standing with other students in the assembly hall, stated, "Let him rot." [. . .].

Vladimir Gukov gave the following testimony:

"[. . .] The student Ogorinskaia said with a smile, 'Let him rot.' Maksimenko, Isaev, Gladkikh, and I heard her words, and we were outraged by her conduct, so when she was leaving the meeting, Gladkikh hit her for her words, and when she went to her classroom, I hit her too." [. . .]

On March 13, during her interrogation, Ogorinskaia asserted: "I was under the influence of conversations of my parents, my stepfather and my mother, which were anti-Soviet in nature.

"Sometimes my father—who is not my biological father, his name is Mikhail Ogorenko—would come home and tell my mother in my presence that all the leading positions everywhere were occupied by Ukrainians and Russians and that Jews were being dismissed from leading positions.

"My father considered this to be the fault of the government." [. . .]

In court, Ogorinskaia renounced her confession and stated that "she said this because everyone was attacking her." [. . .]

On the basis of the above, I conclude that:

The case has been sufficiently investigated, given that the materials gathered prove without doubt that Ogorinskaia made anti-Soviet statements.

As concerns the danger to society posed Ogorinskaia's crime, the case should be evaluated by higher authorities.<sup>83</sup>

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 37877, l. 15-21. Handwritten original.

## • 8 •

### Ignorant and Semiliterate Asses Can Have Strokes, Too

From the resolution of the assistant prosecutor for the Dnepropetrovsk region of the Ukrainian Republic on the case of A. V. Kuznetsov.<sup>84</sup> July 27, 1953.

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Kuznetsov was arrested and convicted of making an anti-Soviet statement on March 4, 1953, during a meeting of workers of the mechanical workshop of Open-Hearth Plant no. 3 of the Petrovsky factory concern-

ing the grave condition of the head of the Soviet government and the leader of the Communist Party.

During the investigation, Kuznetsov did not admit his guilt. He testified as follows: "It is true that on March 4, 1953, an announcement regarding the health of the head of the Soviet government and the leader of the Communist Party was made at our workshop. Zhukovsky and Krivonos made the announcement. After their announcement about the health of the head of the Soviet government and the leader of the Communist Party, I said something, but it wasn't what witnesses have said I said. My statement was the following: 'Ignorant and semiliterate asses can have strokes, too.' After this, Zhukovsky asked me why I made this comparison—and then my heart raced and I did not respond to him. However—I did not mean to say such a thing about Stalin. I was a participant in the Civil War in 1919."

In court, witnesses testified as follows:

V. A. Krivonos [. . .]: ". . . On March 4, 1953, during lunch break, which took place in the afternoon after the radio announcement regarding the health of the head of the Soviet government, all the workers were sadly and silently contemplating the news when Kuznetsov said loudly and in an ironic tone: 'When an ass is sick, his blood also goes right to his head.'" [. . .]

On the basis of the above, I would recommend:

1. That the decision of the Dnepropetrovsk regional court on the case of Aleksei Vasilievich Kuznetsov be upheld. He was convicted justly.

2. That the oversight review prompted by the appeal of Kuznetsov's wife be terminated.<sup>85</sup> [. . .]

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 38021, l. 119–122. Typewritten original.

## . 9 .

### Let Him Die: I'm So Hungry, I'm Beside Myself

From the report of the assistant prosecutor of the Ukrainian Republic to the assistant chief prosecutor of the USSR on the case of V. S. Verbitskaia. July 6, 1962.

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Valentina Stepanovna Verbitskaia was born in 1928 in the village of Malyi Bobrik (Liubashevsky district, Odessa region) and lived in Odessa. She is Ukrainian, divorced, not a Party member, has six years' schooling and two dependents (children), and worked as an unskilled laborer at the Spare Parts factory before her arrest. On April 8, 1953, the Odessa regional court sentenced Verbitskaia to ten years' imprisonment in a correctional labor colony, followed by a three-year sus-

pension of rights, under Article 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian Republic. [. . .]

The investigation has determined that on March 4, 1953, another worker of the Spare Parts factory in Odessa asked Verbitskaia if she had heard that the Leader was ill.

Verbitskaia replied, "Let him die: I'm so hungry, I'm beside myself."

Both during the preliminary investigation and at the trial, Verbitskaia admitted that she did make his statement, but under the following circumstances: On March 3, 1953, she had worked two shifts until 12:00 and had had nothing to eat. On the morning on March 4, she went to work still not having had anything to eat. As a result, she thoughtlessly let fall this remark.<sup>86</sup> [. . .]

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 93558, l. 1-2. Typewritten original.

## · 10 ·

### A Dog's Death for a Dog

From the resolution of the investigator of the Department of the Pacific Sea Basin of the Directorate of the KGB under the Soviet Council of Ministers on the case of S. N. Stepanov.<sup>87</sup> September 7, 1954.

Stepanov was found guilty of engaging in anti-Soviet agitation on March 5, 1953, while drunk at the home of citizen Murzin in Platonovka village, Khankaisky district, Primorsky region, and in the presence of citizens Kurasov, Manaeva, Tishchenko, and Murzin.

Stepanov himself did not admit his guilt either during the preliminary investigation or at the trial, testifying that on March 5, 1953, he had been extremely drunk and remembered nothing about the incident.

However, Stepanov's criminal act is fully proven by the testimony of witnesses.

For example, Tatiana Ivanovna Tishchenko testified: "... At Murzin's place, in my presence, Stepanov sang the anthem of the Soviet Union, perverting its lyrics as follows: 'The union of the invincible, hungry, and lice-ridden.' After that, Stepanov said: 'Right, Petro, I sang the wrong words here: if I say, 'floppy-eared,' they won't get it, but if I say something else, it sounds like a fifteen-year term to me.'"

E. D. Manaeva attested to another sharply anti-Soviet statement made by Stepanov: "... A few minutes after my husband (Murzin) went out to buy some vodka, I asked Kurasov and Stepanov if they had heard the

radio announcement about comrade Stalin's serious illness, to which Stepanov replied, 'Well, a dog's death for a dog.'" [ . . . ]

In his appeal to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet requesting a review of his case, Stepanov states that on March 5, 1953, citizen Murzin invited him to his home with malicious intent, made him so drunk that he passed out, and later told the MVD that Stepanov had engaged in anti-Soviet agitation, suborning the witnesses Manaeva, Kurasov, and Tishchenko to support his falsehood.

Stepanov's argument is invalid and is not objectively supported by evidence. Stepanov did not make any claims about unfriendly relations between himself and the witness Murzin or others either in the preliminary investigation or during the trial. He admitted that there had been no earlier quarrels or scores to settle in his relationships with any of the witnesses. [ . . . ]

In a letter to the chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, comrade Voroshilov, A. S. Ivanova (Stepanov's daughter) states that her father had spoken negatively about his life before the revolution and had been very happy with the Soviet system, for which he had fought. [ . . . ]

There is no evidence in the files that Stepanov conducted anti-Soviet agitation before March 5, 1953, which leads one to believe that Stepanov's anti-Soviet statement made on March 5, 1953, was an isolated incident.

At present, Stepanov is serving his term in a labor camp but not going out to work because of his advanced age. He has not violated any camp regulations.

On the basis of the above, I conclude that Stepanov's crimes were classified correctly. However, considering that his political consciousness is poorly developed and that he is semiliterate and elderly, his long-term isolation from society, as determined by the court (ten years in a correctional labor camp), is unnecessary. Guided by Article 428 of the Criminal and Procedural Code of the RSFSR, I suggest:

That a protest arising out of the oversight scrutiny be submitted to the Supreme Court of the USSR, recommending modification of the verdict issued by the Primorsky regional court on May 7, 1953, with regard to Stepan Nazarovich Stepanov—namely, reduction of his sentence to five years' imprisonment, with his subsequent release from imprisonment in accordance with the decree "On Amnesty," issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on March 27, 1953.

• 11 •

A Poem on the Occasion of Stalin's Death

The work of an unknown poet, distributed clandestinely in the 1950s among prisoners in labor camps and prisons and occasionally appearing outside camps and prisons.<sup>88</sup>

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Russia has breathed a sigh of relief;  
Sweet hope fills her heart.  
Our wise one has died—so what?  
Luckily  
Only the dead have to mourn him.

A mourning veil covers cities and capitals,  
Orchestras in the Soviet palaces are silent,  
Everything is motionless under police surveillance,  
And black ribbons are draped over red flags.

Your journey, which was covered with glory,  
And which led you across Mother Russia, has ended.  
But they won't cover a skeleton with laurels  
Or place them on your wreath, which is splattered with blood.

You erected a monument over Russians' dead bodies,  
And the people will forever speak  
About how millions of souls languished  
Under the heavy heel of your boot.

What have you done for the world?  
Insolently, you sat down on the Politburo throne;  
You gave freedom to the MVD and the Gulag,  
And the yoke of slavery to the people.

You fettered Russia in chains  
And ensnared her with a net of camps.  
For thirty years, through sleepless nights,  
Wives and mothers shed tears.

Your despotism intimidated entire peoples,  
For you had put manacles on them,  
Tightened the vise on our right to be free,  
And caught the Bolsheviks in your power.



Under the guise of a quest for freedom  
And with the deceitful phrase, "Equality for all,"  
You listened to the Russian people groan,  
Rave in the taiga, and laugh as they went insane.

With your abuse of power and untrammelled tyranny,  
With your maze of prisons and your bayonets,  
You wore Russia out, reducing her  
To the clanging of her chains.

Now that you are dead, the people will breathe freely  
Wherever you showed your care for them,  
Wherever you used the deceitful slogan of freedom seeking  
To reinstate serfdom.

You built a feudal Communism  
And watered the soil with Russian blood.  
The people will not forget how sadistic you were  
When you showed your "care."

One day our persecution will come to an end.  
Then we shall return to our family hearths,  
Bring freedom to the new generations,  
And celebrate in spite of our enemies.

We will shatter prisons and tear our chains apart  
And bring the network of camps to naught.  
Instead, we will build schools for our children,  
And in these schools, we will tell the truth about our lives. [. . .]

## CHAPTER TWO

### The Voice of the People

IN THE EARLY years of the Khrushchev period, as under Stalin, one of the most common causes of political repression was “anti-Soviet conversation.” At least 20 percent of the cases supervised by the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security under the Procuracy of the USSR were of this type. (Determining the exact number of cases is difficult because the boundaries of the category are blurry. Most people who were convicted of engaging in such activities as writing leaflets or anonymous letters were also charged with engaging systematically in “anti-Soviet conversations.”) In the period in which we are interested, such convictions peaked during the first half of 1953, when many people spoke “inappropriately” about Stalin’s death during the period of mourning or just after it, and, of course, during the height of Khrushchev’s repressions, from the end of 1956 through 1958. Many of the sentences issued during those years were reviewed and reduced later, even as soon as the beginning of the 1960s. But people continued to go to prison for “conversations” until the end of Khrushchev’s rule. The protagonists in this chapter paid dearly for their careless words: their sentences generally ranged from five to seven years’ imprisonment but, in some cases, were for as long as ten years. The change of leadership when Brezhnev came to power led to changes in punitive policy. As the famous singer-songwriter Yuly Kim<sup>1</sup> said, in Brezhnev’s time one didn’t go to prison for “drunken chat at a party,” only for “public criticism of the regime.”<sup>2</sup>

Most people caught “for conversations” were not deliberate opponents of the regime. The criminal code stipulated punishment for anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda, but not for having particular

opinions. Therefore, an indictment had to include the phrase “the accused repeatedly said to friends and family.” In reality, this simply meant that someone had gone to a party thrown by friends, roommates, or coworkers and expressed an opinion about politics, international events, or the latest government resolutions. He (or she) could even have complained about issues of everyday life, saying that prices were too high and his salary was too low, the stores contained nothing and there were lines outside them, and his family could not get housing or, more generally, that collective farmers worked hard but lived in poverty.

A strong emotional reaction to an incident or chance event prompted many of these conversations. Someone had been demoted, or was unable to resolve a housing problem, or was frustrated by bureaucratic red tape or the difficulty of procuring certain goods (“I looked all over town and still couldn’t find the thing I needed”), or had had a fight with a spouse—and began to curse the government and the “material conditions of life in the Soviet Union” (as indictments often put it).

Another typical and often repeated scenario occurred when someone sounded off while drunk, either with drinking buddies or while on the street or in a crowded place (on a bus, near a store or a beer stand, or in a café). The opinions expressed in these situations were generally on the naive side.

Conversations among educated people had particular characteristics. In the 1950s, “Marxist” criticism of the regime predominated. People accused the government of deviating from Leninist values and violating the principles of the proletarian state, or said that the dictatorship of the proletariat had been replaced by the dictatorship of the Party bureaucracy and that a new class of exploiters had emerged. The speaker could be either a Stalinist or an opponent of Stalinism. In the latter case, the speaker would assert that Khrushchev had not gone far enough in dismantling the Stalinist dictatorship, or even that Khrushchev himself was responsible for repressions and famine in Ukraine. Party history, especially the roles of Leon Trotsky and Nikolai Bukharin,<sup>3</sup> was another favorite topic. Such “ideological” criticism of Khrushchev’s ruling circle was notable for its theoretical nature and had little to do with the actual circumstances of everyday life.

The majority of those convicted of having anti-Soviet conversations appealed to various authorities for reversal or reduction of their sentences. These appeals have a standard form: the author (most were

men) asserts that he “does not consider himself to be an anti-Soviet person” and cites his entire biography as proof: how he spent his childhood during the war, how his mother (or father, if he had returned from the front) brought him up as a loyal son of the motherland, how he went to work at an early age, served in the army, worked hard, joined the Komsomol, and now does not know how to tell his children that their father is a criminal. Never did he hold any anti-Soviet beliefs, the petitioner claims, justifying his actions in all sorts of ways—emphasizing, for example, that his criticism was directed at a specific local problem caused by mismanagement on the part of local officials or the bosses at the place where he worked, certainly not by the Soviet government as a whole.

Lack of an education often served as an argument for innocence: “How can I be an anti-Soviet person if I went no further than second grade?” One petitioner wrote in his appeal that he “was born in the Soviet era, grew up in an orphanage, and couldn’t be a counterrevolutionary—he didn’t even know what the word meant.”<sup>4</sup> People convicted of having drunken conversations usually claimed that because they were drunk, they remembered nothing about the incident.

For a criminal prosecution to begin in the first place, there had to be witnesses—people who were sincerely indignant at hearing the “unworthy words” or else were using the occasion to settle old scores—who heard the anti-Soviet statements and denounced the speaker. The appeals are full of claims that witnesses had an axe to grind and that the investigation and the trial had been biased or violated procedural norms. Often the persons accused claimed that the witnesses were personal enemies or had grudges against them.

In numerous cases the accused’s claim to be a victim of slander or retaliation appears to be true. For example, a middle-level official, such as a department head, production planner, or accountant, might write to his Party cell or the procuracy denouncing the top management of his company for embezzlement. In one such case, with an audit of the company’s accounts imminent, two senior managers invited the denouncer for a drink, got him drunk, and inveigled him into making anti-Soviet statements—after which they sent in their own denunciation.

Or consider the story of Maiorov, a worker from a small village on the Kamchatka Peninsula, who was convicted in 1964. The district policeman in charge of the village was Maiorov’s nemesis. This policeman kept pigs and sold piglets and used his position to get free fod-

der for his pigs from the warehouse. One day Maiorov spoke up about this at a village meeting, upon which the policeman promised to “send him to jail at the first opportunity.” Soon the opportunity presented itself. Maiorov’s wife had a baby, and Maiorov had a celebratory drink and headed to the hospital. When a nurse would not let him see his wife, he swore at her. The next day he came back and apologized to the nurse, but the district policeman had already found out about the incident, written out a denunciation in the nurse’s name, and forced her to sign it. Maiorov thought this would mean fifteen days under arrest for “petty hooliganism,” but the policeman sent the case to court, and Maiorov was sentenced to three years’ imprisonment for serious hooliganism.

As he was taken away to prison, Maiorov “stated that the judge, the prosecutor, and the investigator were heartless, and they should all be hanged and a bomb dropped on [the village].” As he wrote in his appeal, “My escorts recorded all my crude words and gestures. No doubt they were offended by my curses, and they reported what I had said to the KGB. The KGB investigator, C[aptain] P., summoned me when I was in prison in Petropavlovsk and said I’ve got some compromising information on you, and I’m going to go to your v[illage] to collect some more. He came back with the two incidents that I was prosecuted for. So this is the extent of my guilt. First, I read the book *Face to Face with America*.<sup>5</sup> In the book, an unemployed American writes a letter to Khrushchev saying that when he was driving in his car, he turned on the radio and heard Khrushchev’s speech. The next day, during a break at work, I said that I’d read a book in which an unemployed American man owns a car, whereas we can’t buy one even when we work and work. The investigator called that ‘praising the American way of life and criticizing the Soviet one.’”

The second incident was when Maiorov was at the store one day and expressed his outrage about the high price of sausages, saying that someone should throw these sausages “in Nikita Sergeevich [Khrushchev]’s face.” Maiorov was sentenced to five years’ imprisonment under Article 70 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR.<sup>6</sup> He considered that he was twice a victim, first of a personal feud with the district policeman and second of his KGB investigator’s desire “to show Moscow that we are working hard and our KGB department isn’t sleeping on the job.” Maiorov also asserted that he was in no way anti-Soviet.<sup>7</sup>

Generally clashes are involved in these situations: a drunk (often an alcoholic or a tramp without fixed abode or employment) is picked

up on the street and, while being detained or later at the police station, resists the police and swears at them, calling them Fascists, Gestapo agents, or sometimes followers of Lavrenty Beria (after Beria was convicted),<sup>8</sup> shouting out that he does not recognize Soviet laws, and heaping obscenities on the head of the Soviet state, Party leaders, and the government. In most such cases, the Procuracy's oversight materials do not go into the question of whether this really happened or whether the police, detaining a local drunk or drifter as they had done many times before, had simply decided to get rid of one for a long time by charging that person with a crime that fell under an "anti-Soviet" article and acting as their own witnesses.

Whenever someone was falsely accused of anti-Soviet conversation, the witnesses (or even the investigator, if the investigator had fabricated the case) knew exactly what statements to attribute to the accused—that is, what complex of words and actions was currently considered to be unacceptable. The frontier of the permissible was known, although it was constantly changing: today you could do something that was not allowed yesterday, but something else was now forbidden.

Public opinion and the perspectives, ideas, and beliefs that were popular in particular strata of the population, as well as thought processes in general, are difficult to research; investigating and analyzing them brings up many methodological issues. What criteria should we use to extract the significant and characteristic ideas and beliefs from the enormous amount of material? How do we define the boundaries of social strata in which certain significant beliefs were widespread? How can we generalize on the basis of countless opinions that, even for the people who expressed them, were not always well thought out, or on the basis of statements that did not always reflect long-held beliefs?

In recent years, historians have begun to research the social psychology of the Soviet era, including the post-Stalin period. Elena Zubkova has devoted several of her works to the analysis of social and psychological processes in Soviet society. Using surveys conducted in the 1990s, Yu. V. Aksiutin has attempted to reconstruct people's reactions to various events pertaining to domestic politics and international relations in Khrushchev's time.<sup>9</sup> Although these works provide a number of insights into the Soviet psyche, they do not fully explain or help structure the materials of the oversight department. Unlike Zubkova, who explores the beliefs and opinions of all Soviet society, we, in writing this book, are looking primarily at expressions of sedi-

tion and various forms of protest. And Aksiutin's approach has a number of limitations. He distributed survey questionnaires that asked respondents how they had reacted to various events, such as Stalin's death, Khrushchev's speech at the Twentieth Party Congress, the reconciliation with Yugoslavia, and the Geneva Summit.<sup>10</sup> There was no way to guarantee that people recollected their true thoughts and emotions and refrained from substituting what they believed or felt later. More importantly, while this approach made it possible to determine the existence of certain opinions about specific issues, it did not provide a basis for the reconstruction of a worldview. The questions were imposed by the researcher and did not necessarily include issues that had been significant for the respondent or that had concerned many people. Aksiutin supplements the survey with the reports to the Central Committee about the population's reaction to certain events. However, as he has admitted, the reports distort reality: they were composed for the upper echelons of power and reflect the complicated dynamics of Party bureaucracy.

In the end, the inner world of an ordinary Soviet citizen is no less mysterious to us than the inner world of a person who lived in the Middle Ages, to use a construct that has been popular with historians. I did not choose this analogy by accident: in the majority of these cases, we are studying people who were not included in the written culture of educated Soviet people.

Anti-Soviet statements had many layers. People reflected on the "observable reality" of their lives: empty shelves and lines in the stores, low-quality consumer goods, bureaucratic red tape, elite privileges. They compared the evidence of deficiency and unequal distribution of goods with the narratives of prosperity and abundance that the press perpetuated, they read between the lines of the Soviet media's outpourings, reflected on what they heard from Western radio stations, and passed on rumors. Even people who were loyal to the regime and had no inclination to doubt the basic tenets of state propaganda found themselves developing a critical and slightly ironic attitude toward the state and its various personifications, people like the secretary of a district or regional Party committee, the chairman of a village council or a collective farm, a manager, a Party organizer, and the head of a trade union cell in a factory. This ironic attitude toward the regime was expressed, *inter alia*, in an abundance of political jokes.

The educational level of the Soviet population was quite low, particularly in the 1950s. The vast majority of those convicted of "anti-

Sovietism” had not graduated from high school, much less from college. By the same token, the documents produced by both central and local law organizations (procuracies, courts, organs of state security, and the police) are striking because of their authors’ egregious lack of composition skills. The farther one goes from the two capitals (Moscow and Leningrad) and large cities, the more errors one encounters in the spelling and syntax of local documents, not to mention their style and lack of logic. (Even the minister of internal affairs of the USSR, Sergei Kruglov, made spelling errors in his resolutions.) We have come across some howlers: “He is found guilty of the fact that he has two previous convictions”; “he is found guilty of the fact that his father was dekulakized<sup>11</sup> in 1931” (the person was prosecuted at the end of the 1950s); “while in ebriated [*sic*]”; “during his imprisonment, he engaged in anonism” (a mysterious crime—perhaps this person wrote anonymous letters?),<sup>12</sup> and so on.

While reading a document, the prosecutors of the oversight department often underlined errors and put exclamation points and question marks in the margins, and sometimes they added wry remarks. In the 1960s, the spelling and style of documents improved, and documents from the 1970s are marked by the kind of bureaucratic blandness that allows their authors to describe events while saying absolutely nothing about them.

Bolshevik propaganda inculcated the “new Marxist worldview” in the semiliterate population, and the population reinterpreted this worldview according to the traditional norms. What happened to Marxism can be compared to the Christianization of pagan Europe, when the new religion absorbed a number of modified pagan rituals and beliefs. The adoration of the Virgin Mary assimilated certain features of the rites of the fertility goddess, the Christian saints took on the qualities of ancient gods who protected various trades, and the worship at shrines resembled idolatry. This amalgamation of Christianity and pagan beliefs has given rise to a debate on when Europe was actually Christianized. Some believe that historians should not begin with the baptism of European peoples but with the Reformation, when an immense number of people were faced with a choice between the new and the old religions, which forced them to reflect on the meaning of their faith. Both with regard to Christianity and with regard to Marxism, the guarantee of the new system’s stability and vitality was its structural elements (or archetypes). Metaphorically speaking, the structure of thought—its framework, the basic myths it takes into ac-



count—has not changed since time immemorial. Only its content has changed. Ancient images have been transformed while their foundation has stayed intact: a child may play with a homemade rag doll or the newest version of Barbie, he or she might hop on a stick that represents a horse or drive a little car with a motor or colorful lights, yet the essence of the game does not change.

We can discuss Soviet ideology in terms of a myth of creation.<sup>13</sup> At the center is an event analogous to the act of creation: the Revolution, which laid the foundation for a “new world” or a “new era in the history of humankind.” The new society is conceptualized as an organizing category of the ordered cosmos, the result of the triumph of social justice and peace among classes. It is based on the laws of historical development, which Marx discovered, and is opposed to the chaotic world of tsarist Russia and the bourgeoisie, where exploitation and injustice reigned. Socialism, in contrast, is associated with order: it stands for planning, confidence in the future, the crystal clarity of class position, the solemn seriousness of constructing new and geometrically precise city blocks (where an older and unsystematic development once reigned), the aesthetics of “broad, bright streets and city squares,” and so on. Capitalism, on the other hand, was clearly seen as chaos: its distinguishing characteristics were competition, instability, unemployment, the absence of social welfare, the “power of the dollar,” and the “opium of religion.” We see here the mythic opposition between universal order and chaos.

The very vocabulary of the Revolution is full of references to mythology and fairy tales. Age-old symbolism links chaos with darkness, water, the depths of the earth, and the feminine. The cosmos is related to light, fire, heaven, and the masculine. Soviet Communists likened their enemies to the monsters of chaos: the “hydra of counterrevolution,” the “imperialist shark,” a “nest of hissing snakes.” Hydras, dragons, snakes, and other such creatures, that inhabited the underworld or the bottom of the sea were ancient incarnations of chaos. In legends ranging from the stories of Perseus and Dobrynya Nikitich<sup>14</sup> to the tales of Saint George, heroes accomplished feats of cosmic significance fighting these monsters. The positive symbols in Communist narratives are symbols of the cosmos: the sun, the sky, fire, iron (hence the figure of the blacksmith, seen in many folktales as a sorcerer), and birds. Ardent fighters for a bright future was one familiar trope, and another was a sun that, in the new life, is a “fiery motor in place of a heart.” As the Soviet song puts it, “We are black-

smiths and our spirit is young; we are forging the keys to happiness.” Popular lore spoke of “releasing the red rooster [arson]” and admired the airplane as an “iron bird.” Metallurgy was emphasized, and images of the hammer and weapons such as cannons and bayonets (attributes of the masculine) had particular emotional resonance. Anyone who lived during the Soviet era will remember numerous images of Communism as light and capitalism as darkness. The terms “abroad” (*za rubezhom*, literally, “beyond the boundary”) and “over the border” (*za granitsej*) also attest to the demarcation of the familiar world from the alien worlds beyond.<sup>15</sup>

Heroic mythology notwithstanding, people developed doubts about the superiority of the Soviet way of life. The difficulties of daily existence, the shortages of consumer goods and food, and the injustices encountered in everyday life (and not only there) led some to believe that the media’s affirmations of the well-being of Soviet citizens should not be trusted. That, after all, was the message of the Western radio stations, listened to by the entire country and all strata of society, which also communicated the idea that Western democratic countries sympathized with those suffering under Communist tyranny.<sup>16</sup>

The mythopoeic (or myth-creating) consciousness perceives the world through the lens of binary oppositions. Thus, doubts and life experiences might lead a person to invert the myth produced by the Soviet propaganda, but without abandoning entrenched cultural stereotypes: the “bad” and the “good” simply switched places, so that chaos became associated with the Soviet Union while the cosmos became linked to “abroad.” In both cases, “abroad” was a unified, undifferentiated whole: a Soviet person had no real sense of the differences among foreign countries. The “iron curtain” that came down with the Cold War only strengthened the isolation of the USSR, a state that remained closed and preoccupied with its project of building “socialism at home.” Soviet propaganda painted a dark picture of the bourgeois world, particularly its citadel, the United States.

In response, a subversive popular consciousness generated the image of America as a paradise on earth. The United States—along with any country of Western Europe—was seen as the complete antithesis of the USSR. If Soviet state propaganda asserted that “over there, everything is bad” and “here everything is just fine,” this meant, in reverse, that over there, “things must be just fine.” “America” was a country in which workers walked around in suits and owned cars, where people worked short hours but earned a lot of money, where all wishes

were fulfilled. Spurred by this idea, some Armenian teenagers from troubled families, doing poorly at school, attempted to hijack a plane and flee abroad because they believed that over there they could become whatever they wanted (one of the boys wanted to be a movie actor; another, a musician).<sup>17</sup>

Certain features of one's own life were projected onto the image of "America," but with a change of sign from negative to positive: "If you showed these felt boots to people in America, they would laugh at you. In America, they wear felt boots too—but of a kind that only sixteen people in the Kremlin can get here."<sup>18</sup> When the Soviet press lambasted the United States for its lack of real democracy, the power of money, and vote buying during elections, some people drew an unexpected conclusion: "In the Soviet Union, there's no point in voting because you don't get anything for it, but it's a different matter in the United States—there you get paid for your vote."<sup>19</sup>

Given the limited information about the outside world (even basic knowledge of how people in other countries lived their day-to-day lives), Soviet people could generally only evaluate foreigners' way of life by reinterpreting what they read in the local media. Any news "from abroad" that reached people independently of the Soviet press took on a special significance; even an inconsequential detail could serve as the basis for a sweeping conclusion. An Uzbek collective farmer who had been a prisoner of war abroad said that Soviet roads were dusty, whereas Western roads were asphalted. For making this statement, he was accused of "praising life in capitalist countries."<sup>20</sup> Among those convicted of having anti-Soviet conversations some, like the Uzbek famer, had drawn conclusions about the differences between here and abroad on the basis of personal experience. In the 1950s and 1960s, most such people had been prisoners of war or had encountered soldiers from the Allied forces. These individuals could contrast the Soviet denunciation of Fascism with their own observations that Germany had a higher standard of living than the USSR; they could refuse to believe in the atrocities of the American forces during the Korean War because they had once spent time with American sailors who proved to be nice fellows, and so on. Those repatriated from Europe at the end of the 1940s constituted a distinctive group who felt deceived when they returned and saw how little the propaganda corresponded to reality. They were liable to complain publicly about their disappointment and tell others how well they had lived abroad, painting a picture of a lost "promised land" for their listeners.

In addition to the “world of the bourgeoisie,” the USSR had two other antitheses to its socialist society: Russia’s pre-revolutionary past and the vanquished Fascist Germany. Comparisons between life in the USSR and life in Russia before the Revolution were much less common than comparisons between the USSR and the West. That is understandable, given that pre-revolutionary life had become the distant past even by the 1950s. Only elderly people could remember it, and their memories were overlaid by what had happened since; in any case, tsarist Russia had not been such a happy and prosperous place for everyone. It was another matter, however, for the residents of territories annexed to the USSR at the beginning of the Second World War.<sup>21</sup> In the Baltic republics, the Moldavian Republic, and Ukraine, many people, remembering the properties and businesses that they had owned and their relative prosperity before annexation, said that they had lived far better under capitalism.

In some instances of comparison between the Soviet social order and tsarist Russia, people did not draw on memories but appropriated the vocabulary and images with which the Soviet media presented a negative picture of the tsarist regime and turned the words and images around, using them to criticize the Soviet state. The emotional charge of the critique lay in the equation of the two states. Khrushchev was sometimes called a tsar, Communists or the Soviet ruling circle were compared with landowners or noblemen, and collective farmers were said to live worse than serfs. Destructive criticism of the Soviet regime was also couched in terms conventionally applied to capitalism, with similar emotional effect, as when the Soviet Party elite were called “bourgeois,” “capitalists,” and the like.

In many cases, speakers found it hard to decide whether they saw the West in positive or negative terms. For example, in the beginning of the 1960s, two prisoners wrote appeals and letters in which they demanded to be sent “to any capitalist country, so that I may die as a slave, but under capitalism.”<sup>22</sup> In 1963, a disabled person from the city of Orsha wrote a letter to the U.S. secretary of state in which (in the words of the prosecutor’s report) he “asked for help for himself and his family, but, as the convicted person stated, he did not send this letter to America, because his proletarian consciousness did not allow him to do so, and he did not want to grovel before foreigners.”<sup>23</sup>

Unlike the tsarist regime, Fascist Germany was an enemy from the recent past. The majority of the people discussed in this chapter either fought in World War II or witnessed fighting or its effects. Many of

them were children in those years. For all these people, the war became part of their biographies. They perceived Fascism as a terrible evil not only because state propaganda painted it as such but also because they had suffered real miseries, griefs, and hardships caused by Fascism. Generally speaking, the worst thing that a Soviet person could say about Communism was to equate it with Fascism. To call Communists Fascists or to curse the police by calling them Gestapo agents was a gross insult. To say that Communists were not just like Fascists but worse—that was even stronger. We can cite numerous examples of such statements. Comparisons between Communism and Fascism were made most frequently by people from the least literate strata of society, comprising the urban poor, alcoholics, and current or former prisoners.

Sometimes people arrived at a positive assessment of Fascism via a syllogism: Communists are bad, Communists are even worse than Fascists, and therefore Fascists are better than Communists. In 1958–1959 a stoker from the Moscow region, prosecuted three times for anti-Soviet agitation, said that the Soviet border was patrolled so that people would not leave the USSR: “Hitler was the only smart man around: he wanted to bring freedom to the Soviet people and free them from slavery.”<sup>24</sup>

People came up with other odd arguments. State propaganda denounced Fascism as well as capitalism, thus linking the two and leading to a positive joint evaluation on the principle of “my enemy’s enemy is my friend,” with the result that Fascism might get a positive evaluation along with capitalism. This led to a plethora of slogans along these lines: “Long live Eisenhower! Long live Hitler!” and “Long live Fascism! Long live America!” More rarely, people also linked other enemies of the regime: “Long live Eisenhower and the great Mao” (or Tito). Any negative image—regardless of its origin—would do for subversive purposes. One scathing message from a prisoner drew on French and Nazi nomenclature in his address: “To the headquarters of the gendarmerie of the Central Committee of the SS, Kremlin, Moscow. To the inquisitors of the twentieth century, the century of the atom and high civilization. To the cannibals, to the black swarm of obscurantists. To the bloodthirsty dragons and executioners of the police state.”<sup>25</sup>

Cold War propaganda equated Fascist Germany with the United States (and the West in general), calling both powers aggressors. Soviet newspapers and magazines were full of articles and cartoons about

“a plot of global powers against the USSR” and imperialist war-mongering. Nearly every Soviet person was convinced that “America” was an enemy that would use any problem in the USSR to its advantage and that sent spies and saboteurs into the country. The idea that the enemies of the Soviet social order were “mercenaries of the bourgeois world” was not only internalized but creatively transformed. Some people wanted to score off the detested government, true, but also (naïvely) to make money by so doing: we know of many cases in which people tried to send letters offering their services to the embassies of Western countries and Western radio stations.<sup>26</sup> The majority did not have the education or professional training to provide serious help as spies, nor did they have access to military or state secrets. However, many were utterly convinced that the imperialists would welcome (and pay for) any nasty trick played on the Communist regime. In August 1953, two residents of Nizhny Tagil tore out a section of railroad track and caused a passenger train to derail. The pair expected that an agent of “one of the foreign countries” (a euphemism used in Soviet legal documents in place of a country’s name) would show up and reward them for sabotage.<sup>27</sup>

The height of spy mania in the USSR was in the late 1940s, but some vestiges remained in the period discussed here, sometimes quite surprising ones. Over the course of several years, 1950–1953, a mechanic from Kremenchug often told his coworkers that he had been a prisoner in forced-labor camps in Germany during the war, described his life in Europe, and confided, in deepest secrecy, that he had been recruited by American intelligence and had contact with an American agent, whom he met regularly to get his pay. His coworkers warned him to be careful and not tell anyone else, but from time to time, he would ask his brigade leader if he could take two days off to “meet an agent of American intelligence and get paid for [my] services.” The brigade leader let the mechanic take time off and, when he came back, asked if he had received his money. The “spy” said that he had, and treated the brigade leader to some vodka.<sup>28</sup>

F. T. Saksonov had another problem: he claimed to have suffered from someone else’s spy mania. He had three convictions, including one under Article 58-10. After serving his term, he moved to Moldavia, but could not settle down, and changed jobs and places of residence several times. Finally, in 1962, he got hired as an accountant at a state farm; but after a short time, he began to feel that the people who had recently welcomed him were uncomfortable in his presence.

He decided to discuss the situation with a young girl, his neighbor. To start the conversation, he asked the girl if it was true that she was the niece of the first secretary of the district Party committee, D., and that D.'s brother was a priest. As he wrote later, "These questions horrified her, her face showed signs of fear and terror, and she replied: 'Your intelligence is accurate, except that it's not my uncle who is the priest, but my grandfather. No one in the village "knows" that I am related to D., yet you managed to find all this out in just a few days.' She then asked me, 'Which country's intelligence agency do you work for?' I thought this was a joke and answered in a joking way: 'You are still young but very vigilant, since you managed to expose me so quickly.' When I said this, she started sobbing and begging me to spare D.'s life, since he had three children, saying that if I, as a foreign spy, required victims, then I should destroy her, as a Komsomol member, instead of her uncle. I was extremely upset at how badly this conversation with Z. had turned out—she was so dumb that she took a joke seriously—and I started asking her why she and other people were avoiding me, in response to which she screamed hysterically that 'we all thought you were a good man, but you turned out to be a German spy.'" After this, Saksonov noticed that he was being watched. He tried unsuccessfully to meet with D.: D. avoided him and, Saksonov thought, was afraid of him. Finally, Saksonov was called in to the local KGB department and told that his "presence in the Transcarpathian region was causing great concern. They thought that my frequent moves were related to intelligence work, but since there was no evidence, [the KGB agent] simply advised me to leave Transcarpathia and leave them alone."<sup>29</sup> Finally, in 1963, Saksonov was convicted of engaging in anti-Soviet agitation.

We were surprised to find from our research that some Soviet people were inclined to hope for the active intervention of "America" in their personal lives: after all, Voice of America broadcasts indicated that those in the "great abroad" were not indifferent to Soviet people's suffering. The archives contain numerous anonymous letters addressed to the embassies of Western countries and to the president of the United States in which the authors complained about life in the USSR and listed all manner of injustices. There was also a peculiar genre of appeals from prisoners, mainly those convicted of nonpolitical crimes, addressed to the American president and other heads of state and to the United Nations and other international organizations. In these appeals, prisoners lamented what they saw as unjust sentences.

The letters were written not so much in hopes that a foreign power would intervene on their behalf (Amnesty International did not exist in those days) as with the intention of taunting and embarrassing the Soviet state and discrediting it to foreigners (although most writers must have realized that their letters would not reach an ambassador or president). The letters often exhibit sarcasm and bravado.

Following the official claim that a “plot of global powers against the USSR” was in the works, people all over the country said that soon (they named a time—in a year, in the spring, whenever), there would be a war. America (or England and America, or another capitalist country or countries) would attack the USSR and free the Soviet people from Communist rule. The speakers usually went on to say that they would not fight for the Communists, and called on their listeners to “turn the bayonets against them” or “join our American brothers,” for “America” (or Truman or Eisenhower) “would liberate us.” Speakers might mention a secret organization that allegedly had many members who were simply waiting for the onset of war to rise up against the Communists, or speakers might invite their audience to set up such an organization on the spot (“Soon there will be a war with America, and the Soviet regime will be defeated, and then we’ll live well. . . . Americans won’t touch me, there are thousands like me, and Americans will reward us for our work”).<sup>30</sup> Sometimes speakers said that they wanted the Americans to “drop an atom bomb on the Kremlin” (this wish was expressed especially often during a Party congress) or that it would be better to perish from the atom bomb than to go on living like this (“We will give our lives to banish the Kremlin from the face of the earth, along with all its dragons. We would like to ask you all to act decisively during the Twenty-second Party Congress and bury the whole gang. . . . We will do our part, you provide the weapons, and there will be a revolution in the country”).<sup>31</sup> Leaflets were distributed in Krasnoïarsk on November 5, 1967, whose unknown authors might have intentionally set out to illustrate our notion of the contrast between the USSR and the United States as “this world” and “the other world”: “America, destroy the dragon!” “Long live sacred America!” “America! When will you come and break up the dragon’s kingdom!”<sup>32</sup>

Expectation of imminent war and interpretation of this war as deliverance from the Communist regime is a leitmotif throughout the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s. The rumors started in 1951–1952. Sometimes they were quite concrete: at the end of 1952 or the beginning of 1953, an aging Latvian advised his neighbors not to join



a workers' cooperative association and not to pay their taxes, because soon there would be a change of regime, the Americans would come, and Soviet officials would be in for a bad time.<sup>33</sup> A Ukrainian Komsomol member from the Lvov region, a tractor driver at a collective farm, "expecting a capitalist order to be established on the territory of the Soviet Ukraine and wanting to show that he was someone who had fought against the Soviet system, put up a nationalist flag on top of the club in the village of Krivo on the night of November 8, 1960, and on the same night tore down the flags of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic from the store, the club, the infirmary, and the library, throwing them into the mud."<sup>34</sup>

The anticipation of war was most prevalent and enduring among the prisoners of labor camps (most of them, nonpolitical prisoners) and the people who had passed through these camps in various capacities. Another typical "anti-Sovietism" in the camps was the statement that there were forty million prisoners in the USSR ("slaves of Communists," "the whole country is behind barbed wire") and that all of them were waiting for the Americans to arrive so they could rebel.

The rebellion in Hungary in 1956 was also interpreted by some as a sign of the impending downfall of the Soviet regime. The reaction to the news was fairly uniform: the promise to "make a new Budapest rebellion happen" or to "do what they did in Hungary" was added to the conversations about the impending war.

Interestingly, in the same period (the second half of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s), the Soviet security agencies actively persecuted Jehovah's Witnesses, who were always accused of "engaging in conversations about the impending demise of the Soviet system in the so-called war of Armageddon"; talking about Armageddon was interpreted as a call for the violent overthrow of the existing order. The available data leave it unclear whether the sharpening of the struggle against Jehovah's Witnesses was related to any upsurge in the activity of the group. The creed of Jehovah's Witnesses was most widespread in certain districts of Moldavia and Western Ukraine. Most of the believers were women from the countryside with a very low level of education.

In general, it appears that the 1950s were a time of great eschatological expectation.<sup>35</sup> The end of the world could mean the collapse of the Soviet system, or it could mean the ultimate attainment of Communism: after all, Khrushchev had announced at the Twenty-second Party Congress that Communism would be realized in twenty years,<sup>36</sup>

or at least this was how people read his speech. People held different attitudes toward the promised realization of Communism. In the summer of 1953, I. P. Zaitsev, an employee of the geological survey of Tajikistan, stated that he, like all ordinary people, was not in the least interested in building Communism; it was just something the Party bosses had thought up. Before, priests had told people to be patient in expectation of the kingdom of heaven, but now Party secretaries and political officials were carrying out the same functions.<sup>37</sup> The same year, a train conductor from the Cheliabinsk region made the simple statement that “when Communism comes, everyone will act like pigs and steal everything.”<sup>38</sup> A prisoner expressed his opinion in the spring of 1957: “If Stalin were alive, he would put barbed wire all around the Soviet Union and he would have built Communism a long time ago. In the Scriptures [. . .], it says that the Soviet system will exist for forty years and then America will come to power.”<sup>39</sup> In 1959, a resident of Zaporozhe (Ukraine) scribbled on his electoral ballot that “Communism, the kingdom of heaven beyond the grave, is just a myth.”<sup>40</sup> On November 7, 1962, graffiti were discovered on the walls of buildings in the village of Divnogorsk, Krasnoiarsk region (near the site of the grand construction of the Krasnoiarsk hydroelectric power station): “Before, they promised us that we would die and go to heaven, and now they tell us that we’ll die and have Communism.”<sup>41</sup>

We found a few mystical texts of a prophetic character from the late 1950s. Most of them were applications of the books of the Apocalypse to Soviet history. The religious beliefs of the people who were arrested for distributing these texts did not particularly interest the investigators, so we can assume that the expectations of the end of the world that are reflected in these documents were not the product of a particular religious sect. In these texts, we find such tropes as the death and resurrection of a god (in one case, this is applied to Lenin; in another, to Stalin), as well as the likening of Party leaders to beasts and monsters mentioned in the Book of Revelation. We also find imagery characteristic of a Black Mass, in which infernal and celestial elements switch places.

Thinking in terms of archetypes also characterized people’s perception of the head of state. Soviet people’s attitudes toward Party leaders, especially Stalin and Lenin, were marked by a tendency to sanctify or even deify them. The leader of the Revolution was endowed with the features of the first ancestor or a heroic creator who had showed early people how to make fire, taught them crafts and

trades, and given them seeds and various useful objects. We should recall that Stalin wrote “fundamental” monographs on various specialized topics, including linguistics<sup>42</sup> and forestry,<sup>43</sup> and scholars in all fields had to cite the “classics of Marxist thought.” Stalin was seen as both a wizard and a tsar: the well-being of his people depended on his powers. The Soviet leader was not only the head of state but the Leader (*Vozhd'*). Lenin and Stalin, the creators of the workers' and peasants' state, were demiurges, bearers of supernatural wisdom; each was hailed as “the genius of all times and all nations,” “the father of the peoples,” “the leader of the world's proletariat.” The idea of a leader's “universality” corresponds to the belief that the USSR was a cosmos surrounded by chaos. The country's leader thus located himself at the pinnacle of the entire ordered world. One hagiographic book about Stalin argued that comrade Stalin was the second sun, but a much brighter one than the one in the sky, for the heavenly sun had given life to the nations of the world, whereas Stalin had given them much more: he gave them happiness. Similarly, in a long narrative poem, “Zoia,” Margarita Aliger<sup>44</sup> wrote that when Stalin's speech was broadcast on the radio, his words swept over the earth like invisible rays, instilling hope in people's hearts, warming the freezing soldiers, and kindling the partisans' fire.

Nikita Khrushchev condemned Stalin's cult of personality and tried to establish an image of himself as “closer to the people.” He ended up looking like a parody of Lenin, however, and lost his charisma and his credibility as a leader. Evidently, the USSR was not ready for another type of leader (Khrushchev was not ready to be one, either). Instead of a wizard-tsar, Khrushchev became a trickster, a rogue, the butt of jokes.

A trickster, in whom are combined comical and demonic elements, plays clever and sometimes harmful pranks. The Greek god Hermes and the Scandinavian god Loki are examples of tricksters. Later tricksters are the witty rogue in fairy tales (for example, a soldier who deceives the devil) and the jester in European literature (we can also add Korovyov, a character in Mikhail Bulgakov's novel *The Master and Margarita*). A trickster often acts alongside a demiurge: the demiurge creates useful and wonderful things; the trickster makes useless and harmful ones, like diseases and weeds (here we might recall Khrushchev's grand project of corn planting). The trickster also mediates between this world and the world of the dead; he is the only god who can travel to another world, the underworld (Hermes accompanied

the souls of the dead to Hades). In this regard, Khrushchev's trips abroad take on a particular significance.

The trickster is not the leading man in a drama; at best, he may be a court jester. Thus, Khrushchev turned out to be a "false tsar" in the place Stalin had occupied for so long. And that is what he was called in popular discourse. Khrushchev was the target of an unprecedented number of jokes and sarcastic remarks. People called him "a fool," "a pig," "a clown," "a chatterbox," "an adventurer," and "Tsar Nikita." Sometimes people gave him demonic qualities, although this characterization did not seem to fit either his actions or his stature (which was short). In leaflets, graffiti on walls and fences, and prisoners' appeals, he was often called a dragon ("Down with the dragon Khrushchev!" "Khrushchev the Draconian Nobody [Nikaky Drakonovsky]"). A popular rumor of the coming apocalypse that appeared in the Vologda and the Altai regions not long before 1959 (when its distributor and probable author was convicted) contained the following imagery: "Peter the Great, the victorious, is riding a white horse; Lenin, who conquered the world, is riding a red horse; Stalin, with a scale in his hands, is riding a dark horse; Khrushchev is on a pale horse, that is to say, hell."<sup>45</sup>

The Soviet population had reason to criticize Khrushchev's politics. There were shortages of food (including bread) and consumer goods, as well as lines in stores, causing what investigators called "dissatisfaction with material living conditions." Payouts from state bonds were delayed, prices rose, and wage-rates were lowered. Khrushchev's corn-planting project, which he initiated after his visit to the United States, was received with a great deal of skepticism. Even space exploration was criticized: "Sure, there may be a Sputnik,<sup>46</sup> but we have no meat in our soup."<sup>47</sup>

But it was Khrushchev's trips abroad and the entertainment of foreign guests that provoked the most intense irritation. This is explained by a number of conditions peculiar to Russia. In the first place, Russians have a tendency to isolationism, based both on a sense of imperial self-sufficiency and that mistrust of outsiders that is typical of traditional societies. A hundred and fifty years earlier, Alexander I's active foreign policy annoyed his contemporaries for the same reason; his frequent absences from the country, in particular, made him seem neglectful of Russia's internal affairs. In the Khrushchev period, it was said that although the people lived poorly, the government did not care,<sup>48</sup> and leaders traveled around abroad.

Egalitarian beliefs, which Communist propaganda reinforced, also played a role in the popular disapproval of Khrushchev's trips to foreign countries. Leaders were conceptualized as the people's servants: they worked for the people's welfare and ought to live modestly. Soviet propaganda included many stories about Lenin's and Stalin's humble ways (represented by a plain jacket or military tunic, an unpretentious home, and an undemanding taste in food). For an ordinary Soviet person, to take a trip abroad was an unattainable dream and the highest of privileges. Khrushchev's frequent trips abroad violated that sense of "equality," and so did his gala receptions at the Kremlin, especially when they were at the country's expense ("Khrushchev and Bulganin<sup>49</sup> are drinking away the country's wealth"). The leaders' trips abroad and their dinners with foreign dignitaries were seen as privileges, along with their government-granted dachas, their cars, and their reportedly lavish homes—all of which caused annoyance. The unpopular "impostor" Khrushchev did not look like a worthy representative of a great power. In discussing his travels, people said that "Khrushchev was known all over the world as a chatterbox and a drunk" and was not held in respect. The contacts made with capitalist countries in Khrushchev's time were often interpreted as a betrayal of the ideals of Communism: How can the leader of a proletarian state kiss the hand of the queen of England?

Khrushchev's sweeping and well-publicized campaign to "help the developing countries" also provoked great disapproval. People saw no point in these efforts; rather, they suspected that food and consumer goods in short supply were being taken out of the country: "We are starving and standing in lines while Khrushchev is throwing bread across the border."

A storm of outrage followed the 1957 announcement that the members of the "Anti-Party Group" (Molotov, Malenkov, Kaganovich, and others) were being removed from office. Criticism of their dismissal was a constant theme of anti-Soviet conversations. In defense of the Anti-Party Group, people wrote leaflets, graffiti, and anonymous letters. In themselves, the group members were never particularly popular; it was only after their fall from grace that people began to idolize them. Their removal from political power—power that, by definition, was unfair and the source of all evil—turned them into "the enemy of my enemy"—in other words, an ally. The schism in the Soviet government was understood as having caused the banishment of figures in whom, retrospectively, the people put their hopes ("Malen-

kov wanted to let people have a decent life"). Moreover, Molotov and Kaganovich were old Party members, "Leninists," who, as it now seemed, had done a great deal for the people. (The fact that they were longtime members of the Stalinist government and were associated with unpopular measures no longer mattered, and even Kaganovich's ethnicity, which had previously provoked anti-Semitic comments, was now irrelevant.) Khrushchev was viewed as a parvenu who had condemned Stalin and was now attacking Lenin's revolutionary brothers.

The indignation of the pro-Stalinist segment of the population at the resolutions against the cult of personality passed at the Twentieth Party Congress, the renaming of cities (for example, from Stalinabad to Dushanbe), and the removal of Stalin's body from the Mausoleum on Red Square<sup>50</sup> is understandable. But the arrest of Lavrenty Beria provoked a negative reaction as well. Of the sixty-five mentions of Beria that we found in "anti-Soviet statements," fifty-two were positive (although many were statements like "Khrushchev is even worse than Beria"). Beria, who hailed from Georgia, was particularly popular with people from the Caucasus, beneficiaries of the amnesties of prisoners in 1953,<sup>51</sup> and prisoners generally (who evidently linked his name to the memory of the amnesties). Ethnic Russians were more inclined to rejoice that a Russian, Malenkov, would now be in power instead and would "keep the Georgians in line" (since Stalin was a Georgian, some believed that Georgians had enjoyed special privileges in his time).

People's dissatisfaction with their lives made them prone to look back in history, searching for an illusory missed opportunity: if only Lenin had not died so soon, if only . . . Even Trotsky, the Party's arch-enemy according to the official version of history presented in *The History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks): Short Course*, took unrealized alternative paths in people's imaginings. The records of the Procuracy's oversight department contain fifty-three references to Trotsky, of which fifty-two were positive. It was said that he had been a great statesman, that he had had an outstanding record in the Civil War and could have been head of state, that he had been a loyal comrade-in-arms to Lenin, and even that he had wanted to return the country to capitalism. Next in popularity according to the number of references in the records were Bukharin (nineteen references, all positive), Alexei Rykov<sup>52</sup> (nine references, all positive), and Zinoviev<sup>53</sup> (seven references, of which six were positive and one concerned his possible part in Kirov's assassination). Mikhail

Tukhachevsky<sup>54</sup> and Vasily Bliukher<sup>55</sup> were twice mentioned as outstanding military leaders, and Yan Gamarnik<sup>56</sup> was mentioned once in the same capacity. Even the former people's commissar of internal affairs, Genrikh Yagoda,<sup>57</sup> rated a sympathetic comment.

People always sympathized with leaders who had fallen from grace. We can see this in the attitude toward Marshal Georgy Zhukov. When he was in disgrace (both in Stalin's time and in Khrushchev's time), people felt sorry for him and spoke of him as a great military commander (we found twenty-one sympathetic references). However, when he got back into office and took part in the plenum condemning the Anti-Party Group, Zhukov was criticized along with Khrushchev (we have seven such statements). The real qualities of leaders who had fallen from grace were either unknown or long forgotten. The very fact of their opposition (albeit an imaginary opposition) to the present government played a decisive role in people's perception of them.

Musings about missed opportunities—representing a retrospective hope to see a good and just leader—even led people to express regret that Hitler had not managed to conquer the USSR. However, a hopeful glance was rarely cast as far back as the pre-revolutionary era. Conversations about how life had been better in tsarist days carried claims and reproaches against the Soviet regime, which had failed to fulfill its promises, yet we know of very few instances in which people indicated monarchist leanings (“if only Nicholas II could be resurrected”) or predictions that the Soviet system would soon fall and a tsar and capitalists would reign.

Thus, most anti-Soviet conversations known to us were not “anti-Soviet” in the proper sense of the word. Popular sedition did not transcend the prevailing cultural paradigm but simply switched the value of the signs from positive to negative. We are inclined to explain this lack of revolutionary sedition by the fundamentally patriarchal nature of Soviet society in the 1950s and 1960s (even more so than in pre-revolutionary Russia, where personal freedom was at least accessible to the elite). The patriarchal mode of thought was characterized by a strong tendency to generalize and by the dominance of shared beliefs over individual ones. The majority of ordinary “anti-Soviets” saw the world in much the same terms as those who punished them saw it; they had a common system of values and moral norms and the same amount of information at their disposal.

The documents below delineate popular topics that the state considered anti-Soviet. But because oversight records of cases about con-

versations rarely cite the content of the conversations, we reproduce leaflets, anti-Soviet letters, and the like to give an idea of what might have been said.

Commentary by O. V. Edelman

## Documents

### *It's Just Talk*

## • 12 •

### Panicky Discipline in the Soviet Army

From the resolution on the case of A. S. Kuznets by the assistant to the prosecutor of the Moldavian Republic in charge of oversight of investigations by state security.<sup>58</sup> April 29, 1954.

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[. . .] A. S. Kuznets testified as follows: "I admit my guilt in that I was frustrated with actions in the village by the Soviet state and, as a result, repeatedly expressed my dissatisfaction with taxes in the USSR in conversation with other collective farmers. I also spread lies about the material living conditions of workers in the USSR and, in the same conversation, praised life in Fascist Germany and German Fascist technology. I slandered the Soviet Army and, in the same conversation, stated that during the war of 1941–1945, the Soviet Army defeated the German army because of help from the British and the Americans, and that without this help the Soviet Army would have never won. I also praised the American and British armies. I undermined the discipline of my fellow collective farmers by telling them not to hurry with their work, since there would always be more." [. . .]

At the trial, the witness I. N. Dudi testified as follows: "[. . .] When I was in the Soviet Army, I received a letter from my family in which they said that Kuznets had crossed over to serve in the German army. After 1947, I encountered the accused in our village. In conversations that took place near the hut in June 1951, he said that there had been order and good discipline in the German army, that their soldiers had carried out orders exactly, and that planes had departed right on time, while in the Soviet Army, there had been panicky discipline, and orders had not been carried out on time. Kuznets went on to say that if the Americans and the British had not helped the USSR, Germany would have won the war. Five or six people were present at these conversations." [. . .]



At the trial, the witness N. V. Mazur testified as follows: “[. . .] When I was in the village store, I met Kuznets, who said that he had been a prisoner of war in Germany and had worked there, and that in Germany all consumer goods were better than ours. Kuznets said that peasants work in collective farms but make very little money, that taxes are high and the private plots are poor, and that collective farmers can’t buy anything for themselves. While working at the collective farm, Kuznetsov had a bad effect on discipline; he was often fired from one job and transferred to do something else.”

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 45259, l. 10–12. Typewritten original.

## • 13 •

What a Bearded Elder from Kazakhstan Thought about Collective Farming<sup>59</sup>

From the minutes of the circuit session of the Guriev (Kazakh Republic) regional court on the case of U. Ismagulov.<sup>60</sup> June 1, 1953.

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Witness testimony:

1. Witness S. Aitbaev, born in 1914, currently working as the chairman of a collective farm: “[. . .] On this case, I know the following. I have no prejudices against the accused. In 1952, between February 20 and March 5 (I do not recall the exact date), I was at the apartment of U. Kul'taev, a resident of Baida village [*aul*]. Also present were the tax inspector in charge of this village, K. Kaliev; a veteran of the Soviet Army, M. Atukaliev; and the accused, Utepbergen Ismagulov. The conversation was about collective farming. Ismagulov said: ‘Collective farming is not moving forward. Every year, livestock belonging to collective farms perish and collective farmers flee because the farm economy is in such bad shape. At the present time, collective farmers do not want to work at collective farms, and they do not work well.’ Ismagulov went on to say, ‘In tsarist times, this collective farm’s livestock belonged to a *bai*,<sup>61</sup> and the bais didn’t let livestock perish, as happens now, because the animals were personal property. In those days, people tried to work hard and multiply the number of livestock they had. Now collective farmers may work day and night, but they have no houses, food, or clothing. In the past, living conditions were very good; people in those times ate meat and drank red tea (evidently, the witness means black tea) and were strong. One person could eat the meat of a whole sheep. Now we get nothing from the livestock that belong to collective farms. If someday they take our privately owned livestock away, we will perish.’ Speaking about international af-

fairs, Ismagulov said: 'After America and Britain win in Korea, they will declare war against the Soviet Union. This is a war of machines, and there will be neither humans nor cattle left after that war.' Ismagulov stated that what they say about the low standard of living in other countries is not true. He made it seem as if this was the Soviet government's fault, an attempt to deceive the people. He said that during the war he had been in Germany. He made it sound as if Germans live in luxury. Their barns are full of grain and livestock. They wear clothes made of silk. [. . .] According to him, not even their dogs would eat what we're eating. In the same conversation, Ismagulov said that he had been prosecuted several times in the past. He said that he had been released every time because all investigators take bribes: whatever crime you have committed, if you give them a bribe, they will make your punishment easier or even release you. He said that there is no justice at all. In September 1952, the accused and I participated in the twentieth session of the village council. During the discussion, Ismagulov said: 'In tsarist times, they also collected taxes from the people, but taxes were collected on time because the people were very wealthy back then, and in the Soviet Union, people live very poorly and so they cannot pay taxes.'"

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 45057, l. 19-20. Typewritten copy. Certified translation from the Kazakh.

• 14 •

A Conversation on the Tram about Current Political Events

From the protest of the chairman of the Supreme Court of the USSR on the case of P. N. Flikov.<sup>62</sup> December 29, 1958.

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[Witness Telgerekov]: "On February 24, 1957, fairly late (around 9:00 p.m.), I was coming home with my wife and citizen Svechnikova. I boarded a No. 3 tram at a stop in Kuibyshevo. When the tram came to a halt at one of the stops, I heard people talking about the decree of December 19, 1956,<sup>63</sup> and went up to them and joined the conversation. Flikov said that the decree was stupid and this was not the way to improve people's behavior. He said that he had just come from Kemerovo, and there was nothing in the stores there. When people started talking about our living conditions, he said that there are many beggars on the trams, that elderly people get insufficient pensions, and that even though there was a rebellion in Budapest, we still send our bread there, as well as to China and Korea. When I asked Flikov where he worked, he answered

that he wasn't talking about himself but about cleaning women, who earn very little money. In an argument that ensued, he said, 'Just look at you. Students are rebelling while you idiots are sitting around silently.'" [. . .]

[Witness Svechnikova]: "Flikov said that in the fortieth year of its existence, the Soviet state couldn't come up with anything more stupid than a decree about petty disturbances of public order. I am hard of hearing, so I only heard fragments of what he said. He said something like, that people in the Soviet Union steal a lot; there are a lot of beggars; we should create better living conditions for the people; in Kemerovo, they are on strike, while here people are silent." [. . .]

[Witness Nesterov]: "We brought [Flikov] to a police station, where we reported everything he had said to the officer on duty, who then summoned an officer from the committee [of state security, the KGB], and in response to his questions, Flikov began to talk, saying: 'I'm not afraid of speaking, I'll tell you the whole truth,' and he said that he was an engineer but went around in boots made out of tarpaulin, that the government only holds meetings and receptions but just look how many beggars there are in our country! He began to list the cities in which the students are protesting or sowing discontent: cities such as Kiev, Tomsk, and Omsk."<sup>64</sup>

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 78158, l. 9. Typewritten copy.

## • 15 •

### Americans Will Bomb the Moscow Lair; We Have Nothing, No Arms to Fight With

From the resolution of an official of the Procuracy of the RSFSR on the case of G. M. Novikov.<sup>65</sup> July 11, 1958.

At the trial, witnesses testified as follows.

Baev: "... Novikov and I have been working together for several years ... he has always expressed his dissatisfaction with the way things are in the Soviet Union. He called workers slaves, our manager a lord [*barin*], and Communist Party members "muzzles."<sup>66</sup> He also called N. S. Khrushchev 'Tsar Nikita,' and referred to the Kremlin as a lair, and a Party meeting as a club. ... He never stayed after work. When asked why he was in a hurry, he said that he needed to listen to the Voice of America broadcast; during the day you couldn't hear it well, but at night you could.<sup>67</sup> One day our bathhouse caught fire, but he said it was not his problem and he didn't even want to help put out the fire, while really he was the one who didn't watch the electric hot plate carefully, which is

what had caused the fire. . . . [ . . . ] Novikov saw that I had three issues of the magazine *America*<sup>68</sup> and asked if he could borrow them. Subsequently, I asked Novikov to return them to me . . . but he said that his kids had torn them up, but the magazines were not torn up, and he also said that when the Americans came, he would show them the magazines. Apparently he wanted to show them that he had been interested in the U.S. for a long time. He said that if the Americans came to the Kamchatka Peninsula, they would make him the top man, while Communists would be hanged. . . . He also said that Americans would bomb the Moscow lair, and that we have nothing, no arms to fight with. He expressed his opinion about the events in Hungary, stating that if it weren't for our troops, that country would have established the same kind of social order as the one they have in Austria. He said bad things about the events in Egypt<sup>69</sup> and enthusiastically took the side of the British. Novikov did not like our social order. . . . He told me that the American radio reported that we have an unstable government and that you can only find out the truth through their broadcasts. By listening to these broadcasts, he found out that Bulganin had been dropped from the government, and that the American radio derides collective farming. He offered to buy me a radio because I had a private apartment and could listen to Voice of America freely. . . . I talked to Novikov about America because I had been to that country myself, but I did not praise it. . . . I explained to him that the Voice of America told lies. He said that America was a land of miracles. . . ." [ . . . ]

Matveenko: "[ . . . ] When Khrushchev made a speech about the reform of agriculture in our country, Novikov said that this project was unrealizable and that it would remain on paper. On the events in Hungary, he said that they should figure it out on their own and we should not meddle. . . . During the events in Egypt, someone mentioned volunteer troops, but Novikov disagreed: 'What are you talking about: they will send regular troops, no doubt about it.' . . . He also said, 'Tsar Nikita has gone off on another tourist trip. . . .'<sup>70</sup> He expressed the opinion that nothing had changed in the collective farms since Khrushchev's speech and that only the newspapers talk about change. . . . Novikov spoke about Egypt and Hungary in a way that is not fitting for a Soviet citizen. . . . He asserted that America had saved us during the Great Patriotic War." [ . . . ]

Onikienko: "I've known Novikov since 1952; we work together. . . . He was surprised—how could it be that Churchill had called on the world to strangle the Soviet system while it was still in its cradle? <sup>71</sup>—and said, 'It's too bad that Churchill didn't have enough support back then; then we wouldn't have had this slavery.' He attributed the Russian people's victory in the Great Patriotic War to America and England. . . . He called stokers slaves and his manager a lord. . . . With regard to the Rosenbergs,<sup>72</sup> he said

that they had sold atomic secrets, and if it weren't for that, we wouldn't have had the atom bomb. He stated that he was against China's joining the U.N. and said that the followers of Chiang Kai-shek were the true representatives of the Chinese people. . . . He said that Russia was interfering in Hungary's internal affairs and the lives of its people, as if we were suppressing the will of the people. . . . He approved of all the speeches by the capitalist bigwigs and cursed all the speeches of our leaders . . . particularly comrade Khrushchev. . . . Novikov said: 'What kind of democracy is this when we only have one party, while America has many of them?' . . . If the Americans came, he would risk the lives of his pups, meaning his children, and take up arms against the believers in red magic, that is to say, the Communists."

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 89266, l. 8-10. Typewritten copy

## · 16 ·

If They Let Him, He Would Fly to America in the Clothes He Stood Up In

From the memorandum of an official of the Procuracy of the USSR on the case of M. P. Dronzhevsky.<sup>73</sup> December 25, 1958.

Witnesses cross-examined in court testified as follows.

Prokhorov: "I worked with Dronzhevsky. Sometimes he would start unsuitable conversations. He'd say that there are too many bourgeois nowadays and that they are oppressing the workers. One time, during the elections, Dronzhevsky said that he didn't want to vote, for he had served time and now his record had been cleared. He also said that in Canada, workers live better and own cows, and every worker has an automobile, and that his sister lives in Canada and owns her own restaurant, and if they let him, he would fly to America in the clothes he stood up in. He said that here we work like horses and over there even the homeless live better than we do. After piecework rates were lowered, he used swearwords when talking about the Soviet state."

Mukhomedzianov: "[. . .] During a meeting on socialist competition, Dronzhevsky said that we workers are badly paid, while in America workers work for six months and then rest for six months. He also said that Soviet elections are just a formality and that the bosses nominate themselves as candidates. At lunch, Dronzhevsky said that it wasn't lunch but pig fodder." [. . .]

Ostrovsky: "In February 1958, during job assignments, Dronzhevsky said that there is nothing in the stores, that the government doesn't care

about workers, and that the miners' management does not send them work clothes on time." [. . .]

Maliutin: "Dronzhevsky often said that in America workers live better and own two-story houses, that our Soviet leaders travel to foreign countries too often, that they party and drink wine, and because of that workers are paid lower wages and live in worse conditions. He said that Jews should be destroyed—the Germans shot them. He often showed his dissatisfaction and said such things. He said that unemployed people live five times better in America than workers live in the USSR."

At the trial, the accused testified as follows: "I work at a lumberyard and had a run-in with my manager because they pay me less than they pay other power saw operators. That is why I had a run-in with him, but they twisted it to make it sound as if I'd cursed the Soviet system and had a hostile attitude toward it. In October 1957, when they were allocating jobs, the lumberyard manager asked me how the voting had gone. I said that it had gone fine, because only one candidate had been listed on the ballot, and there hadn't been anyone to strike out.<sup>74</sup> The investigator wrote up the report on the interrogation inaccurately, but he said that he would put me in solitary confinement if I didn't sign it. With regard to America, I said to my boss during a break that we are planning to catch up with America. I said that people live better in America, that American homeless people live better than we working folks do here. I said that my sister had gone to Canada with nothing but the clothes she had on, but now she owns her own restaurant. I said that I would have liked to go to America and take a look at how she lives now. [. . .] When I had a face-to-face confrontation with witnesses Prokhorov and Mukhomedzianov, they didn't say anything on their own; they only confirmed whatever the investigator said. I have nothing against the Soviet system, only against shortcomings in the management of the lumberyard."

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 85022, l. 4–6. Typewritten original.

## . 17 .

### Suiazov Did Not Approve of a Single Initiative by the Party or the State

From the statement on the case of N. A. Suiazov<sup>75</sup> by the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR. June 5, 1964.

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At the trial, the witnesses testified as follows.

Apatov: "[. . .] Our working conditions were difficult, we didn't make

a lot of money, and Suiazov said that in the U.S. the homeless live better than we do while we're forced to work so hard. It happened that in our workshop, managers often changed. Suiazov said that the managers at our mine change as often as statesmen in our government.

"In 1957, Suiazov said that in the U.S., they feed their homeless, but we are forced to work without pay. At that time, we really did earn very little. . . . Suiazov went on to say that every worker in the U.S. owns a car . . . workers in the USSR live worse than workers in the U.S. . . . what you make is just enough to buy food. . . . He talked about corn sowing. I said that the sowing area had doubled and the best lands were given over to corn. In response, Suiazov said that if they use the best lands to plant corn, then we won't have bread—and we won't have corn, either. . . .

"Conditions at the mine were difficult, and Suiazov said, 'Not since Demidov<sup>76</sup> have people worked in the mines the way we're working.'" [. . .]

Matveev: ". . . In 1959, Suiazov joined our brigade. He is very talkative. We argued a lot. One time, we were digging with *picks* [the word is underlined in the text, and the prosecutor of the Procuracy of the USSR wrote in the margin, "In the twentieth century!"], and Suiazov said we've got so much technology, but they don't let us use it. We do it all manually. He said that we don't make good use of technology, which is why workers have these awful, low wages. In France, Suiazov said, workers live much better.

"In spring 1960, as a political propagandist, I explained the Party line to the workers, focusing on the struggle with the cult of personality.<sup>77</sup> I said that Molotov and Voroshilov<sup>78</sup> had taken part in building the Soviet state, traversing that difficult path, but now they had gone to the bad. Suiazov often said that American workers live better than workers live in the USSR. We argued and told him to read the newspaper, but he said that the newspapers tell lies. Yet he listened to Voice of America and said that he knew the whole truth about life in the USA.

"There was one more conversation as late as spring 1962. He said that our working conditions were bad and that they were still paying us very little for our work. We disagreed [opposite this phrase, the prosecutor of the Procuracy of the USSR put two question marks]. I told him that if there was a war, he would be the first to be a traitor. And he said that if there was a war, he would be arrested at once because he was on the blacklist.

"Suiazov said that political education is nothing but brainwashing, that we haven't seen the real world and that's why we believe everything we're told.

"Suiazov went on to say that Khrushchev and other leaders had recently

begun to travel too much; he said that we had been making many friends [internationally] and giving them too much, and that's why we live badly, while in Stalin's time there were no such trips abroad and we lived better. . . . Also, Suiazov often told anti-Soviet jokes . . . about good and bad leaders.

"[. . .] Suiazov also said that if there was a war, all our allies would turn away from us, beginning with Poland, and he cited the example of 1939. . . ."

Dvoretzky: ". . . Suiazov spoke against the exposure of the cult of personality; he said that Stalin's policies had been correct and that Khrushchev had been wrong to punish him . . . that he had acted incorrectly with regard to Voroshilov and Molotov. Around 1959–1960, Suiazov spoke against the treaty with Austria.<sup>79</sup> He said that Khrushchev's foreign policy was wrong. He approved of Albania's foreign policy and said that Albania did well to cut itself off from the USSR. Suiazov went on to say that Khrushchev made military threats against other countries and conducted a Cold War policy. . . .

"Later, Suiazov also spoke against the Virgin Lands campaign.<sup>80</sup> He said that we expended a lot of money and technology on that campaign, but the harvest was poor. Suiazov spoke against help to the people's democracies. He said that we helped them a great deal, but we ourselves lived poorly. Suiazov criticized the space program and said that the state had wasted a lot of money on it. He had a low opinion of Communists, calling them parasites, hangers-on, and swindlers and saying that they lived to make money. . . . He said capitalists were better than Communists. According to him, a capitalist would give a worker a ride, but a Communist wouldn't even talk to him. He told anti-Soviet jokes. He said that we wouldn't catch up with America and that even our grandchildren wouldn't live to see Communism. He said that they had been talking about Communism for forty years but it was still nowhere to be seen. . . .

"Suiazov did not approve of a single initiative by the Party or the state, he always spoke against them. . . . Once we had a meeting devoted to Cuba.<sup>81</sup> Suiazov said that we should not have helped Cuba. . . .

"The Soviet government is in favor of a peace treaty with Germany, but Suiazov spoke against it. He said that signing a peace treaty would fuel the Cold War. He also said that the Cold War could become a hot one. . . . He said that the Soviet minimum wage is lower than the American one; you work and work, he said, but you don't have enough to feed two kids."



## · 18 ·

## Where Is Our Bread?

A leaflet posted by Yu. F. Eliseev<sup>82</sup> in Bogorodsk (Gorky region) on the night of October 1, 1963.

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Comrades:

How much longer do we have to suffer?

How much longer will Khrushchev abuse the people and feed them promises of a bright future?

What happened to the bread? We're not asking for anything more. Where is our bread?

Comrades!

On October 2, the whole city will go on strike. We will demand:

1. That bread be baked without additives (let Khrushchev eat that bread!).
2. That the baking of white bread be resumed.

Do not begin work until these extremely simple demands are fulfilled! You know well that you can't fill your bellies with empty promises!

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 96270, l. 3.<sup>83</sup>

## · 19 ·

## He'll Teach Us How to Live with Corn

A poem by Yu. F. Eliseev, found during a search of his apartment.

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There's no more bread, the flour has vanished,

Sausage has gotten more expensive.

"What in the world is going on?"

All around, people are worried.

It's the specter of Communism

Slowly walking into our houses, taking his sweet time.

We export everything:

Razors, stockings, socks,

And wheat, and good old flour—

Everything but rotten cod.

And we don't even have that anymore

Since Khrushchev got placed

On the tall pedestal  
Of state gods.

Our Nikita won't let us down,  
Our Khrushchev won't disappoint:  
He'll teach us how to live with corn,  
Though you won't find it on his plate.

With this great Nikita  
We will be full for a long time  
With loud talk  
About our bright future.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 96270, l. 3.<sup>84</sup>

### *In Search of the Promised Land*

## · 20 ·

#### I Absolutely Must Meet with a Representative of Your Embassy

A letter placed by A. D. Bakhrin<sup>85</sup> in a car belonging to the American embassy in Moscow. April 22, 1967.

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I absolutely must meet with a representative of your embassy. It is vital both for me and for you. It is a question of life and death for me. I have realized that Communism violates all of the rights of man, violates his freedom.

Communism is the worst kind of oppression of man, his most basic rights, living conditions, and existence. Our Communist rulers have turned our people into a herd of abused cattle. They want to turn all of us into robots so that we can carry out all their commands, never thinking or caring about the living conditions of our families. All that matters is that we have a place to sleep, disgusting cabbage soup to gulp down at the cafeteria, and a workplace where we are supposed to raise our productivity.

For this reason, I have decided to fight this terrible COMMUNISM (all our more clear-headed people have already realized what all these notions of Communism have led to). If you will help me with my struggle and direct all my actions, I am ready to do anything to hinder the survival of Communism. And if you don't believe me and won't reach out to me, I have already decided that I will take my own life. But don't think it is

craziness: I am disgusted at the very idea of working for Communism, and that's why I have only two options—to fight or to take my own life.

I will wait for you on April 23, at 14:00 and at 20:00 Moscow time at the box office of the Plamia movie theater, which is located inside a high-rise (where there is also a grocery store), near where your embassy is.

Look for a tall guy with a newspaper in his hands. I enclose a used ticket to a movie. You will come up to me and ask: "Do you want to buy a ticket for the 23:00 show?" I'll look at it and say, "Okay, I'll pay you a ruble for it.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 3217, l. 7. Certified typewritten copy.

## · 21 ·

### We Look to You for Our Liberation from Communist Slavery

From a special report on the opening of a criminal case against V. D. Naletaev,<sup>86</sup> sent by the prosecutor of the Sverdlovsk<sup>87</sup> region to the deputy chief prosecutor of the USSR and the deputy prosecutor of the RSFSR.

The basis for the criminal charges against Naletaev was that on July 29, 1959, in Sverdlovsk, near the Bolshoi Ural Hotel, he handed an anti-Soviet letter to Martin Paul, an American journalist from the delegation accompanying Nixon, the vice president of the United States. The letter said, "To the President of the U.S. and the Great American People. We look to you for our liberation from Communist slavery. The Russian people. July 29, 1959."

After handing said letter to the American journalist, Naletaev went to the lobby of the Central Hotel in Sverdlovsk. He was accompanied by a female acquaintance, L. There he wrote a second, similar letter with the intention of giving it to the Americans. However, soon thereafter he was detained, and this second letter was confiscated from him during a search by officials of the KGB and the local police.

When the Americans left Sverdlovsk, they left the letter that they had received from Naletaev on the desk in Room 324 of the Bolshoi Ural Hotel, where the journalist Martin Paul stayed.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 86761, l. 2-3. Typewritten original.

• 22 •

I Was Drunk at the Time

From the oversight records of the case of V. D. Naletaev by the Procuracy of the RSFSR, copied by the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR.

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At the trial, Naletaev admitted his guilt and testified as follows: "On July 27, 1959, I left my apartment to have a look at the American delegation. Before this, I drank 250 grams of vodka, stopped near the hotel, propped a piece of paper against a fence, and wrote a note. In the note, I addressed the president of the United States and the American people and asked them to deliver the Russian people from the slavery of Communism. I stuffed this note into the pocket of an American who had just come out of the hotel. He took this note out of his pocket, looked at it, and gave me a friendly pat on the shoulder.

"After this, I entered the lobby of the Central Hotel and wrote a second note, which was similar to the first. When I wrote these notes, I was delusional, and I had no particular goal in mind. I consider myself to have been a fool. . . . Communist slavery is a figment of my imagination. I was not fully aware of what I was doing."

In response to an attorney's question, he responded: ". . . The American was drunk. . . . I didn't know that I would be arrested. I was drunk at the time."

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 86761, l. 35. Typewritten original.

• 23 •

Respectfully, from Hell

A letter from I. R. Petrokas<sup>88</sup> to the Voice of America radio station. April 1957.

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April 7, 1957. Lithuania.

All of mankind is writhing behind the thick walls of hell. However, the great heat in hell has formed a gap in the wall, and we thrust our burnt hands into the free world, calling for help.

What are Moscow's dictators doing?

They have agents abroad for their Communist activities; they send capital, grain, and other products over there at reduced prices so that they can attract and vanquish mankind. They want to show the world that we have

everything and we are rich. In the districts that border other states, everything is inexpensive, but deep inside the USSR, everyone lives in great poverty and everything is expensive. You can't subsist on your salary, which is why everyone steals and deceives one another. You can find truth only if you pay for it. Moscow doesn't care about people's poverty and tears. If a man earns 15 rubles a day, it means that he has only enough to eat and has nothing to spend on his other needs. Work boots cost 100 rubles; good-quality boots, 200 rubles. A suit can cost up to 2,000 rubles. Agricultural production is in decline, and they are not even getting back in the harvest what they sowed. Collective farms are required to pay high taxes, and when they pay them, there is little left for the farmers, and they get nothing. A collective farmer can rent a small plot of land—sixty ares [*sotkas*],<sup>89</sup> which is a little over half a hectare—but he pays a lot for it, and sometimes he can't pay the whole amount. For one cow, you have to pay 30 rubles and make the following deliveries to the state: 100 kilos of milk, 30 kilos of meat, and 50 eggs. In addition, there are other charges, such as social security. It's obligatory to deliver these products, but they pay you very little for them. If you keep a cow, you can't get straw for it, or anything else, which is why we steal at night from the barn; we make a gap someplace in the wall and fearfully stuff our bags with the straw—and then we have to carry it a whole kilometer on the way home. All the paths and all the roads are awash in our tears and our sweat. Everyone has to work to meet a quota, but no one can do it, for it is too high. If you do not meet the quota, a special tax is collected.

My dear readers, I cannot describe all of this; tears well up in my eyes, and I can't describe all of this on this little piece of paper, and my head isn't well—I've had a stroke.

My Lithuanian brothers, I will write more later, and now I ask you for help, since you are Catholics and members of Catholic society. Lend me a helping hand, spare me a few cents, and give them to my brother, who will send them on to me.

I hope that my plea will be heard. Respectfully, from hell. [Here the author provides an address in Chicago.]

Dear Lithuanians and other non-Communists. Take care that the red devil doesn't ruin you and eat up your wealth. That red dragon can swallow everything. It would be better for the world to end than to be run by Communism.

Dear people, you must help your government to expose and destroy Communist slavery, for your governments alone won't do anything without your help. And if someone is sick of wallowing in his riches, let that man go to the Soviet Union.

I wouldn't be afraid to sacrifice my life for everyone's freedom. Do not trust Communist agents. You must know that these agents receive large

salaries from Communist centers; they are traitors and maybe they don't even know what Communism is. They just collect their salaries, and life smiles on them. You must either avoid such agents or put a red jacket on them and kick them out of that country.

I ask you to forward this letter to the administration of a charity. Dear head of the charity, I ask you to help me in my miserable existence.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 82267, l. 2-3. Certified typewritten copy. Translated from the Lithuanian.

*Out with the Corn Peddler! Negative Sentiments  
about Khrushchev and His Government*

• 24 •

If Molotov and Malenkov Didn't Find the Truth, How Can Prisoners Find It?

From the oversight report on the case of A. I. Gorlanov<sup>90</sup> by the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR. November 22, 1957.

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Witness Us<sup>91</sup> testified as follows: "On many occasions, I had to listen to Gorlanov's anti-Soviet conversations. He usually praised life abroad and cursed life in the Soviet Union, slandering Party and state leaders.

"In October 1956, I happened to stand in line with Gorlanov in the cafeteria. We were talking about nutrition, and Gorlanov said: 'They go around making visits and giving away millions of rubles, planes, and wheat, and all of that comes at our expense; look how we eat: we are choking down rye bread here.' When I reprimanded him, he swore at me. . . .

"In November 1956, in Section no. 5, Semenov was listening to a reading of an article on the strengthening of socialist law, in which they talked about Stalin's cult of personality and Beria's bad actions. Gorlanov . . . said: 'In the Soviet Union, forty million people are kept in prisons and camps, and it's the Communists, the Cheka [security police],<sup>92</sup> prosecutors, and judges who are to blame. Every second one of them should be hanged; that way there will be no mistakes.

"He said that he didn't believe that article: 'Sure, you can pile all the blame on them now, but where were the other leaders then? . . . Everything is built on our bones and there's no end to it.'" [. . .]

Witness Barantsev: ". . . At a lunch break at the construction site for the Rossia movie theater in December 1956, I don't remember the exact date,

[Gorlanov] read in the newspaper about Soviet food aid to Hungary. . . . Gorlanov said, 'Why are Khrushchev and Bulganin sending these train loads of produce to other countries? Why are they sending them butter, sausages, and canned goods and making us sit here, half-starved?' He also said that our leaders trade tractors for monkeys in China and planes for elephants in India. In January 1957, the leaders of the Kurgan regional Party committee came to the construction site. After they left, Gorlanov said, 'When the theater is finished, the newspapers will say that Komsomol members built it, not prisoners. The newspapers lie and all Communists should be hanged.' I warned him that he could be convicted under Article 58 of the Criminal Code, to which he said that now under Article 58 they prosecute only people with a higher education, so he wouldn't be prosecuted." [. . .]

Witness Startsev: "In July 1957, after work, [he] read the resolution of the June plenum of the Central Committee on the Anti-Party Group of Molotov, Malenkov, and Kaganovich. After reading it, Gorlanov said in the presence of the prisoners S. and N. that you can't find any truth in the Soviet Union. 'Molotov and Malenkov are old Party men; they have done a lot for the people, but they've been crushed like bugs. If these people didn't find the truth, how can we find it? Molotov and Malenkov were right to oppose friendly relations with other countries.'" [. . .]

Witness Trubin: "When Gorlanov saw a plane in flight, he said that it was Khrushchev flying to check on his corn. . . . He also stated that he wouldn't chop down trees; let Khrushchev and Bulganin chop them down. . . . In August 1957, after work . . . we were listening to the radio . . . and there was a report about the upcoming trip of a delegation of Soviet Party and state leaders to East Germany. . . . Gorlanov expressed disapproval of this trip, stating: 'Those bastards are visiting their friends, but they don't bother looking into their own camps, where millions of innocent people are locked up.'"

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 84285, l. 14-16. Typewritten copy.

## • 25 •

### Hands Off Malenkov, Molotov, and Kaganovich!

From the special report on the arrest of P. A. Shumov,<sup>93</sup> sent by the deputy prosecutor of the City of Moscow to the deputy chief prosecutor of the USSR. November 15, 1957.

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Shumov is accused of writing and sending an anonymous anti-Soviet letter to the editors of the *Sovetskaia Rossiia* newspaper on July 5, 1957.

In the letter, he wrote: "We know one thing: it takes just one lousy sheep to ruin a whole herd, and that's what N. S. Khrushchev is doing. Why are there urgent meetings of Party people in all the factories? Because they want to fool those workers' leaders who really want a better life for workers, such as L. M. Kaganovich, who is sixty-four, Malenkov, fifty-five, and the young comrade Shepilov, whom he carried up the ranks, and a number of others, respected by the workers. Will you, as a representative of public opinion via the workers' letters, let this happen? One thing you should recognize: that this is a veritable hornets' nest, constructed by N. S. Khrushchev, the robber of the whole Russian land and the thief of our hard-earned kopecks, and N. A. Bulganin, a traitor to the laboring masses, whom we have reelected for twenty-five years just so that he'd creep all the way to the throne and then break the workers' necks. We will not allow this to happen. Remind that traitor Marshal Bulganin that he was once manager of the Likhachev [auto] factory. Maybe he will come to his senses and realize what he is doing! After all, he is sixty-two years old; let him retire and drink less. We, the old cadre of workers, his former subordinates, know something of him. We demand that the following people not be touched: (1) Malenkov. (2) Kaganovich. (3) Molotov. (4) Shepilov. (5) Voroshilov. (6) Budennyi.<sup>94</sup> (7) Anastas Mikoian.<sup>95</sup> If that hornets' nest—Khrushch[ev] the corn peddler,<sup>96</sup> Bulganin the traitor, and Co[mpany]—even touch them. Then there will be a verdict.<sup>97</sup> . . . The workers will condemn them in absentia. The Kremlin will be their prison: they'd better not leave it, or else. We understand completely that Khrushch. and Co. want to crawl into the history of Russia, even on their bellies, so that someone will write about them. Let Kh., B., and Co. know that it won't work. We are the old cadre of workers; the traitor Bulganin will remember our names from his work at our factory (here Shumov provides a list of family names). We think that this list is sufficient. Tell him that we are listed at the address bureau,<sup>98</sup> let him find us, and then we will talk. We have nothing to fear: the enemy's bullet didn't kill us, and we are alive. If they don't sober up after partying all around Europe, they'll all get the same sentence, as at the front—a nine-gram bullet."



## The People Have Sided with the Outcasts

An anonymous letter from G. G. Logunov<sup>99</sup> to the newspaper *Pravda*. July 5, 1957.

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Dear Sir,

How can you put up with this outrage, the removal of Molotov, Malenkov, Kaganovich, and Shepilov from office? Please know that the people sympathize with them and not with Khrushchev or others like him. If the people are silent, it's only because they've been intimidated. Fear hangs over us, and a single brave word would land us in prison. The people have sided with the outcasts. Why do we need our foreign brothers?<sup>100</sup> So that if a war breaks out, they could stab us in the back?

We ourselves are still very poor. You may not see poverty, since you live in Moscow, but you can see it all over Russia.

We ought not to compete with America in helping other countries. What America gives is really its surplus. The American workers are very well provided for. But our workers don't even have enough clothing to cover their asses. So you should think about your own people before thinking about your little brothers.

So it looks as though Molotov and others were dismissed because they cared for the people. We started the Virgin Lands later campaign and increased the harvest by two billion *puds*<sup>101</sup> of bread. But could you even tell?

In Joseph Stalin's time, we did not cultivate the Virgin Lands, and there was a [price] reduction every year, and it wasn't at the expense of workers' wages. We need Stalin. He would put things in order.

Remember, our people are patient. So far, they only grumble and pine after their true patriots and continue to live in their dirty huts (don't look at Moscow; Russia is not Moscow), and slave away. But there will come a day when they will speak their mind.

Do not be blind; do not hide behind your Party cards! Speak the truth to our current government. Why the hell do we need a party that has put a noose around our necks and is taking away our last pair of pants and our last shirt!

All the Communists are selfish bastards, and they could care less about the people or their needs.

And you, comrade editor, you're also a selfish bastard. You care only about your own well-being.

And if you're not a dirtbag like them, please write a refutation of my letter and print it in your newspaper.

Outraged. July 5, 1957.

• 27 •

Get Stalin Out of the Mausoleum!

From a special report on the arrest of I. D. Tokolov,<sup>103</sup> sent by the deputy prosecutor of the Kursk region to the prosecutor of the RSFSR. October 30, 1958.

Tokolov is accused of sending a series of anonymous anti-Soviet letters to the editors of *Pravda* and to Marshal Zhukov on July 9, 1957. In these letters he gives an anti-Soviet evaluation of the way things are in the Soviet Union, vilifies the policies of the Party and the Soviet government, and attempts to discredit one of the leaders of the Party and the Soviet government. [. . .]

For example, Tokolov writes in a letter to *Pravda*: “Who forbade the giving of bread to collective farmers after Malenkov had given it? (A group of impostors, Stalin’s lackeys, headed by Khrushchev.) . . .

“The people demand the immediate expulsion of the morally bankrupt scoundrels led by Khrushchev. Why don’t we have the kind of democracy that Lenin demanded? Khrushchev should be thrown out of the government. . . . You distort Lenin’s legacy; although you refer to some of Lenin’s correct statements to the people, you do not follow them: the collective farmers are half starved, as are the workers. . . .

“The comrades that you tell us lies about strove as members of the Central Committee to improve our standard of living. But you dealt with them in the same way that Stalin dealt with those comrades who stood in his way as he destroyed the working people. . . .

“As for you, Khrushchev, Bulganin, and Co., you give collective farmers nothing but hunger and cold: there is no more bread (the corn ate it up), and there is no more wheat (you sent it abroad). On their wages, those in the working class cannot support a family the way human beings should be supported. . . .

“The bad results of your leadership could provoke mankind to white-hot rage. There will be a day of reckoning. Resign while you can!! . . .

“Most of what you do is on paper, and in reality there’s nothing. Your anti-people clique doesn’t have any popular support, even though you may toot your horn from the tribunes that you have seized (temporarily). You have always been nothing but Stalin’s toadies who helped him to starve the entire population of the Soviet Union.

“Can you name one country where people work but earn nothing? Here’s an answer: it’s the USSR, where Nikita the corn peddler and Nikolai the traveler<sup>104</sup> rule. You chatter a lot—and it’s all pointless. . . .

“In the eyes of the masses, you have become wolves in sheep’s clothing: you call yourselves Lenin’s ‘followers.’ . . .

“Just look at those people who carry the state on their shoulders, and

you will see that they are half-starved, carrying hangers-on on their thin shoulders. . . .

“The people demand: ‘Down with Khrushchev’s and Bulganin’s gang. Long live the people’s government!’

“Our patience is like a rock, but this rock is crumbling! The gang of toadies will be destroyed. . . .

“We (the working class and the peasantry) demand the reinstatement of our comrades and the elimination of the gang of oppressors led by Khrushchev and Bulganin. Get Stalin out of the Mausoleum!”

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 86458, l. 7–8. Certified typewritten copy.

## · 28 ·

### He’s Going to Moscow to Kill Khrushchev

From a memorandum by a department prosecutor of the Main Transport Procurement of the USSR on the case of A. G. Batula.<sup>105</sup> February 10, 1958.

Batula was detained on August 23, 1957, at 22:40 at the Vapniarka station of the Odessa railroad by an officer of the railroad police because he had no identification documents. At the police station, [. . .] Batula said that he “is going to Moscow to kill Khrushchev; it would be better to live under Americans and Germans. . . .” He “will kill that bureaucrat Khrushchev; and if war began, it would shatter the Kremlin; it’s better to go to America because people are starving to death in the Soviet Union.” He expressed the desire to kill comrade Khrushchev with a rock, stating that Khrushchev had taken office, but he wouldn’t work for Khrushchev, and that the resolution of the plenum on the removal of Molotov, Malenkov, Kaganovich, and Shepilov was incorrect, just part of a fight for government office. . . .

[He said:] “While Joseph Stalin was alive, foreigners had not visited us, and life was better under Stalin. Now Khrushchev has opened the door to everyone and is treating everyone to dinner, although workers have nothing to eat. . . . He also expressed the intention to leave the USSR for America even if it meant working as a spy.”

[During the interrogation, Batula explained:] “I did say that I was going to Moscow to be at Nikita Khrushchev’s birthday, and when the policeman began asking me again where I was going, I told him that I was going to Moscow to kill Khrushchev. In fact, I was on my way back from Moscow to Stalino<sup>106</sup> [Ukraine] and was waiting for the Lvov-Stalino train at the Vapniarka station. [. . .] Because I had no identification doc-

uments, I could not find a job anywhere. I repeatedly made inquiries about my documents with the police and at the procuracy of the Stalino region; in Moscow I went to the Administration of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) and to the MVD, but no one could help me get new documents. As a result, I developed personal bitterness about the Soviet government and became dissatisfied with the conditions of life in the USSR. I expressed all of this when I was detained by the police at the Vapniarka station.”

GARF, f. R-9131, op. 31, d. 81967, l. 19–20 (reverse). Original manuscript.

• 29 •

Khrushchev Is a Corn Peddler, a Comedian, and a Swindler

An anonymous letter sent by G. A. Yurinov<sup>107</sup> to the Central Commission on Elections at the Supreme Council of the USSR in March 1958.

Dear comrades,

I write not for myself but on behalf of all the residents of Pskov, for all of us are talking about this now.

1. When will a member of the government visit us? How much longer are we going to be oppressed? If Khrushchev or, say, Bulganin came here, they would find out how things are going for us, they would know if we lived well or badly, and maybe then they wouldn't carry on about how we live so well in Russia. Why don't any of them ever visit us?!

2. Why did Nikita Khrushchev become our master? Since when?! Everyone laughs at him, and people write all kinds of jokes and fables about him—don't they reach Moscow? After all, he is a corn peddler, a comedian, and a swindler; he has chased our much-loved Malenkov away, and everyone esteems and respects Malenkov.

3. There was a time when Khrushchev raised a rumpus over Stalin's cult of personality. Yet Stalin led the country for thirty years, and then Khrushchev tried to act as if he were Stalin, but first, in terms of his [i]deology, he is far from Stalin's equal; second, he is a shortsighted man, no one knows him the way we knew Stalin; and third, when you compare him to Stalin, it's like comparing a little dog to an elephant in all respects, but he wants to imitate Stalin, and it ends up as the same cult of personality, only done differently, in Khrushchev's own way.

Why do we hear nothing but “first secretary comrade Nikita Khrushchev”—everyone is sick of hearing all that, and then THE LAST POINT: Why does he chatter so much? He doesn't even let anyone else talk, so in

our country, Bulganin and Voroshilov, or Mikoian, or others can't even talk. That's how the personality thing is coming right back again.

4. Tell our government, but not Khrushchev, that we must change our national anthem—I mean the music, since our anthem sounds like some kind of storm, some disaster for humanity. Just listen to it, you'll feel like crying—it seems to foretell some kind of misfortune.

5. Tell Khrushchev—well, tell all the Central Committee (which is to say, his friends, since everyone over there is friends with him)—tell everyone except Bulganin and Voroshilov (it's he who picked them) that he **SHOULDN'T JUST GO AROUND BRAGGING ABOUT COMMUNISM—THIS COULD BE WORSE THAN THE ATOM BOMB AND THE HYDROGEN BOMB TOO.**

He is famous for his Communism, which we'll never see, the way a pig never sees its ears. But we'll see an atom bomb shooting right out of Khrushchev's . . . —we'll see that soon—believe me.

5. Stop trying to catch up to America in terms of milk production.<sup>108</sup> These, once again, are Khrushchev's empty fancies—and everyone is sick of them. It's not in terms of milk production that we should be catching up with America but in terms of other things. They are laughing at us, we know that, it's not just abroad that they know it—and we are sick of all this talk of milk, and we are disgusted by the whole government in Moscow because of that, too.

Only one favorite remains: Khrushchev. Except that he is the favorite of his lackeys in the Central Committee, not of the people.

6. Dear comrades!!!

Remember that all this is the real truth. Elections are just a formality that we go through. They have taken such a form that every one of us knows that we have to vote, but no one cares for whom or under what conditions and how. Whether you vote or don't vote doesn't make any difference. That's why anyone you ask reacts to it by going to the voting site, throwing this simple little piece of paper in the ballot box without even looking at it, and that's all it is. This is what things have come to.

That's all, with best regards from all the voters in our Pskov region. They all have the same views as I do because all they get for a hard day of work is one hundred grams of bread. While we prattle on about buying some tractors, our collective farms aren't worth even one tractor if they've got to subscribe to the loans—actually, they're not even worth a truck.

## Cult of the Corn Peddler

From the oversight report of the prosecutor of the Department of the Main Transport Procuracy of the USSR on the case of E. V. Mosin.<sup>109</sup> January 27, 1957.

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The court has found Mosin guilty of spreading slander about the way things are in the Soviet Union while traveling by electric train on the Moscow-Kursk line in 1957. [. . .] On August 20, 1958, while traveling on a tram and a bus in Moscow,, he broadcast his anti-Soviet ideas to other passengers. [. . .] When he was taken to the police station at Moscow's Yuzhny port,<sup>110</sup> he continued to make similar statements. [. . .]

Mosin did not admit his guilt. He testified as follows: "I don't remember; maybe I did allow myself to make anti-Soviet statements, or maybe I didn't. I was drunk." [. . .]

At the trial, witnesses testified as follows.

A. V. Polosin, Party member, senior police officer: "Mosin was summoned by the police for his connections with illicit traders. He, the witness, started walking after him. When they got on the tram, Mosin asked: 'You know Khrushchev, that corn peddler? It's a cult:<sup>111</sup> he used to drink heavily in Riazan, then moved to Ukraine and got way into the Central Committee, and then he chased Molotov and Kaganovich out of the government.' He used swearwords as he said this. . . . He said that if somebody had given him a rifle, he would have shot Khrushchev himself and also hanged him. There were approximately twenty-five people on the tram, and all of them heard his anti-Soviet statements.

". . . We transferred to Bus no. 8. On the bus, this citizen started talking in the same way: he said that Khrushchev makes the people eat corn, that the people are dying of hunger . . . he used swearwords as he spoke. I can't say for sure whether he was drunk or not." [. . .]

A. A. Mironova, a conductor on the bus, not a Party member: "I saw Mosin on the bus in August; I think he was drunk. He could barely stand up; he made a rumpus on the bus and screamed out that he respected the Central Committee but not Khrushchev, and that prices haven't been reduced. He used swearwords."

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 87523, l. 1-2. Original manuscript.

## Khrushchev Is a Trotskyite Who Survived

An anonymous letter<sup>112</sup> sent to Nikita Khrushchev in March 1962.

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Hello, Khrushchev. We are Party members in various fields, ranging in age from twenty to fifty-nine years old. Many of us are veterans of the Great Patriotic War. We spend our lives among workers and white-collar employees. As members of Lenin's Party, we feel obliged to tell you that the majority of Soviet people consider you to be an enemy of Lenin's and Stalin's Party. In other words, you are a Trotskyite who survived.

None of your actions<sup>113</sup> reflect the interests of the people, and the people do not support them in their hearts.

V. I. Lenin dreamed of making China a friend of the Soviet people, and comrade Stalin realized this dream. But you, because of the cult of personality (which we need like a dog needs a fifth leg), you ruined this friendship. MAO is against the way you are disgracing Lenin's and Stalin's Party. Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin bravely stood up against the enemies of the Revolution and defeated them in open battle, and they weren't afraid of prison, but you are a coward and a troublemaker. While comrade Stalin was alive, you kissed his ass, and now you pour dirt on him.

You make the people especially angry when you scream about some Anti-Party Group.

The Soviet people know well that you seized power because of your adventurism, and they don't believe that comrades MOLOTOV, MALENKOV, KAGANOVICH, VOROSHILOV, and other people who were brothers-in-arms with comrade STALIN were against the Party. For this reason, we don't accept any of your ideological work against them.

Khrushchev, all you do is talk, and in reality your policies are directed against the people and make the people angry.

Your economic councils<sup>114</sup> are just more opportunities for hangers-on; you hogged the money that the people loaned to the state, money that could have been used to make thousands of enterprises; there's no meat in stores or at the market, and potatoes are three rubles per pail, and you can't even find them in the stores. You deceived the people with your money reform and raised the prices for furniture, carpets, and many other things.<sup>115</sup>

Lastly, we're warning you: if you expel comrades MOLOTOV, MALENKOV, and KAGANOVICH from the Party,<sup>116</sup> we will take measures in the form of physical violence, and no bodyguards will be able to save you.

Every STALINIST is ready to sacrifice his life to destroy the enemy of *Lenin* and Stalin. Khrushchev is that enemy.

Long live LENIN's and STALIN's invincible Party! Death to Khrushchev!

• 32 •

Calling Everyone to Fight Khrushchev and His Gang!

An anonymous appeal,<sup>117</sup> distributed in February and September 1962 at the Moscow Likhachev fan heater and car factory.

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An Appeal

Workers and employees of all Plants and Factories, members of the working class! Let us ALL unite to Fight KHRUSHCHEV and his gang, who have subordinated the Soviet People. All the workers have been enslaved, and the people's wealth is in the hands of the Exploiter Khrushchev and his accomplices. Do not believe their promises. The people have been deceived and lulled into submission with false promises, but in reality they are robbed and humiliated. THE PEOPLE HAVE ALL THE POWER! Down with the exploiters! We WILL WIN! KHRUSHCHEV has squandered the resources that belong to the people, and now he is partying and enjoying himself while robbing the people of their last piece of bread. Food prices have been raised, salaries have been lowered, and housing does not go to the workers but to parasites who are living at the state's expense.

We know how to create wealth, we know how to rule, we know how to fight!

Together We WILL WIN!

Let us mobilize our ENERGY for FIGHTING Khrushchev's gang!

Let KHRUSHCHEV be fodder for pigs and fertilizer for his cornfields!

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 95989, l. 6. Typewritten copy.

• 33 •

Khrushchev, Get Off Your Throne!

Special report on the initiation of a criminal case against V. S. Rassypnov,<sup>118</sup> sent by the deputy prosecutor of the Penza region to the prosecutor of the RSFSR and the deputy chief prosecutor of the USSR. March 6, 1959.

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I report that on February 1, 1959, near the Suvorov village church, Moksha district, Ya. V. Sinitsov, a brigade leader at the Lopatinsky state farm, and V. S. Sharov, a stableman at the same state farm, found a leaflet with the following content made out of two sheets of lined notebook paper and written with a marking pencil:

"Citizens, why do we look at life in this way? The Communists have taken our whole lives; they took away all our human rights, leaving us with nothing.



"Citizens, let's make rebellions and overthrow Communists; let's kick Khrushchev off his throne.

"KHRUSHCHEV, GET OFF YOUR THRONE!

"DOWN WITH ALL COMMUNISTS!

"The people are so tired of living in the chains of brutality; the people need land, they need bread and freedom.

"KHRUSHCHEV, GET OFF YOUR THRONE!

"Soon the whole people will rise, they will stand on their own two feet, and they will open their eyes.

"Enough, we are tired of being blind, we need a good life, we don't need the Soviet regime. All power to the people!

"DOWN WITH THE COMMUNISTS!

"Soon your eyes will be gouged out.

"Citizens, just think of how we live: we live not according to our own will but according to Khrushchev's will.

"DOWN WITH KHRUSHCHEV! DOWN WITH THE COMMUNISTS!

"Citizens, if we overthrow the Soviets, we will live well, according to own will; let's organize strikes, [since] soon our lives will be over; go on strike, comrades, we're done here; let's take power into our own hands.

"DOWN WITH KHRUSHCHEV!

"Khrushchev rules the people badly, he takes too much upon himself, he has made discipline too harsh, this discipline makes us live in fear, we're too scared to even say a word.

"DOWN WITH KHRUSHCHEV.

"Write more of these leaflets."

This leaflet was sent to the Moksha district Party committee and forwarded to the KGB Administration of the Penza region.

On February 17, 1959, this fact led to the initiation of a criminal case that can be prosecuted under Article 58-10 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR.

Handwriting analysis [. . .] showed that the text of the leaflet was written by Vladimir Stepanovich Rassypnov [. . .].

[In the margin of the document, opposite the text of the leaflet, chief prosecutor D. E. Salin wrote: "One shouldn't indicate full last names in reports," meaning Khrushchev's name.]

## • 34 •

## A Tale about Tsar Nikita

A poem found in a toilet in an apartment building in Rostov-on-Don and forwarded to the chief prosecutor of the USSR and to the Central Committee on May 10, 1965.<sup>119</sup>

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We've all been kids in the past  
We all loved to listen to fairy tales  
About Kashchei, about Dodon,  
And the Tsarevich Gvidon.<sup>120</sup>  
[. . .]  
Dear reader, I can see better  
Now that I've come up closer:  
Let me tell you a new fairy tale.  
About the twentieth century.  
Prince Nikita once lived  
Not too well, not too richly.  
He didn't cross the seas  
Or give lavish presents.  
And he had, just as a prince should,  
A capital—the town of Kiev.  
There he lived and reposed  
And dreamt about the future.  
Meanwhile, in Moscow, on the throne,  
Kashchei sat—but without a crown;  
Instead, he wore a military jacket  
With the epaulets  
Of the highest military rank.  
Then Kashchei's end came;  
Death took that villain.  
That was sweet news for Nikita—  
He seized power in Moscow.  
Not even half a year later,  
The enemies of the people were found,  
Convicted, killed,  
And the power went to Nikita.  
But the Kremlin folks wouldn't calm down;  
They tried to eat each other up.  
Malenkov was removed from power,  
And Bulgashka took his seat.<sup>121</sup>  
Then Nikita started to fly like a bird  
Around foreign countries,

And wherever he went, he gave gifts:  
So-and-so would get a palace,  
Another, a little factory,  
Here they got wheat, there a little steamship—  
Thus he robbed his own people  
So that all this other rabble could eat.  
One day Tsar Nikita invited Tito<sup>122</sup> to Russia  
And he said, “I’m sorry, brother,  
You haven’t done anything.  
It was Kashchei who was guilty  
Of feuding with you, saying you all were dogs—  
Damn that Kashchei!  
Come now, be patient, dear Tito,  
Let me consolidate my forces. You’ll see,  
I’ll kick the villain from the Mausoleum.  
Meanwhile, let him lie there,  
He won’t go anywhere.”  
Marshal Tito smiled,  
Nikita gave him a hug  
And a little plane  
And promised him some money.  
Then he planted some corn  
Throughout his Soviet kingdom,  
Saying, “Eat up, good friends—  
I’m taking good care of you.”  
Tsar Nikita was a fellow with a big face,  
And lots of teeth, and lots of words.  
He didn’t eat corn himself  
But ordered it fed to others.  
[. . .]  
He wanted to feed all the Chinese,  
Germans, Africans, and Malaysians—  
So the tsar thought: “What shall I do?  
Where can I get the money?”  
And so he found a solution, as we know:  
He stopped his huge loan  
(He had borrowed money from the people),  
But he gave nothing back.  
He said: “Come on, be patient,  
Keep your bonds for now:  
When we get close to achieving Communism,  
We will have a lottery again.<sup>123</sup>  
We’ll see then—

Twenty years are not twenty minutes:  
It'll be a while."  
Of course, the people grumbled,  
But they didn't dare object.  
The tsar is just chatting away on the tribune,  
But they're saying nothing—  
What a right-thinking people!  
Then Tsar Nikita noticed  
That his entourage stood in his way—  
He wanted to give orders alone.

[. . .]

He got the plenum together  
And said: "I am beginning to see treason.  
Let me prove it to you.  
Malenkov has strayed from the path,  
Kaganovich got lost,  
Molotov has veered to the left,  
And then Shepilov joined them.  
To avoid a fight,  
We must chase out this pack."  
Again the people made a racket  
And yelled different things:  
Some praised what Khrushchev had said,  
Others cursed.  
The majority understood the decision.  
A month went by, then another,  
And Tsar Nikita dug in.  
Then he yelled: "Oh no, another woe:  
Marshal Zhukov is trying to take power."

[. . .]

Nikolai Bulganin again approved,  
And Kozlov<sup>124</sup> made a speech  
Supporting the tsar's words.  
Zhukov was called a dangerous adventurer  
And a military careerist.  
Now he is expelled from the Central Committee;  
He's leaving the Kremlin palace.

[. . .]

He [Khrushchev] is master of everything;  
He came up with the idea of the seven-year plan.  
He ordered that a rocket be sent  
To the far-off moon  
To wake up Satan.

Now that he had experience,  
 He made speeches everywhere,  
 Promising a good life  
 And saying, of course,  
 “We will catch up with America  
 And produce more meat,  
 More clothes, more ore—  
 We will have paradise everywhere!”  
 He lived happily  
 And didn’t wait for Communism,  
 But then he himself got lost  
 And tumbled from the top.  
 You should grieve, O people:  
 This is the end of the fairy tale.  
 But I’ll tell you a secret:  
 I’ll continue this tale.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 99291, l. 3–6 (reverse). Handwritten copy made by the author of the poem.

### *Apocalypse in the Popular Imagination of the 1950s*

#### • 35 •

Beast IV, Terrible and Different from Them All—That’s the USSR

From the letter of I. M. Egle<sup>125</sup> to the editors of *Pravda*. June 1956.

In the Book of Daniel, in the seventh chapter, from verse 2 to verse 29, there is a poem.

In this poem, it says clearly that there are four winds and four beasts.

The first one, which is like a lion, is England. During the war, it suffered great losses (its wings have been torn out). Now, its ruler had a human heart—a cunning heart. You can see it especially clearly in its politics in the past few days.

The second beast, which looks like a bear, is Germany. The three ribs in its mouth, I believe, are three tsars or rulers who waged war. That’s because it says: “Arise, devour much flesh!”

The beast that is like a leopard with four heads and four wings. That’s the USA. Four heads and four wings stand for the four points of the earth. Which is how it is in reality. Power has been given to him or her. And they say in the newspapers: “Who gave them (i.e., the American government) the power to act this way?”

Beast IV, terrible and different from them all—that's the USSR. As for the ten horns, I don't know, it's either that ten rulers reign or that each one of them takes a turn reigning; most likely, they take turns. There were Lenin, Stalin, Malenkov, and now Bulganin—so it must be four altogether.

Also, six rulers shall rebel. And if four took about forty years, then the six others may take from forty to sixty years.

And maybe more. But one of them, the eleventh, will have a special rebellion; he will be arrogant. And he will rebel against the believers. But this, I believe, doesn't happen until Seal V is broken.

This rule will end when the kingdom is burnt (verse 11).

This means that there will be a war (and it is inevitable, like when a woman has a babe in her womb, which I mentioned above—I am citing Paul the apostle), and the USSR will be burnt to a crisp. This has been determined by God.

The other states will still exist for a short time. Afterward, we shall have the thousand-year kingdom of Christ with his people on this earth.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 80889, l. 50–51. Certified typewritten copy.

## • 36 •

### Stalin Isn't Dead; He Is Alive

An excerpt made by the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR from the anonymous manuscript entitled "A Message," distributed by L. P. Karelina<sup>126</sup> between 1956 and 1958. May 6, 1959.

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#### Excerpt

from "A Message," dated January 9–13, 1954,  
copied out in 1956 by the sister of the accused, A. P. Nikoiforova,  
and confiscated from L. P. Karelina on October 15, 1958

"The materialistic doctrine of denying God's existence can be traced back to ancient Babylon, which is the foundation of Moscow's power. . . . This new Babylon is the mother of harlots, which is to say that it is extremely corrupt. . . . In this city, by order of this city, Christians were killed. . . . We know from chapter 13 of the Book of Revelation that 'and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority' (verse 2). Here John the Evangelist<sup>127</sup> means the first beast, that is, Lenin. He was given authority over one-sixth of the earth; and the other beast that chapter 13 of Revelation talks about ('And I beheld another beast coming

up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon'; verse 11)—that's Stalin, who had seized these ten horns, that is, ten nations. . . . This verse says that Stalin isn't dead; he is alive. And when he appears before us, he will lie about it to nonbelievers, saying that he was 'resurrected by science.'

"He will appear before us in 1955. He needed all these lies so that he could destroy people's faith in our God, the Lord Jesus Christ. . . . So when he appears, he will claim to be a god. He also needed the lies so that he could keep his old glory, because in 1954 a war will begin, and three out of ten states will be taken from him. These states are: China, North Korea, and the German 'Democratic Republic.' . . . In the end, there will be seven tsars from the first and to the last, who will carry out the devil's will: a dragon, a false prophet, and three evil spirits that come out of them. Here are their names: Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Beria, Molotov, and Malenkov. . . . Of these seven tsars, five will fall, and we see now that only four have fallen: Marx, Engels, Lenin, Beria . . .

"When Stalin appears, he will act against believers in his struggle with religion for forty-two months, that is, for three and a half years (from 1956 to 1959). After this, a great tragedy will begin (that is, a war), and God will destroy him. . . . The power was given to the ten tsars and Stalin for a few years. . . . These ten tsars will have one doctrine, the Marxist one, and will make it the foundation of power in their countries. . . . The ten countries will hate Moscow and 'bring her to ruin,' that is, will suck the life blood out of her, and they 'will leave her naked,' that is, they will leave her and her nation hungry and cold, because Russia has to support them and import bread, machines, and food, depriving her own people of them, and there aren't even that many people because of mismanagement and forced slavish labor. Subsequently, these ten countries will wage war on Russia and burn it in a fire because God wills it, so his will be done.

". . . Moscow has stooped to the lowest moral condition possible. It has become the home of the devil's servants, Satan's earthly throne, and a haven for any foul doctrine. . . . Moscow will burn to the ground; nothing will remain, not even rubble. . . .

"In Russia, millions of lives are wasted, and people are thrown into camps to suffer like slaves. All of this was done when Lenin was alive and was still being done in Stalin's time, but Lenin got his power from a dragon, while Stalin vowed to carry out his testament. . . . Lenin is the Antichrist who denies the father, the son, and the Holy Spirit.

". . . We know that Christ had twelve disciples, that is, apostles; we also know that under Stalin, the Politburo had twelve members. . . . Under Communism all that will matter to people is getting a crust of bread to eat; they will work so hard that flies will land on their noses and they won't have even a second to chase the flies away. We know Stalin's sinister schemes, we know where they will lead mankind, and we know who will

enter Communism and receive that mark. The Scriptures say, 'If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also will drink of the wine of God's wrath, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of his anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone.' . . . Communists are apostates of the holy word."

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 84667, l. 8-9 (reverse). Original manuscript.

• 37 •

What Makes the Antichrist Different from Other Rulers?

From the special report on the content of the manuscript "The Explanation of the Revelation to John," distributed by L. A. Brachka in the winter of 1958-1959,<sup>128</sup> sent by the deputy prosecutor of the Latvian Republic to the deputy chief prosecutor of the USSR. March 21, 1960.

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The aforementioned work was typewritten in Latvian, ninety-five pages. We extract certain characteristic passages from the aforementioned work:

"What makes the Antichrist different from other rulers? He will scorn God and persecute Christ at meetings and in newspapers, magazines, and so on.

"He will unite all nations and will promote the third nation in particular. The political order of the third nation is the order that precedes the Communist order. . . .

"... It's noteworthy that recently, different groups have been alluding to a 'wounded head'; the Antichrist will be born from it.

"The world has already seen a great historical event. Lenin, who didn't die but is kept in some hospital in Moscow, where he struggles with a mortal wound in his head and prepares for the day when people all over the world will see him again, and the whole earth will be surprised again. For he was alive—then he died, as the people were told—and here he is again, alive and well.

"This beast will receive a great power, and then many people will pray to it. The beast will have a big mouth, which means propaganda, a great deal of agitation, demagoguery—this will be especially clear in three and one-half years, or, as it says in the Revelation to John, forty-two months. That beast, or Lenin, he was alive—then was not—and now is alive again. Only a few people will not pray to him—those whose names are in the book of the life of God's son; they are the real children of the Lord. . . ."

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 88219, l. 5-6. Typewritten original.



As the Lord Gathered His Sheep, So Does the Devil Gather His Goats

From the brochure "The Cross and the Star," by F. E. Bakhrov,<sup>129</sup> copied by an employee of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR in 1967.

Along with the sayings of the apostles, which Bakhrov copied out of the New Testament and the Bible, he wrote the following in his own voice.

Regarding the Great French Revolution: "Whoever reads the history of this revolution will understand immediately that it came from the great rage of a devil who had fallen from heaven. France was once a merry and fashionable country, joyous as a child. It turned into a terrible breeding ground for the Red contagion, which takes away enthusiasts' last semblance of prudence with the words that instantly became fashionable: 'Liberty, equality, fraternity.'"

He goes on to say that revolution paralyzes not only those who are involved in it but also their neighbors.

Later Bakhrov exclaims, "So who is the one that promised 'Liberty, equality, fraternity'?" and [he] replies that it was the devil. Then he gives a list of revolutions (the French revolution, the Russian Revolutions of 1905 and 1917, and revolutions in other countries, including the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945). Bakhrov calls Marx, Engels, and Lenin the devil: "As our father in heaven sends prophets," Bakhrov writes, "so does the devil send prophets, starting with K. Marx and Lenin. . . . And to this day there are the devil's prophets, and they will be until the coming of the devil's son—the Antichrist—in 1962.

"As the Lord gathered his sheep, so does the devil gather his goats: 'Proletarians of All Countries, Unite!'

"God gave his sign—the Sign of the Cross, and the devil gave the Star."<sup>130</sup>

Bakhrov also makes statements about economics. While explicating the concept of the "week" in the Bible, he writes: "In our time, one week corresponds to one seven-year plan. . . . A day is equal to a year. It follows that the first definition should be read as follows: 'And he shall confirm the covenant with many tribes and tongues—for one seven-year plan.' This is to say that only one seven-year plan is listed, and there will be no other. Everything will end within one seven-year plan. In our new political order, an order never seen before, we've always had five-year plans, and now, all of a sudden: a seven-year plan! A seven-year plan is scheduled at exactly the time marked by divine providence.

“The seven-year plan began on January 1, 1959. Just one year has passed, but we can see the results. Many believers are renouncing their faith. Many nonbelievers are throwing away their Party membership cards and joining the little flock through repentance and baptism. Life is like a sieve, and we see this sieve in action. A final selection/confirmation is going on.

“... At this time, material lack and moral difficulties are artificially created for everyone. Overcoming these difficulties is an ordeal. Do not forget: the Lord chooses special people, people who are zealous to do good.

“... In the midst of the seven-year plan, he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease. Prayer, candle, altar bread? ‘And on a wing of the temple he will set up an abomination of desolation.’ The abomination of desolation is the star, and by this time (June–July 1962), the star will replace the cross. In translation, this will read as follows: ‘And on a wing of the temple, instead of a cross, there will be a star. And it is clear that the star is the symbol of the abomination of desolation from the texts of the Holy Gospel: ‘They that till the round shall mourn: for their seeds shall fail through the blasting and hail, and with a fearful constellation’ (3 Esdras 15:13).

“The altar bread will look the same, but upon it there will be a star, or a hammer and a sickle, instead of the cross. What Christian would take them! The Holy Trinity will be separated. The Holy Ghost will be severed, and portraits of political figures will hang on the walls along with icons.

“... The Antichrist’s collective rule began a long time ago (in 1917), or, more accurately, in 1922, since the day that the government was acknowledged by the West. This period is passing, and what we have is the kingdom of the Antichrist under the leadership of one man: the universal ruler. The last name of the Antichrist (his name) is not given either in Revelation, or by any of its interpreters, or by the prophets. This is because there is no need (for Christians) to desecrate their mouths with the vile name until it is absolutely necessary to do so.

“... Few newspapers avoid libel, lies, mockery, or falsification of the Christians’ noblest feelings. But the worst is yet to come. Seeing this, you will understand more clearly that the coming of the Antichrist—a universal monarch of the world, a man, a sin, the son of death—is near.

“The devil sees everything opposite to the way our Lord sees it:

Christians have:	The devil has:
The church	Movie theaters, clubs, theaters, etc.
Icons	Portraits
Processional banners	Posters
Worshipping the Lord	Entertainment
Repentance	Lies
Religious processions	Demonstrations
Services of worship	Meetings
The cross	The star
The unity of the Holy Trinity	Equality
Communism	Communism

“If people are crying and moaning as they build Communism, what will happen when they announce that this satanic Communism has been built?

“‘A complete destruction, as has been decreed, shall be poured out on the one who causes desolation’—that is, at the end of seven-year plan the one who causes desolation (the Antichrist) will be destroyed, along with his order and all his power. After this, a true Communism will prevail—the Communism that the Holy Scripture calls the kingdom of our Savior, which will last for a thousand years.

“... A little more than two years remains until the crowning of the universal monarch of the world. In the interim, a revolution will occur all over the world. In the interim, there will be anarchy, and then the ‘elections’ of the world monarch.

“To prepare (deceive) the world’s public opinion about this unprecedented act, the devil uses all his charms. He acts through all possible means: deception, lies, slander, terrorism, bribery, and other low means, using the weaknesses of the people and their leaders. He does it according to a subtle prepared plan.”

Bakhrov expresses himself in even clearer terms here: “Recognition of our autocrat for what he is may happen even before the Constitution is destroyed. The day of this recognition will come when the nations are exhausted by the troubles and incompetence of their rulers and exclaim: ‘Take them away and give us one universal tsar who will unite us and eliminate the reasons for conflict: boundaries of nationality, religion, and states, calculations of advantage; give us a ruler who will give us peace, which we cannot find with our rulers.’”

## Heretics and Profaners

THE CULT of personality gave both the Party leaders in the Soviet Union and their visual representations a special significance. Party leaders' portraits and statues symbolized their actual presence. In George Orwell's *1984*, no matter where you go, the same, ever-present portrait of Big Brother is watching you. We see a picture similarly replacing the real person in a historical anecdote about Nicholas I. The tsar was told of a man who spat on his portrait at a tavern while drunk. Nicholas ordered that the man be pardoned. He wrote, "Tell him I spit on him, too," and ordered that portraits of himself not be hung in taverns and other inappropriate places.

People even talked to the portraits. In 1958, a forest ranger in Transcarpathia (Ukraine), while in the park office, broke a pencil and threw the splinters at Lenin's portrait, saying, "What are you looking at? See how lousy my life is!"<sup>1</sup>

The belief that a visual image is intimately connected with its subject dates back to ancient beliefs in magic involving figurines and statues of gods and spirits, superstitions about mirrors, and other such notions. In the Soviet Union the portraits and statues of Party leaders took the place of Christian Orthodox icons or, rather, pagan idols. Causing damage to a leader's image was punished as a "sacrilegious action."<sup>2</sup> As a result, any attempt to mock or destroy one was considered not simply a crime but a ritual desecration (often a deliberate one). An attempt to destroy a portrait—by, for example, gouging out the eyes or cutting the face—also resembled a voodoo practice, as though harming the image would harm the person depicted.

Most "attacks" were aimed at either Lenin or the leader who was

in power at the time. People were surrounded by their images, so this is understandable. After the Twentieth Party Congress, however, portraits and statues of Stalin were subject to special treatment. After learning about the atrocities of his regime, some people “overthrew” their formerly revered leader by defiling his portraits. But others objected to attacks on Stalin’s image even by those in positions of authority. In 1959, one resident of Semipalatinsk (Kazakh Republic) complained to a secretary of the Central Committee, A. I. Kirichenko, that “comrade I. V. Stalin’s bust in the city square was taken down with a tractor. Then it was driven to the courtyard of the regional Party committee and placed under a tree, under the window of the secretary of the regional committee, Dmitrin. I consider this to be a mockery of the Great Revolutionary, the leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, a pure soul who was loved by the people. . . . I appeal to you, dear comrade Kirichenko, for only you can correct this egregious act of disrespect for the bust, for comrade Stalin.”<sup>3</sup>

In 1969–1970, in preparation for a lavish celebration of Lenin’s centennial, many new images of the leader were added. The number of portrait desecrations grew proportionately. The KGB recorded 155 “politically harmful and disorderly actions related to the centennial,” 55 of which were committed in 1969 and 100 in 1970. “The criminal element destroyed several monuments, busts, and bas-reliefs of the leader, plus a number of decorative panels, exhibit stands, banners, portraits, signs, posters, reproductions, commemorative newsletters, and other festive decorations.”<sup>4</sup>

Lenin’s Mausoleum was an especially sacred space, especially given the popular slogan “Lenin is alive forever.”<sup>5</sup> Many jokes revolving around this saying began with: “Lenin has been resurrected. He is walking down the street and he sees . . .” Prisoners addressed their complaints not only to Khrushchev, the Central Committee, the United Nations, or the president of the United States but also to Lenin’s Mausoleum. One complaint was directed to “those who keep Lenin’s body,” as if they were priests in a temple and could intervene to attain justice.

Lenin’s portraits and statues were comparable to national and political symbols like the Soviet flag and the state emblem. By overthrowing one of these symbols and putting another in its place, people clearly and concisely demonstrated their political leanings. The most common act of this kind was the replacement of Soviet flags with national flags in Ukraine and the Baltic republics. This was done at night.

Most perpetrators were schoolchildren or youths. In many cases, investigators could not find the guilty party. The sheer number of flags on buildings during holidays was so great that it seemingly provoked people to pull them down. People who still felt allegiance to countries annexed by the Soviet Union also tried to put up national flags (Lithuanian, etc.) on forbidden national holidays.

In the summer of 1963, two yellow and blue Ukrainian national flags appeared on top of an arch by the highway near a ranger station in the Stry district, Lvov<sup>6</sup> region. The investigation lasted for a year and a half. Experts conducted evaluations of the fabric and the dyes and identified all the people who lived nearby or who had passed by the highway on the day the flags were put up. All was in vain: the guilty party remained unknown. The investigator did not want to acknowledge defeat. He concluded that the flags were not yellow and blue, the colors of the proscribed Ukrainian flag, but orange and blue. In doing so, he erased the symbolic meaning of the flags and was able to close the case.<sup>7</sup>

The case records from the Procuracy of the USSR include mentions of forty-six episodes related to flags. The chronological distribution of these episodes is worth noting. There were four cases in 1953–1954, nine in 1956–1959, fourteen in 1960–1964, thirteen in 1967–1970, four in 1972–1973, and one in 1976.<sup>8</sup> As we can see, in the peak period of political repression, 1957–1958, few flag crimes took place. The largest number occurred in the 1960s. Twelve took place in Ukraine, ten in Latvia, seven in Lithuania, five in Estonia, and one in Moldavia.<sup>9</sup> The remaining incidents were the work of labor-camp prisoners. For them, putting up flags with various anti-Soviet symbols (for example, a flag with the dollar sign and a swastika) was a form of defiant political protest.

Desecration of other symbolic objects occurred as well. We know of cases in which Ukrainian nationalist groups discussed the possibility of blowing up the monument to Bogdan Khmelnytsky<sup>10</sup> during the three-hundred-year anniversary of the unification of Ukraine and Russia. They also discussed blowing up a village monument to Soviet soldiers. In 1956, two tractor drivers planted seeds to grow plants in the shape of a (Ukrainian) trident<sup>11</sup> on a collective farm field.<sup>12</sup> In 1955–1956, a group of Lithuanian college students tore down Soviet flags and poured acid on them. The students had also planned to blow up a monument to Felix Dzerzhinsky<sup>13</sup> in Kaunas (Lithuanian Republic).<sup>14</sup>

Certain places had a symbolic significance, and all actions pertain-

ing to them took on a particular meaning. In 1968, a resident of the Kalinin region wrote a letter to the Central Committee. The possessor of several previous convictions, he felt that he had been wronged by the Soviet state. In the letter he criticized life in the USSR and threatened to blow himself up “near Lenin’s remains in the Mausoleum, so that the wicked Communists remember what their wickedness leads to.”<sup>15</sup> On May 1, 1977, a schoolteacher from the Uzbek Republic tried to set herself on fire in Red Square.<sup>16</sup> Even common disorderly or rowdy acts that were committed near a local Party office were considered to be anti-Soviet.

Besides special objects and places, there were special times: the official holidays of May 1 and November 7.<sup>17</sup> Surveillance was intensified during these holidays. After each holiday, the minister of internal affairs wrote a special memorandum to the Central Committee and the Council of Ministers of the USSR. This memorandum described crimes, accidents (including traffic accidents), disasters, and fires, ordinary incidents that took on a special status during holidays and merited the authorities’ close attention. Of course, the government also took note of “anti-Soviet manifestations” involving such things as flyers, graffiti, and incidents with flags and portraits. For example, Two Lithuanian national flags were found in the Lithuanian Republic on November 7, 1956.<sup>18</sup> Soviet flags were torn down from six buildings in Tallin on November 7, 1957. In Alma-Ata (Kazakh Republic) three portraits of members of the Central Committee were cut up on Lenin Square on the night of May 1, 1958, as were three others elsewhere in the city. On the same night, in Estonia, nine flags were torn down, five of them in Tallin.<sup>19</sup> The following day, portraits were also cut up on the waterfront in Alushta (Crimea).<sup>20</sup> On the night of November 6, 1958, eight state flags disappeared from a village club in the Estonian Republic. On the night of November 8, in the Akhtyrka district center of the Sumy region (Ukraine), three portraits of Party leaders were cut up.<sup>21</sup> On May 1, 1959, flags were torn down from eight buildings in Tallin, and four flags were taken down in Riga (Latvian Republic). A national flag was hoisted in the Limbazu district of the Latvian Republic. An anti-Soviet poster appeared at a bus stop in Monchegorsk (Murmansk district). After a holiday parade, a group of women with a white flag marched on the streets of a village in the Kzyl-Orda region.<sup>22</sup> On November 7–8, 1959, two portraits of Party leaders were cut up in Sumy, and nine portraits were cut up on the city square of Kustanai<sup>23</sup> in front of the regional Party building. In Feodosia (Ukraine),

"fourteen posters stating the objectives of the seven-year plan were found cut up."<sup>24</sup> Sometime after May 1, 1975, the head of the KGB, Yu. V. Andropov,<sup>25</sup> reported to the Central Committee that in the Lvov region, flags of thirteen Soviet republics had been burned near a monument to the Soviet "soldiers of liberation." Some flags were also destroyed in Moscow and Kharkov. In Grodno, "the portrait of the founder of the Soviet state was defiled."<sup>26</sup>

The damage inflicted to images of leaders, the removal of flags, and other "blasphemous" actions were crimes both in Stalin's time and afterward. The Soviet judicial system was reluctant to interpret such behavior as ordinary hooliganism. In Stalin's time, even a "profaner's" unconscious actions were seen as a serious crime; no attempt was made to delve into the question of intent. In 1953, when a hospital in Moscow was undergoing renovation, a senior physician who was anxious to finish the job ordered a carpenter to replace the window frames rather than make a pedestal for Lenin's bust. He also tore down a propaganda poster from a freshly painted wall. The doctor, who happened to be Jewish (this was the time of the Doctors' Plot),<sup>27</sup> was found guilty of crimes. Also in 1953, an artist in a toy factory in Chimkent (Kazakh Republic) was arrested because in 1952, when he quit his job and took a portrait of Lenin with him, he also tried to take home a bas-relief of Stalin that he had made, but his boss forbade him to. So the artist broke the bas-relief.<sup>28</sup> Both the doctor and the artist demonstrated an attitude toward the image of a leader that was highly unusual in late Stalinist times: they regarded the image as an ordinary object or even as property that one could take or leave at will. Both were immediately punished.

After Stalin's death, the judicial system became somewhat more flexible and rationalized. For example, a resident of North Ossetia was convicted in March 1952 for "desecrating a portrait of one of the leaders of the Soviet state." In 1954, he managed to appeal his conviction. The Collegium of the Supreme Court of the RSFSR concluded: "The evidence shows that on November 7, 1951, when M. was drunk while in his apartment, he quarreled with his wife and broke some dishes and furniture. Then he tore down the portrait of one of the leaders of the Soviet state and threw it on the floor, breaking the glass." However, "M. did not make anti-Soviet statements while he was engaged in these actions," and this turned out to be the decisive factor: "The board determined that there was nothing anti-Soviet in M.'s actions."<sup>29</sup>

In the era of "liberal Communism," the mystical basis of Stalinist



culture began to erode. Not all “desecrations” of a leader’s image were seen as blasphemy, and there was a tendency to rationalize what would formerly have been seen as acts of sacrilege. People did not react to desecrated symbols with the same superstitious shock. The authorities became more pragmatic, and investigations followed established Soviet legal procedures. Although leaders’ images continued to be used in propaganda, they were perceived less as idols or mystical objects. State rituals lost their psychological dimension and became simple formalities, dictating only people’s behavior and no longer attempting to limit their personal inner freedom.

Commentary by O. V. Edelman

### From the Procuracy’s Files

G. V. Vestenius was a worker from the Riazan region. On October 4, 1952, he got drunk in a dormitory. He then threw a pickle at the portrait of “one of the leaders of the Soviet state” and suggested that the portrait be thrown away.<sup>30</sup>

V. A. Golub was a worker at a tractor factory in Minsk. In the fall of 1952, he stole a number of objects from the factory. He then entered the factory’s craft room and smeared paint on models of the Kremlin, the state emblem, and the emblem of Belorussia that were supposed to accompany a display showcasing highly dedicated employees. Golub also went to the “Lenin room,”<sup>31</sup> where he cut up a volume of the newspaper *Zvezda*, as well as a few articles meant for the wall newspaper.<sup>32</sup> He attempted to shred the portraits of two leaders.<sup>33</sup>

P. I. Khutilainen, an ethnic Finn, worked as an accountant in a savings bank in Valga (Estonian Republic). In 1948, while visiting his friends, he took down Stalin’s portrait, crumpled it up, and threw it in the bathtub. (During the 1947 currency reform, he had lost a substantial amount of his savings and was outraged by the reform.) In 1951 and 1952, while drunk, he said in various conversations that all Communists should be shot, the collective farms were doing badly, newspapers lie, Soviet cars are bad, life was better before the revolution, Russians are fools, etc.<sup>34</sup>

Ch. A. Kuliev (Aliiev) was a Tajik, homeless, with three convictions and without a fixed occupation. On February 19, 1953, he was detained in the Kazan train station in Moscow for stealing a suitcase. While at the police station, he began to curse the Soviet system and Communists, using obscenities while swearing at Lenin’s bust. All that

Communists know how to do, he shouted, is to make people rot in prison, and "it's better to live with Truman than in the Soviet Union."<sup>35</sup>

P. P. Gotzelikh, an ethnic German born in the Kherson region (Ukraine), lived in a special settlement (exile colony) in the Kirov region. In 1952–1953, he expressed dissatisfaction with exile, saying that his family was imprisoned and that soon the United States would start a war with the USSR. When neighbors told him about the arrest of the "doctor-saboteurs" in Moscow, he swore at them. He pierced "a portrait depicting the leader of the peoples" and "a portrait of the founder of the Soviet state" with a needle and an "arrow that he made himself." (However, we cannot rule out the possibility that at least one of the portraits was damaged by Gotzelikh's young nephew.)<sup>36</sup>

V. D. Petchenko was a worker at a lumber mill in Belorechensk, Krasnodar territory, with a previous criminal record. On January 15, 1953, he entered the staff room of the lumber mill and aimed a blow at Stalin's portrait with an axe, saying, "What if I hit you? How many pieces would you break into?" (he used an obscene word instead of "hit").<sup>37</sup>

A. G. Bagnenko was a miner in the Stalino<sup>38</sup> region (Ukraine) with two previous convictions. On the night of December 19, 1952, he went to the mine's social club while drunk. He uttered obscenities, broke light bulbs, and tore up Stalin's portrait while "making counterrevolutionary statements." Then he ran into a friend, and the two of them went off to the club's cafeteria and robbed a person who was eating there.<sup>39</sup>

N. A. Kalganov was a war veteran who had earned several medals and decorations. He worked as an accountant at a school in the Ulianovsk region. On September 2, 1953, he was detained by the police for creating a commotion at a train station cafeteria. While he was being detained, "he uttered obscenities and then began to praise Beria, the enemy of the people, and to spout obscenities about Party leaders and the Soviet government. He asserted, 'You ate Beria alive, and you will [obscene word] eat me too. [Obscene word] you, your Party, and your government and [here Kalganov began to list the leaders of the Party and the Soviet government].' After this, he jumped onto a chair, took a bust of V. I. Lenin from the table, and flung it with force against the table, breaking it in half. Before shattering the bust, Kalganov cursed with obscenities and shouted, 'Take this!'"<sup>40</sup>

N. A. Lozinsky was an accountant at a construction agency in the Kuibyshev region with a previous criminal record. On October 4,

1953, he got drunk and burst into a women's dormitory, breaking the door. He scared several young women, who escaped by jumping out the window. Then he entered the dormitory office and tore down Stalin's portrait from the wall, as well as a reproduction of a painting entitled *Yes, There Is Such a Party*.<sup>41</sup> He broke the frames of both, tore up the paintings, and threw the pieces into a stove, "where they were partially burned." In addition, he "ripped the portrait of comrade Shvernik<sup>42</sup> off the wall, took it out of the frame, and threw it away somewhere. Neither the portrait nor its remains could be found."<sup>43</sup>

U Se Yen (Yashikara Yanaga) was stateless, originally from South Korea and ethnically Korean. He led a team of loaders on Sakhalin. In 1952–1953, he criticized the conditions of life in the USSR and cursed the Russians, stating that life had been better during the Japanese occupation.<sup>44</sup> Yen said that in the stores on New Year's Eve "you could only buy black bread, which was like horse manure, and there was no alcohol on sale at all, but everything had been available under the Japanese." On January 21, 1953, on a day of mourning for "one of the Party leaders,"<sup>45</sup> Yen flirted with a female clerk, "holding an icicle in one hand that he said represented a penis and claiming that the penis had gone gray with grief over the death of the leader."<sup>46</sup>

O. I. Voronov was born in 1931 and had been demobilized from the Soviet navy. On January 16, 1954, he applied for a job in the Personnel Department at the Arkangelsk dock. When his application was rejected, he threw his hat and a telephone receiver at the portrait of a Party leader and cursed the leader with obscenities.<sup>47</sup>

E. A. Kivistik, Estonian by nationality, was the head of the storage facility at the Tartu clinical hospital. M. M. Miuiursepp, also Estonian, was a nurse in the same hospital. On December 31, 1953, the two women got drunk and threw two busts of the "founders of the Communist Party and the Soviet state" out the window of a room on the second floor of the hospital.

E. Kh. Silkuni, an Armenian, was born in 1935 and attended the Yerevan medical institute. On the nights of August 7, 10, and 16, using a penknife, he cut up two portraits of Khrushchev on the grounds of a Kislovodsk resort.<sup>48</sup>

L. N. Sibolt and G. V. Lood were workers in Estonia. On November 1, 1956, they got drunk and tore down the portrait of Bulganin in the waiting room of a train station. They tore the portrait and sang an anti-Soviet song. Sibolt wrote and kept an anti-Soviet poem.<sup>49</sup>

N. A. Derzhavin worked at a motor pool in the city of Kzyl-Kiy in the Osh region of the Kirgiz Republic. In 1956–1957, standing in lines while drunk, he criticized the conditions of life in the USSR and the Soviet leadership, cursed Stalin, and stated that a revolution and not a counterrevolution was taking place in Hungary. On April 10, 1956, he broke Stalin's statue in the city of Kzyl-Kiy.<sup>50</sup>

N. N. Slavov, a Bulgarian from Guriev, worked as an electrician. He repeatedly criticized the electoral system in the USSR in conversations with his friends and family. He also asserted that a revolution and not a counterrevolutionary uprising had taken place in Hungary and talked about the workers' rebellion in Poznan.<sup>51</sup> In April 1956, one day after hearing the letter "On the Cult of Personality" from the Central Committee being read aloud, Slavov went to his office, took down Stalin's portrait, threw it on the floor, and trampled on it.<sup>52</sup>

B. M. Tsarkov, born in 1936, was a driver from the Altai territory. He compared the living conditions of workers in capitalist countries to those in the USSR. While at a restaurant, he threw a bottle of vodka at Lenin's bust.<sup>53</sup>

On November 5, 1957, A. N. Romanov, a resident of Moscow with no fixed occupation, threw a bottle filled with ink at Lenin's Mausoleum.<sup>54</sup>

On May 9, 1958, at the square in front of the Savelovsky train station in Moscow, V. I. Akseptovich attempted to destroy Lenin's monument and Stalin's bust. He called upon people to destroy Lenin's works and compared Bolshevism to Fascism.<sup>55</sup>

I. I.-V. Vanem was a collective farmer from the Estonian Republic. On August 15, 1958, while in his village, "he got drunk with a group of residents and engaged in anti-Soviet conversations. He saw a monument to Stalin and deliberately broke it by throwing it to the ground while making a sharply anti-Soviet statement."<sup>56</sup>

K. K. Fedorinchuk was a mechanic at the Lvov Polytechnical Institute. On March 13, 1959, he tore down Khrushchev's portrait, gouged out the eyes, and wrote an anti-Soviet inscription.<sup>57</sup>

K. N. Minibaev was an ethnic Tatar, unemployed, and a resident of Frunze<sup>58</sup> (Kirgiz Republic). "As early as 1949, he harbored the desire to break V. I. Lenin's coffin. On July 13, 1960, Minibaev flew to Moscow with the intention of realizing his criminal intent. On July 14, 1960, he visited V. I. Lenin's Mausoleum and engaged in blasphemous actions—namely, jumping onto the barrier as he walked past

the sarcophagus with V. I. Lenin's body and breaking the protective glass of the sarcophagus with his foot."<sup>59</sup>

On October 31, 1961, the monument to V. I. Lenin was blown up at a park in Zestafoni (Georgian Republic). The guilty party was never found.<sup>60</sup>

V. G. Shadrin distributed anti-Soviet poems and caricatures while in prison. After his release, "on the night of November 8, 1961, he made a flag of the RSFSR and drew a caricature of the founder of the Soviet state on it. He also wrote on the flag, 'Down with the Soviet system!' and hung it outside the village club in Bogatyrevka, Bakchar district" (Tomsk region).<sup>61</sup>

On the night of November 5, 1961, A. N. Zubkov, a man living in Dzerzhinsk, Gorky region, without a fixed occupation, shattered three monuments to Lenin in his city. The sledgehammer that he used to break them was confiscated, "along with a great number of anti-Soviet flyers and nine plywood panels with anti-Soviet statements." Zubkov was planning to place the panels all over the city on the night of November 6.<sup>62</sup>

L. V. Trekhalina was born in 1911 and lived in Stavropol. On March 25, 1962, "while visiting V. I. Lenin's Mausoleum, she pulled a flare gun from her coat and attempted to shoot at the sarcophagus."<sup>63</sup>

A. A. Liutikov was born in 1925. An accountant by training, he received an invalid's pension. He lived in Pavlovsky Posad (Moscow region). In 1961-1962, he wrote anti-Soviet letters to newspaper editors, foreign embassies, and Soviet institutions. In these letters, he cursed Khrushchev and the Soviet system. On April 24, 1962, while visiting Lenin's Mausoleum, he threw a rock at the sarcophagus.<sup>64</sup>

L. F. Kutakov was a tram driver. On July 26, 1962, "at 1 a.m., he disfigured the portrait of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR on a display stand between the VDNKH (Exhibition of Economic Achievements) subway station and the Cosmos movie theater. He used a pencil to scratch the portrait. Earlier he had written a number of graffiti on the same display."<sup>65</sup>

On May 1, 1965, G. V. Urgebadze, a Georgian and a resident of Tbilisi, poured kerosene on a cloth banner with Lenin's portrait, which was hanging from the Council of Ministers of the Georgian Republic building.<sup>66</sup>

On May 6, 1966, L. I. Brezhnev's portrait was defiled near the Goznak factory in Leningrad. "There were two cuts, forty centimeters and

fifteen centimeters long, respectively.” The guilty party was never found.<sup>67</sup>

L. G. Solovieva (Merkulova) was without a fixed occupation or place of residence. “On the night of October 19, 1967, seeking shelter in an army garrison in Tbilisi, she went into the Lenin room of Bathhouse no. 3 and desecrated display stands with photos of V. I. Lenin. Subsequently, she threw Lenin’s bust from the third floor, where the Lenin room is located, to the second floor. The bust broke, and Solovieva was detained by bathhouse employees. When interrogated, Solovieva said that she committed these acts on the basis of her religious beliefs.”<sup>68</sup>

I. I. Suvak was an ethnic Moldavian without fixed occupation. On November 25, 1968, walking in a park in Floreshty (Moldavian Republic), he “climbed onto the monument to V. I. Lenin and smashed the head and the arms. During interrogation, Suvak stated that he did this out of anger toward the Soviet government and the existing system.”<sup>69</sup>

G. V. Vatintsev was born in 1907. He was Russian by ethnicity, semiliterate, and a resident of the Krasnodar territory. On March 29, 1966, he threw a sledgehammer at Lenin’s sarcophagus.<sup>70</sup>

E. M. Khiamialiainen, Finnish by ethnicity and a student at Leningrad University, was born in 1949. On April 21, 1970, at 10:00 p.m., he approached a display stand with a photo exhibit dedicated to Lenin’s centennial near the Gostiny Dvor department store on Nevsky Avenue in central Leningrad. He set the display stand on fire.<sup>71</sup>

A. S. Kalishin was born in 1955. He was a Komsomol member, had a college degree, and worked as an engineer at the Kuibyshev<sup>72</sup> Polytechnical Institute. I. N. Izvekov was born in 1959. He, too, was a Komsomol member, but he was expelled from the Leningrad Polytechnic Institute for low grades. Both lived in Kuibyshev. The two made explosive devices to protest Izvekov’s conscription. On September 4, 1978, they set off a bomb at the entrance to the conscription office. On October 25, they attempted to set off a second bomb in the same place. On November 4, 1978, they blew up the monument to D. F. Ustinov, the minister of defense. No one was injured in the explosion, but the bust was slightly damaged. Kalishin and Izvekov had repeatedly listened to foreign radio stations and engaged in anti-Soviet conversations.<sup>73</sup>

## Documents

## · 39 ·

## He Mistook Sverdlov's Portrait for Trotsky's

From the appeal by the chairman of the Supreme Court of the USSR to the Railway Commission of the Supreme Court of the USSR on behalf of P. M. Dibrov.<sup>74</sup>  
June 2, 1953.

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Dibrov was found to be guilty of tearing down a portrait of Ya. M. Sverdlov,<sup>75</sup> taking it out of the frame, and tearing it up. He did this on the night of January 31, 1953, while drunk. Dibrov entered the women's dormitory and went to the room occupied by the employees of the railway, where the portrait hung.

Having read the materials of the case, I find that the verdict reached by the court of the rail line and the verdict of the district court must be changed.

Dibrov testified that he had been very drunk and remembers nothing. The witnesses Petunina, Sakhnovskaia, and Lashina stated that on the night of January 31, 1953, Dibrov went to the dormitory of the rail yard while drunk. At first, he struck up a conversation with them, but then he approached a table where he saw a bottle of ink. He picked it up and wanted to freshen up his hair, thinking that it was cologne. When Petunina warned him that the bottle contained ink, Dibrov put the bottle back on the table. After this, he saw two portraits on the wall: one of comrade Stalin and the other of Ya. M. Sverdlov. Dibrov pointed to Sverdlov's portrait and asked the witnesses, "Why do you still have the portrait of Trotsky, that Fascist?" Rather than explain that this was the portrait of comrade Sverdlov, the witnesses replied that they were not the ones who had hung the portrait, and they had no intention of taking it down. Then Dibrov stood on the headboard of Sakhnovskaia's bed, planning to take down the portrait, but lost his balance, fell, and dropped the portrait. Lashina picked up the portrait and intended to hide it, but Dibrov took it away from Lashina, removed the portrait from the frame, tore it up, and threw it on the floor. [. . .]

Given this testimony, Dibrov explained that he was under the heavy influence of alcohol and mistook Sverdlov's portrait for Trotsky's. He asserted that this was the only reason he allowed himself to act in this manner. [. . .]

The judgment does not mention anything that contradicts this explanation.

Dibrov's wife testified that on the night of January 31, 1953, he came home in such a state that she had to undress him and put him to bed. [. . .]

The materials of the case do not show that Dibrov's actions were accompanied by anti-Soviet statements.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 43038, l. 7-8. Typewritten copy.

• 40 •

He Silently Desecrated the Portrait

From the resolution of the prosecutor of the Department for Special Cases of the Procuracy of the USSR on the case of M. B. Grigorovich.<sup>76</sup> February 27, 1954.

Grigorovich was found guilty of engaging in obscene acts, in the presence of residents, in front of the portrait of the Leader of the Peoples [a common epithet for Stalin] in the dormitory in December 1952, as well as desecrating the portrait.

During the trial, Grigorovich admitted his guilt and made the following statement: [ . . . ] “ . . . In December 1952, I got my paycheck and had something to drink. Then I went home to my dormitory. I was angry that I had not made much money, and I decided that the leader of the peoples was at fault for this. This is why I began to make obscene gestures at his portrait. I am guilty of two obscene acts. That is, in December 1952 and January 1953 I did it in front of a number of my comrades, whose confessions [*sic*] I confirm.”

The witnesses, who were interrogated during the trial, have stated the following.

1. Rutkovsky [ . . . ]: “ . . . One night at the end of 1952, while in the barracks, before going to sleep, Grigorovich stripped down to his underwear and stood before the portrait of the leader. He started engaging in obscene actions. Grigorovich did the same the second time, after New Year's. I was in the room when Grigorovich desecrated a portrait of the leader, and so were the other guys. When desecrating the portrait, Grigorovich was sober. He desecrated the portrait silently. That is, the first time, he showed his penis to the portrait, and the second time, he passed gas and addressed the portrait, saying that the leader was turning his face away because he didn't want to smell it.”

2. Bolondz [ . . . ]: “ . . . Before New Year's Eve and after the holiday, Grigorovich desecrated the portrait of the leader of the peoples at bedtime. His actions were obscene. About five people were in the room during these incidents. [ . . . ] The portrait hung above Grigorovich's bed.

“Grigorovich engaged in these obscene actions at bedtime, at about 10:00 or 11:00 p.m. He did not say obscene words. He only said that the



leader didn't like to smell the gas and turned his face away. The second time, he showed his penis to the portrait of the leader."

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 21, d. 42870, l. 18-19. Typewritten copy.

## • 41 •

### She Threw a Rock at the Sarcophagus

From the resolution of the senior investigator of the Investigation Department of the Directorate of the KGB under the Council of Ministers of the USSR on sending the case of L. A. Smirnova<sup>77</sup> to court. October 10, 1961.

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On September 9, 1961, at 13:25, while visiting V. I. Lenin and I. V. Stalin's Mausoleum, L. A. Smirnova committed blasphemous acts. While walking by the sarcophagus that had Lenin's body, she spat on it and said, "Take that, you bastard!" She then threw a rock wrapped in a handkerchief at the sarcophagus. The rock broke the protective glass.

During interrogation, Smirnova acknowledged her guilt. She stated that she had decided to attack the sarcophagus on September 8, 1961. Early in the morning of September 9, 1961, she headed to Red Square. While walking on a side street she picked up a rock, placed it in a handkerchief, and put it in her pocket. She followed her plan after entering the Mausoleum.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Get Out the Vote!

Who are you going to elect,  
You, with the groggy, bitter face?  
For forty years you've toiled in vain,  
You unthinking slave . . .

FROM A POEM WRITTEN ON A SHEET OF PAPER AND DROPPED INTO  
A BALLOT BOX IN NIKOLAEV IN MARCH 1957 AND MARCH 1958

PEOPLE WHO were involved in subversive activities had a solid understanding of the essence of the Soviet electoral system. A person did not have to have access to additional (forbidden) information or listen to foreign radio stations or have a college degree to realize that the choice of one candidate, “the representative of Communist bloc and non-Party members,” was a farce.

Throughout the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, criticism of the electoral system remained a constant topic of anti-Soviet conversations. People said that the elections were a lie, that people were pressured to vote, that all the candidates were Communists and people in prominent positions, that “in our democracy, you have to vote for whoever the Party nominates,”<sup>1</sup> and that “they appoint deputies in advance, and all we have to do is go to the polling station and drop our ballots in the ballot box.” They also complained that the elected deputies did nothing for the population. People compared the Soviet and American electoral systems to the advantage of the latter. Sometimes they talked about the advantages of the multiparty system.

In 1953, the chairman of a collective farm in the Turkmen Republic, a Party member, said that the elections were just extra work, that they were held too often and he was sick of them. He added that “they hold elections only so they can register the population and then make

up the [economic] plan” and that they tried to avoid including Kazakh peasants with their own farms in the lists of voters (evidently, they were harder to organize and register).<sup>2</sup> In the same year, a medical student from Izhevsk was convicted of anti-Soviet conversations in which he stated, among other things, that it didn’t matter whether he voted for Stalin or for a dog.<sup>3</sup> In 1948–1952, a middle-aged resident of Moscow with some college education, occupying the relatively prestigious position of executive manager of a music and dance group of the Soviet Northern Fleet, called the elections “puppet comedy” in a conversation.<sup>4</sup>

In the early 1950s, rumors circulated that “elections are not secret but open, and every voter is assigned a particular number to cast his vote,”<sup>5</sup> that the elections were held according to instructions from above, and that all the ballots were numbered with invisible ink: “just try crossing something out or writing on the ballot—they’ll find out instantly.”<sup>6</sup> (These opinions were expressed in 1953.)

Elections were held on Sundays, in order not to keep people from work, and were organized as holidays, with flags, banners, and festive music. The electoral committee was required to ensure a 100 percent voter turnout. By showing up at polling stations, the population followed a ritual and demonstrated its loyalty. Even now, Russians who grew up in Stalin’s time try to come to the polling station when it opens, since early attendance once served as additional proof of devotion to the regime. Publicly calling on people not to vote was dangerous. Members of some religious movements (such as Jehovah’s Witnesses and Baptists) were often prosecuted for their attempts to persuade other believers not to vote. They also encouraged others not to serve in the army and forbade their children to join the Young Pioneers or the Komsomol or to go to the movies or other places for entertainment.

As long as the hangover of Stalinist political culture remained (through the mid-1950s), even suggesting to a friend that he or she strike out the name of the only candidate from a ballot or vote against a candidate could be classified as anti-Soviet.<sup>7</sup> The situation started to change later. Under Khrushchev and particularly under Brezhnev, a demonstrative refusal to vote became more like an extreme method of putting pressure on local authorities. After all, it was scandalous for a citizen to refuse to show up to vote, especially when a specific grievance was involved; and scandal never does the responsible officials any good.<sup>8</sup>

I remember the commotion in a village soviet and its electoral commission that followed one such refusal to vote in the early 1980s. A local resident who worked as a driver (a fellow who liked to drive, race cars, get drunk, and fight) lost his house in a fire. When his younger brother came back from the army, the village soviet refused to register him because there was not enough room for him in the shed where the family was living temporarily (once he was registered, the brothers could demand better living conditions from the village soviet). A Soviet person without registration did not exist. After repeated dealings with the bureaucracy, the driver was furious. On election day, after having a drink to loosen up, he announced that he would not vote. The members of the village soviet and the electoral commission were terrified to hear this news. They spent the day trying to convince the rebellious driver to vote and promised him to resolve all his problems. By evening, they had managed to persuade him: he went to the polling station and submitted his ballot.

On election days, the polling station took on the same kind of official, sacral aura as the office of a district Party committee, a monument to a Party leader, and other such places. Common disorderly behavior at the polling station was viewed as a sacrilege, and expressions of disloyalty took on a particular significance. The official atmosphere of the polling station and the increased propaganda provoked people to perform disorderly acts and make seditious statements (the number of drunks also rose on election days, which were considered holidays); and, at the same time, their "subversive character" was taken much more seriously than it would have been on a normal day. (This may be compared with the outburst of irreverent comments about Stalin, and the authorities' response to them, during the days of mourning after his death.)

Even in Stalin's time, people committed disobedient acts at polling stations. In December 1950, at a polling station and later at a movie theater, an unemployed resident of the Estonian Republic sang, "Truman, come and save me from Red hell!"<sup>9</sup> During the election of people's judges<sup>10</sup> in 1952, a Jewish housewife who was a Party member expressed her disappointment that none of the candidates for people's judges were Jewish.<sup>11</sup>

On February 15, 1953, three young tractor drivers (two Russians and a Latvian) in the Daugavpils region (Latvian Republic) showed up drunk at an electoral meeting where a candidate for the position of delegate to the district soviet made a presentation. The tractor drivers

broke up the presentation by making a racket and cursing loudly. They also criticized the Soviet electoral system.<sup>12</sup> On February 22, 1953, a sailor and fisherman in Novorossiisk went to a polling station, pointed to the portraits of Party leaders, and said: "I'll write and ask how long they're planning to keep us living in squalor." Having received his ballot, he added that he didn't care who he voted for.<sup>13</sup> The same day, a stableman at the radio station of the Northern Sea steamship line in Arkhangelsk was having a conversation with his communal apartment roommates. He "expressed terrorist intentions with regard to the leader of the Soviet people and his brothers-in-arms" (evidently, he cursed Stalin and his ruling circle and said that it would be good to kill them all).<sup>14</sup> A collective farmer from the Kostroma region criticized the candidates nominated for the local soviets.<sup>15</sup> While at a teahouse, an Estonian worker at a ship repair depot "acted disrespectfully toward the portrait of one of the leaders."<sup>16</sup> A worker from the Irkutsk region cursed the Soviet state at a polling station while drunk.<sup>17</sup> At the end of February 1953, a poorly educated nineteen-year-old female resident of a small Latvian town, not currently employed, posted a leaflet criticizing the Party, Stalin, and the recent elections near the entrance to the city executive Party committee.<sup>18</sup>

The Procuracy's oversight records do not show any incidents of this kind in the first years after Stalin's death. However, disruptive events arose in connection with the elections to local soviets in March 1957, and in subsequent years they consistently accompanied elections. In March 8, 1957, for example, a twenty-year-old ethnically Russian worker with a criminal record came to a polling station, demanded that a dance be organized, and sang an anti-Soviet song entitled "How Beautiful the Evening Capital Is."<sup>19</sup> On March 3, a lumberyard worker in the Primorsky region came drunk to the polling station, made threats against Communists, and praised life in the United States.<sup>20</sup> While at a polling station, a Turkmen collective farmer said, "You are posting these slogans to deceive the people. Candidates for deputies are not nominated by the people but appointed from above, yet you force people to vote for them."<sup>21</sup>

On March 3, 1957, a thirty-year-old miner from the Molotov<sup>22</sup> region, previously prosecuted for supporting the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists,<sup>23</sup> got drunk before going to the polling station. Once at the polling station, he cursed the government and declared that he had been wearing chains for twenty-eight years. The same day, in Melitopol (Ukraine), a drunken worker went to a polling station, had

a fight with a Party organizer and the head of the Personnel Department at his factory, and began cursing the Communists.<sup>24</sup>

In December 1957, the leader of a team of construction workers from the Smolensk region went to a polling station while drunk. There he criticized the government and called Khrushchev an enemy of the people.<sup>25</sup> On December 10, during the elections of people's judges, a drunken twenty-five-year-old resident of Bendery (Moldavian Republic) said that there were no free elections or democracy in the USSR.<sup>26</sup>

On February 6, 1958, a welder from the Ulianovsk region made a speech at a meeting on the upcoming elections while drunk and cursed the way things were in the Soviet Union, the Soviet electoral system, and Khrushchev; then he behaved in a disorderly manner in the hallway.<sup>27</sup> On March 16, 1958, during the elections for the Supreme Soviet, a man with multiple previous convictions went to a polling station in Volgodonsk while drunk and used obscenities about members of the government, calling on people to vote for Bulganin and Malenkov instead of Khrushchev.<sup>28</sup> In the Tiumen region on the same day, a twenty-eight-year-old lumber mill worker with four previous convictions for hooliganism got drunk, cursed, and caused a disturbance at a polling station. He shouted that he would not vote for Communists, that "it is even worse to live outside prison than in it, that the electoral system in the USSR is nothing but a lie, that everything is determined in advance, that there is no reason to vote," and so on.<sup>29</sup>

A Latvian employee of the Riga (Latvia) zoo, who had returned to the USSR from Australia in 1960, had trouble adapting to life in the Soviet Union: he refused to join a collective farm because he did not like the way that an individual's pay was determined, he did not want to register for military service, and he demanded that all Communists be expelled from the trade unions. On March 19, 1961, he also refused to vote because he believed that Soviet elections were a fraud.<sup>30</sup>

On March 3 and 16, 1969, in the Kustanai region (Kazakh Republic), a twenty-seven-year-old Kazakh who worked as a veterinary technician was engaged in drunken debauchery near a club and at a polling station. He got into a fight and used swearwords. After he overheard passersby talking about an incident on Damansky Island (on the Soviet border with China),<sup>31</sup> he said that he was ready to kill ten Russians for the sake of one Kazakh or Chinese, that during the war, it was the Kazakhs who had defended Moscow, and that "one day, the Asians will show you." He also called those present Vlasovites and Benderovites (anti-Soviet nationalists).<sup>32</sup>

Because of the special status of election days, the attention of the authorities was particularly acute then. The minister of internal affairs and the chairman of the KGB reported to the Central Committee on events, as they always did on holidays. Order was maintained more strictly on those days. In February 27, 1955, for example, after the elections for the Supreme Soviet in the republics and in the local soviets, the minister of internal affairs, Sergei Kruglov, reported to the Central Committee and the Council of Ministers of the USSR that "on the night of February 26, 1955, and on election day, the number of policemen and patrolmen was increased in cities and residential areas in order to prevent crimes and disorders. To strengthen the maintenance of order, we mobilized the internal security staff of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and groups of volunteers who help the police. The state fire authority inspected polling stations for compliance with fire safety standards. Where necessary, fire protection personnel monitored polling stations."<sup>33</sup> Reports enumerate incidents, especially those related in some way to the elections: a car that was assigned to a polling station was stolen; a polling station was burglarized, a rug and a radio-phonograph were taken away; someone broke into a safe deposit box in which ballots were kept, but only stole some money. A member of an electoral commission got involved in a fight. A representative of the electoral committee got drunk and lost a ballot box that contained ballots he was delivering to the district committee; several meters of a telephone cable leading to a polling station were cut and probably stolen; the building in which a candidate for the position of delegate lived was set on fire. The victims are described in these documents largely in terms of their relationship to the elections: a member of an election committee, a candidate for the position of delegate, an official agitator, a voter. As a result, ordinary hooliganism (for example, an incident in which three young men threw rocks) took on new significance: "three local residents, who were inebriated, threw rocks at voters." The report states "voters," not "citizens," "residents," or even "passersby," as would be noted on any other day.<sup>34</sup>

These reports also note incidents in which people refused to vote and, in particular, incidents in which they deliberately criticized the elections. On February 27, 1955, in a village located in the Kharkov region (Ukraine), someone tore down posters that promoted the upcoming electoral campaign. The guilty party turned out to be a man who came from a dekulakized family that had owned the house now serving as a polling station. In the Moscow, Kiev, and Chernigov re-

gions, several leaflets were found that called people not to vote for local candidates (these were cases of discontent with specific local leaders). In Asbest (Sverdlovsk region), someone posted a handwritten leaflet that said, "We vote for America."<sup>35</sup> On March 3, 1957, after the elections for local soviet members, the chairman of the KGB, Ivan Serov, reported that anti-Soviet leaflets calling on people not to vote had been found in Sumy, Kiev, and Kharkov in the Ukraine. He went on to say that torn Soviet flags were found at the polling station in a Lithuanian collective farm, and that in a Moldavian village, a twenty-four-year-old female member of a religious sect had thrown a smoldering rag into the ballot box along with her ballot. (The woman said that she "did not want to vote for women, so decided to burn the ballots").<sup>36</sup> In December 1957, on Soviet Constitution Day and during the elections of people's judges, a disabled war veteran from Kirovograd (Ukraine) wrote and posted three leaflets.<sup>37</sup> In March 1958, in Estonia, eighteen block-printed leaflets with the slogan "Down with the Soviet Elections" were found, and an old newspaper with Hitler's portrait appeared on the front gates of a building in Tallin (Estonian Republic).<sup>38</sup> In Alma-Ata (Kazakh Republic), two instructors at an agricultural college distributed leaflets calling on people to vote against the candidates for the Supreme Soviet.<sup>39</sup>

Leaflets, posters, and graffiti "intended to disrupt the elections," which called on people not to vote, or to vote against candidates on the ballots or against Communist candidates, appeared in 1961 in a village in the Dokshitsy district, Vitebsk region (Belorussia).<sup>40</sup> In 1962, they were also found in Riga,<sup>41</sup> Bobruisk (Belorussia),<sup>42</sup> and the Braslav district of the Vitebsk region.<sup>43</sup> In March 1969, a slogan "calling for the overthrow of the Soviet government" was written on the wall of a polling station in Orel.<sup>44</sup> In the same month, a Latvian worker at a printing plant in Riga poured paint all over the posters at three polling stations (in April of the same year, he also painted the arms and legs of a monument to a Soviet soldier with red paint, which was supposed to symbolize the abuses of the Soviet occupiers of Latvia).<sup>45</sup> In Uzhgorod (Ukraine) in the spring of 1970, a university professor who was a Ukrainian nationalist made forty leaflets giving instructions on how to behave during the elections. He sent the leaflets to school principals, the chairmen of trade union committees at various enterprises, and the chairmen of collective farms.<sup>46</sup> In 1974, leaflets appealing to people not to vote were distributed in Nizhny Tagil and Karaganda (Kazakh Republic).<sup>47</sup> In 1982, in Kharkov, a former civil aviation pilot



went to a polling station and tried to persuade those present not to vote.<sup>48</sup>

Anonymous notes on ballots were a common method of expressing one's opinion on election procedures, members of the Soviet government, and the state in general. People often threw leaflets or notes into the ballot box along with the ballots.

The Central Committee was informed about the content of these messages, as well as about the incidents that took place at polling stations. The messages on ballots were not necessarily subversive. On March 10, 1962, for example, after elections for the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the secretary of the Moscow city Party committee Nikolai Egorychev made a list of messages, among which were many statements in support of Khrushchev and the struggle for world peace. People also made various suggestions and requests to the deputies and the government on specific issues. These statements were not seditious but rather offered "criticism of specific shortcomings": people asked the state to lower the price of bread, to produce more shoes or more children's clothes and toys, to raise teachers' pensions and salaries, to provide people with housing, or to improve amenities in a particular district.<sup>49</sup> The suggestions did not change much over time. In a list of notes written on ballots, made for the Central Committee after the elections for local soviets and courts decades later, in July 1987, we find the same topics.<sup>50</sup> Of course, the reports made to the Central Committee on texts included only a partial selection. The 1987 report, for example, was clearly intended to show that the people supported the policies of perestroika.<sup>51</sup> A separate category for negative notes contained only six such notes, of which three demanded a transfer of all power to the soviets<sup>52</sup> and a refusal to vote for Communists. The rest advocated a multiparty system, supported the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, or expressed support for the *Pamiat'* (Memory) society.<sup>53</sup> In addition, two or three negative notes were reported in each of several republics and regions: notes in Ukraine advocating a multiparty system and transfer of all power to the Soviets, and calling for the shutdown the Chernobyl power plant; in Estonia criticizing Russia and the war in Afghanistan; in Lithuania demanding freedom of religion; in the Perm and Altai regions opposing nuclear explosions on testing sites.<sup>54</sup> It would be easy to get the impression that information on truly subversive messages—those liable to prosecution—may have been withheld from the country's political leadership.

Those who wrote abusive messages on their ballots must have realized that they risked being caught: recall the rumors that all the bal-

lots were numbered with invisible ink). Once caught, they explained their actions in various ways. Those who left messages on ballots in 1959 and 1957 said, respectively: "All these ideas came into my head when I was drunk. I had never thought of doing this before";<sup>55</sup> and "My housing situation was difficult. I was asking the factory manager all the time for a place in the factory housing. He promised to allocate some housing space for me, and I was on the list for a place in the building for factory employees that was under construction. But in February 1957, the manager told me that I had been struck from the list because I couldn't get residential registration in Moscow and am registered outside the city. We lived in a fourteen-square-meter room; it was very cramped. My wife's mother and father lived with us. I could never get any rest at home, so I usually tried to stay at work in the evenings. When they denied me my housing space, I was shattered, very upset; I thought about it a lot and concluded that the management was not treating me like a human being. I didn't care what happened to me; they could hang me if they liked. When I went to the polling station, all this came into my head, and I wrote a bitter anti-Soviet note and put it in the ballot box. . . . By now, I've had time to think it through and I fully realize that my action was not worthy of a Soviet citizen."<sup>56</sup> Of course, the root cause of these notes was the desire to release pent-up feelings and "give the government a slap in the face."

To keep messages on ballots short and to the point, people used methods developed in Soviet propaganda: they wrote notes whose construction bears a striking resemblance to the official slogans that were ubiquitous in newspapers and on the street. All sorts of phrases beginning "Long live [*da zdavstvuet*] . . ." are found in the messages, and even more with the negative "Down with [*doloy*] . . ." To point up the comparison, let us look at some slogans from the Central Committee, printed on October 13, 1957, for the forty-year-old anniversary of the October Revolution in *Izvestiia*, the newspaper published under the auspices of the Supreme Soviet: "The realization of socialism in the USSR is the major achievement of the October Revolution. Long live the working class, the collectivized peasantry, and the Soviet intelligentsia—the builders of the first socialist state in the world!"; "Long live the Communist Party of the USSR—the leader of the October Revolution and the great inspiration and organizer of the building of socialism and Communism in our country!"; "Long live the soviets of the deputies of the laboring masses—truly the organizations that give power to the people in our country! Long live socialist democracy!"; "Employees of the construction and trans-

portation industries! Introduce advanced methods into production, fight for technological progress, and strive to raise productivity in all possible ways”; “Soviet industrial workers! You must struggle to reduce costs, raise the quality of production, and lower the costs of production!” The state made similar appeals to people working in all major branches of the economy, even intellectuals: “Writers and artists! Multiply the spiritual riches of our country! You must fight for high ideological quality and artistic mastery in your works! Let us strive for a close, unbreakable connection between art and people’s lives!”

This slogan form, which became customary, thanks to propaganda and agitation with banners, appears in notes on ballots, as well as in leaflets, graffiti, and elsewhere, as we shall discuss in later chapters.

Commentary by O. V. Edelman

## Documents

### • 42 •

#### The End Will Come

A leaflet dropped into a ballot box at the polling place at the Pmossa station on the Leningrad railroad. Elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, February 19, 1951.<sup>57</sup> See also document 44.

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You bastards, torturers of the people, bloodsuckers! You are still bound to die sooner or later. No matter how long it takes, the end will come. Remember that.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 42258, l. 10.<sup>58</sup>

### • 43 •

#### We Are All Forced to Vote

A leaflet dropped into a ballot box at the polling place of Igino village (Verkhny Liubazh district, Kursk region). Elections of People’s Judges, December 16, 1951.<sup>59</sup>

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Read this.

When we vote, few of us think about what we’re doing. We are all forced to do it by being punished by the same damn court. The Soviet

court is staffed by people who represent the worst traits of humanity, people who acquit the guilty for money and other bribes but prosecute those who are innocent.

Under their laws, they can find a person guilty who slaughtered his own piglet or put some rye, damp with his own sweat, in his pocket; these people are sentenced to eight to ten years.

Our call to action—and there are quite a number of us—is to cross all of them out. To hell with them all.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 39849, l. 5.<sup>60</sup>

• 44 •

Stalin Is a Georgian Jew

From a leaflet dropped into a ballot box at the polling place at Pmossa station on the Leningrad railroad. Elections to Local Soviets, February 22, 1953.<sup>61</sup> See also document 42.

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. . . The Russian people will not breathe freely until we destroy all the Jews, the way Germans did. Stalin is a Georgian Jew, and as long as he leads the nation, we will have nothing but suffering. As if we don't have any Russian leaders! Down with the Soviet regime. Down with god-damned Stalin, torturer of the people.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 42258, l. 11.<sup>62</sup>

• 45 •

What Have You Done to Estonia?

A leaflet dropped into a ballot box at a polling place in the Kiviylidistrict of the Estonian Republic. Elections to Local Soviets and Elections of People's Judges, April 12, 1953.<sup>63</sup>

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1. What have you done to Estonia and its people, you robbers and slave traders? Let our brothers and sisters come back to us: release those innocent people, and give their property and land back to them.<sup>64</sup>

2. You have oppressed nations and people, turning workers into slaves; you starve us, you destroy us, our disabled suffer because you do not provide them with any help. God damn you.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 37833, l. 12.<sup>65</sup>

• 46 •

Who Is Happy with His Life These Days?

A leaflet dropped into a ballot box at a polling place in Yaroslavl. Elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, March 14, 1954.<sup>66</sup>

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I did not come here because I can't tell a monarchy (formerly Stalin's, now Malenkov's)<sup>67</sup> from a republic; I did not come here because I can't see slave labor around me or because I can't see our people being insulted, humiliated, and robbed. Nowadays, in Russia, we don't have a single happy child, worker, office worker, engineer, or academician. Everyone has been enslaved, crushed, and "protected." They thought up Communism, that mirage, although it didn't work, and they are shamelessly sucking the last drops of blood from the people for their own benefit, for wars, and for shackles for the people.

Think about what they call Communism, which we are supposed to "build" but which deprives us of anything like a peaceful life in the present. Who is happy with his life these days? Maybe Malenkov, who killed Beria on the sly—Beria, that irreplaceable assistant to Stalin. In short, they're all good butchers! Stalin killed his wife<sup>68</sup> and didn't serve time for this—why is that?

I am the son of a farmhand, and that's what makes me say this, and I have been deceived, just like everyone else. I became an officer so that I could earn my bread, but who will give me spiritual bread—freedom?. If I ever try to say this aloud, they'll hang me, like any accursed man, and it'll serve me right: fancy wanting to have freedom in the USSR!

Use your head: don't let them deceive and oppress you; fight for authority, fight for the opportunity to live well and for freedom!

Our heads are stuffed with junk; once you read this, pass it on to a comrade: after all, don't we have freedom of speech?

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 67475, l. 14-15.<sup>69</sup>

• 47 •

Long Live Eisenhower!

A message on a ballot dropped into a ballot box in Stalino (Ukraine). Elections of People's Judges, June 6, 1954.<sup>70</sup>

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You vile Red Fascists. Long live Aushenower [*sic*]!

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 82832, l. 11.<sup>71</sup>

• 48 •

Long Live the British-American Alliance

From a message on ballots dropped into a ballot box in Leningrad. Elections of People's Judges, December 1954.<sup>72</sup>

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1. Death to Communism. Long live the British-American alliance.
2. Damn you, Communists.

A worker

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 77200, l. 1.<sup>73</sup>

• 49 •

Down with the Soviet Government

From an anonymous note dropped into a ballot box in Moscow. Elections of People's Judges, December 1954.<sup>74</sup>

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... Down with the Soviet government, which has betrayed the cause of the laboring masses.

Down with the lackeys, the traitors, and the so-called people's judges, who execute the laws of lawlessness of the treacherous Soviet government.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 78725, l. 1.<sup>75</sup>

• 50 •

What Do Elections Do for Us?

An anonymous note dropped into a ballot box in Ivanovo. Elections to the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR and Local Soviets, February 27, 1955.<sup>76</sup>

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Dear electoral commission,

The elections are today, and we've had elections many times—but what, may I ask, do they do for us? Nothing at all. You can see for yourself what's going on in the stores, where for three hundred wretched grams of candy, you have to stand in line for three or four hours; and it's not just the stores: look at your own cafeteria, there's a line here too. Sure, you may say that we are happily going to the polling station to vote, but how

can we get even a few grams of something for our kids as a treat? So, dear commission and Communists, isn't it time to end these elections and this oppression and torment? Wouldn't it be better if we set ourselves free? I appeal not only to you but to all voters to become free people in our own country; it's about time that the Kremlin's aristocracy stopped milking us and living it up; they've made enough money already, they've already messed up the people and the collective farms. It couldn't be worse: they feed us only five-year plans, and so many of these plans have come and gone, but it's obvious that our people are even weaker and live like beggars, and they aren't happy with what the Communists have sown, and that's why I write you, my friends. You must struggle for freedom and not for the opportunity to torment and oppress the people.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 70860, l. 20. Typewritten copy.

## · 51 ·

### Eternal Glory to the Hungarian Workers

From a leaflet dropped into a ballot box in Donetsk. Elections to Local Soviets, March 3, 1957.<sup>77</sup>

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. . . Death to Communism. Down with Communist imperialism. Eternal glory to the Hungarian workers who perished in their struggle against Communist dictatorship. . . Shame on the Soviet troops that suppressed the revolutionary uprising of the Hungarian workers. . . Long live freedom. . . Long live people's democracy. . . May the world despise the Central Committee, which has reached a dead end and has, in forty years, torn Russia down to its foundations. . . Communists, renounce your ideals, let the people live. . .

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 78640, l. 1-2.<sup>78</sup>

## · 52 ·

### You Despots Are Drowning in Wine

An anonymous note dropped into a ballot box in Kaliningrad (Moscow region). Elections to Local Soviets, March 3, 1957.<sup>79</sup>

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Down with the corn peddler, down with the embezzlers of the state's money, the Communist millionaires, the murderers, Mudrov's scum,<sup>80</sup> the bloodsuckers! You strangle the people, but a time will come and we'll set-

tle the score, you bastards. You make the people rot in damp, dirty, dark shacks. Meanwhile, you despots are drowning in wine and grabbing rubles by the tens of thousands, you live a life of debauchery, you live in luxurious palaces, but you treat the working folks like cattle. A day will come when the people will demand justice. Down with the murderers! Long live the Russian people.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 80462, l. 33.<sup>81</sup>

## • 53 •

### Stop Drinking Human Blood

A leaflet dropped into a ballot box in Menzelinsk (Tatar autonomous republic of the RSFSR). Elections to Local Soviet, March 3, 1957.<sup>82</sup>

#### An Appeal to the Communists of Menzelinsk

The people whom you have oppressed, tormented, humiliated, and starved address you. It is you who have done this, so be gentle with us, at least for these few months: give the people some breathing space, stop drinking human blood. A time will come soon when you will have to pay an even higher price; the people themselves will find an appropriate punishment for you, given what took place in Hungary, etc. You can ease your punishment by the people only if you treat them all as equals, one human being to another; you can wait for and accept our revenge. In the middle of June the bloodshed will begin; the gallows and other kinds of punishment await all the loyalists.

These are the words of all the people. We can't wait for that day when the socialist order will fall. You bloodsuckers. All is ready for our attack. So onward. We'll meet again soon.

#### "Sleepwalker"

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 80151, l. 14. Certified typewritten copy.

## • 54 •

### A War Is Needed for the Belorussian People

From a message on ballots dropped into a ballot box in Liakhovichi (Brest region).<sup>83</sup> Elections to Local Soviets, March 3, 1957.

We vote *for*, for a new time, for 1941. The people need a war, but so far no one can express his opinion. A war is needed for the Belorussian people so that they can be released from Communist oppression. . . . Soon



Communism will be destroyed. I express the will of ten thous[and] people.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 82573, l. 10.<sup>84</sup>

• 55 •

May the Day of Our Rebellion Come Soon

From a message on ballots dropped into a ballot box in Kiev. Elections to Local Soviets, March 3, 1957.<sup>85</sup>

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1. Down with the tormenters of the people.
  2. You blabbermouths, liars, tormenters of the people. Down with the government of Stalinist murderers.
  3. May the day of our rebellion come soon.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 88331, l. 26.<sup>86</sup>

• 56 •

Khrushchev Stealthily Uses Secret Letters

From a message on ballots dropped into a ballot box in Ulianovsk. Elections to Local Soviets, March 3, 1957.<sup>87</sup>

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Khrushchev is a hypocrite. He came to power by killing Beria, and now he is talking about following the law. The Twentieth Party Congress is responsible for the events in Hungary: it demoralized the Party leadership of the labor movement.

Khrushchev is a liar. He spoke untruthfully about comrade Stalin so that he could start his own quest for glory. He stealthily uses secret letters<sup>88</sup> and demands that his influence be increased—he has no shame. He talks about open expression but bombards others with secret letters.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 78653, l. 7–8.<sup>89</sup>

• 57 •

Enough of Fooling Public Opinion!

From a message on ballots dropped into a ballot box in Frunze (Kirgiz Republic). Elections to Local Soviets, March 10, 1957.<sup>90</sup>

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Enough of fooling public opinion! Down with Khrushchev's dictatorship! Down with violence and shameless robbery!

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 80822, l. 4. Photographed copy.

• 58 •

Khrushchev, You Idiot, Go Away

From a message on a ballot dropped into a ballot box in Riazan. Elections of People's Judges, December 15, 1957.<sup>91</sup>

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Khrushchev, you idiot, go away. The people despise you. Have some decency and give way to those who have struggled and are still struggling! Liberate Molotov and Malenkov. Don't bait the West. You lowlife, this way they arm themselves even more, our lives become even harder, and it's even harder for us to beat capital[ism]. You contemptible corn peddler, out with you!

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 83717, l. 2.<sup>92</sup>

• 59 •

I Give My Curse and Not My Vote

From a message on ballots dropped into a ballot box in the Omsk region. Elections to the People's Courts and the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, 1957.<sup>93</sup>

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1. I am against these judges appointed by the Communists because it's not the judge who judges, but the prosecutor, and I am also against those pawns, the jury, because they are nominated not by people but by that diabolical machine called the Party.

2. No support for Communists, who have crushed all that is human in us, who have doomed ordinary folk to die out.
3. I give my curse to you Communists, and not my vote.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 88765, l. 18.<sup>94</sup>

## • 60 •

### We Hate the Party

A leaflet, several copies of which were posted at the Vologda train station on election day. Elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, March 16, 1958.<sup>95</sup>

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1. We hate the Party. That party has slandered its best sons, such as Stalin, Malenkov, Molotov, Zhukov, and others, and in the meantime they are planning a plot against the people of all countries.

Down with Khrushchev, Mikoian, and Pospelov.<sup>96</sup>

2. Comrades! Khrushchev is going to have a baby soon. That's why his belly is even bigger than the belly of a pregnant woman.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 85245, l. 1.<sup>97</sup>

## • 61 •

### By May, You Should Expect a Rebellion

A message on a ballot dropped into a ballot box in Korsakov (Primorsky region). Elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, March 16, 1958.<sup>98</sup>

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Communists shouldn't be in power; give people freedom.

By May, you should expect a rebellion against [them] in Kharkov, Moscow, and Leningrad. Communists will die here.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 86076, l. 8.<sup>99</sup>

## • 62 •

### Down with the Communist Party

A leaflet dropped into a ballot box in the Kanash district (Chuvash autonomous republic). Elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, March 16, 1958.<sup>100</sup>

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You devils, leaders of the Communist Party. Down with the Communist Party; down with all your collective farms and state farms, the Soviet

commune of Communism. Why the fuck do we need them, we the people; down with your Antichrist party—do you get it? May this Communist Party not exist in Russia. May there be no Communist Party and, finally, not a whiff of these Communists; we should destroy every last one of them with atom bombs and hydrogen bombs. Do you get it, mother-fuckers. This message is authorized<sup>101</sup> by the people.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 86614, l. 20.<sup>102</sup>

## • 63 •

### Khrushchev Is an Enemy of the People

From a leaflet dropped into a ballot box in Nakhodka (Primorsky region). Elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, March 16, 1958.<sup>103</sup>

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Voting is a matter of national importance.

But the thing is, Khrushchev has gone too far; in reality, he is an enemy of the people, and if we are ever to go to war, he should be the first to be hanged like a dog. . . .

. . . He is a blabbermouth and an idiot. After the election, jobs will be lost by the working class, and that's his doing, too. This way, he can have more lavish feasts and dinners; the people just have to fill themselves up with what they hear on the radio.

If there is a flood or downpour somewhere, we provide help immediately, but meanwhile, our people are starving, fed only with stories from the radio.

You should take a close look at how the people live; soon they will revolt, and it would be advisable that this god, who claims to be almost a god and creator of the world, should die and rot in hell, the lousy dog and bastard.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 86982, l. 44–45.<sup>104</sup>

## • 64 •

### They Fool Us with These Elections without a Choice

From a leaflet dropped into a ballot box in Michurinsk (Tambov region). Elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, March 16, 1958.<sup>105</sup>

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Down with the self-proclaimed fanatical and parasitical government that oppresses the people of Russia. Down with the Kremlin swine who are hated

by all and who have fattened themselves by taking the last piece of bread away from the people! Throw all your efforts into the struggle with the Kremlin monopolists, who are looting and lying and taking away all the means of production from the workers and peasants. Out with the bootlickers and toadies who have been forced on the people for the elections, as if according to the people's will! The people are not voting for them, they are just scared and obedient; grinding their teeth, they drop their ballots, those cheat sheets that have been imposed on them, into a stupid box. They fool us with these elections without a choice, with one candidate on the ballot, who is favored by the Kremlin's dictator but, alas, not at all by the people.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 94497, l. 12.<sup>106</sup>

## • 65 •

### Shoot Your First Bullet at Khrushchev's Head

From a message on a ballot dropped into a ballot box in the Balakhna district of the Gorky region. Elections to the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR and Local Soviets, March 1, 1959.<sup>107</sup>

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1. Shoot your first bullet at Khrushchev's head. Bread costs 140 kopecks; just try to find it in the stores; meanwhile, corn, they say, has exceeded the prewar level of production [illegible word]; shoot your first bullet at Khrushchev's head.

2. Shoot your first bullet at Khrushchev's head. Down with this kind of Communist: Leninist Communists.

3. Down with the Communists, forward with the Leninists.

4. Down with Khrushchev. Of the Party members, we'll chop his head off first.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 86145, l. 9.<sup>108</sup>

## • 66 •

### Why the Hell Do We Even Need You, You Communist Impostors?

A leaflet left by a ballot box at the polling station of Sovrudnik village (Severo-Eniseisky district, Krasnoirsksk region). Elections to Local Soviets, March 5, 1961.<sup>109</sup>

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Why the hell do we even need you, you Communist impostors, enemies of the people? You torment and deceive us. We need freedom and liberty,

but you impose terror and oppression on us. You've turned your people into slaves who live under the Communist yoke. Down with the Communists.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 93160, l. 2.<sup>110</sup>

• 67 •

Let Us Save Our Motherland!

A leaflet dropped into a ballot box in Kiev. Elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, March 18, 1962.<sup>111</sup>

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Long live the Leninist government without Khrushchev, that blabbermouth and traitor. Long live Molotov, Voroshilov, Malenkov, and the rest. Where is the meat, the milk, and other food!!!

The politics of that fool have led us to the loss of China, Albania,<sup>112</sup> and millions of our former allies. The nation has reached a dead end. Let us stand together. Let us save our motherland!

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 93800, l. 26 (reverse).<sup>113</sup>

• 68 •

The Communist Party Is Worse Than the Fascists

A leaflet dropped into a ballot box in the Amur region. Elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, March 18, 1962.<sup>114</sup>

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A call to vote for Communists is the same as a call to vote for Fascists. In their cruelty, their abuse of power, and their ferocity, the Communist Party is worse than the Fascists. The Russian people have endured all the pleasures of this party: famine, cruel exploitation, prisons, and a network of countless camps. It's a party of hypocrites who lie to the people, a party of barbarians—a party of parasites. The Communist Party is a parasite on the healthy Russian body. Millions and millions of Russians have an understanding of this party in their hearts. The people await their true freedom, and they will achieve it.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 117, l. 18.<sup>115</sup>

## · 69 ·

## This Is the Weakness of the Soviet Social Order

From a message on ballots dropped into a ballot box in Komsomolsk-on-Amur. Elections to Local Soviets, March 16, 1969.<sup>116</sup>

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1. There shall be no support for the Communist regime. Raise the banner of the struggle against Communist ideology.

2. Millions of good people are playing a role in the Communist performance, but they determine nothing. This is the eternal weakness and ephemeral power of the Soviet social order.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 3254, l. 7.<sup>117</sup>

## · 70 ·

## Let Us Cross Out Those Corrupt Candidates

A leaflet copies of which were scattered in the Ordzhonikidze district of Sverdlovsk. Elections, February 28, 1979.<sup>118</sup>

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Comrades, let us cross out those corrupt candidates; as soon as the elections are over, they forget all about us. It doesn't worry them that the Party has become detached from the people, that prices are rising and stores are becoming empty.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 8394, l. 5. Original.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Lone Protesters

SOME INDIVIDUAL acts of protest took an open and public form. These acts could be intentional and carefully thought out, or they could be spontaneous and emotional. Acts of protest ranged from drunken anti-Soviet shouts to discerning speeches of criticism at Party meetings or collective farm meetings. None of the cases presented here involves underground activities or anonymous writings.

For many years, no open acts of protest took place in the Soviet Union. The last organized protest was in 1927, when the Trotskyite opposition staged an alternative political demonstration on the ten-year anniversary of the October Revolution. In Stalin's time and afterward, acts of drunken "anti-Soviet hooliganism" inevitably accompanied political and electoral campaigns. On the whole, such acts did not bother the state too much.

That relative indifference made it all the odder when in 1956 and 1957, after two decades of terror and repression, people began making speeches at Party and Komsomol meetings that ran contrary to the Party line. Such speeches were most prevalent during the plenum of the Central Committee that passed the resolution on the Anti-Party Group of Molotov, Malenkov, Kaganovich, and "Shepilov, who joined them." We know of only a few cases of criticism that took place after this June 1957 plenum. People were quick to realize that the rules of the game had not changed and that talk of "intra-Party democracy" was mere talk. There was no reason to take the risk of speaking out.

In the mid-1950s, we also begin to see attempts to display antigovernment banners at official celebrations, demonstrations, and parades. The scandalous visibility of such public "anti-Soviet expressions" dis-



rupted the solemn tedium of official festivities. Party bosses saw the acts as blatant violations of ritual and the rules of decorum. The acts undermined an unwritten agreement between the state and the people. They were evidence that “the people were running wild” and a sign that “they were not scared anymore.” People who chose to express their dissatisfaction with the regime through individual public protest rarely sought open support from others. They were often seen as suicidal or crazy. What appears to have been collective action occurred in only a few cases, in contexts where it was easy for the supporters to blend back into the crowd and become anonymous. For example, M. M. Krasilnikov, a student in the philology department at Leningrad State University, had his moment of triumph on November 7, 1956, when he walked through the streets of Leningrad with a group of fellow students, shouting, “Down with Khrushchev!” “Down with the Soviets!” “Down with the Party gang!” “Long live free Hungary!” and “Down with Communism!” The marching students, whose names remain unknown, responded to Krasilnikov by shouting, “Hooray!”<sup>1</sup>

Individual public protests took many forms and covered a wide range of beliefs. Some protests were just ordinary drunk and rowdy outbursts. Others were deliberate acts of civic protest. With the first kind, the “demonstrators” elicited nothing but irritation and offense from those who witnessed their behavior. With the second kind, at least some looked on with silent sympathy. To most people, however, the protest seemed like a meaningless and hopeless waste of energy, proof to bystanders that “a whip can’t stand up to an axe.” It was not until the second half of the 1960s, with the rise of the dissident movement, that significant group protests were organized and gained worldwide publicity.

Commentary by E. Yu. Zavadskaiia

## From the Procuracy’s Files

1956

I. S. Sharikov was a member of the Party and a lecturer in the department of philosophy at the Moscow Pedagogical Institute. On March 23, 1956, while attending a Party meeting at the Academy of Social Sciences, he made a speech in which he criticized the Party. He was reprimanded for this speech, and at the next meeting, he announced that he regretted what he had said. Yet Sharikov continued to talk to

his friends and acquaintances about corruption, the degeneration of the regime, and the stranglehold that bureaucrats had on the people. Sharikov criticized the system for the absence of democracy and the lack of independent organizations for working people. He said that the USSR "takes first place for the number of people who have been to correctional labor camps," etc.<sup>2</sup> "He incited the writer Dudintsev to write works that were critical of the Soviet system." Sharikov wrote and kept manuscripts with anti-Soviet content. A total of forty-seven pages were confiscated from him.<sup>3</sup>

On November 6, 1956, Kh. A. Briedis, a stoker from Riga, went to a meeting in celebration of the October Revolution. He asked, "Tell me, when will we have a change of power, the way they had it in Hungary?"<sup>4</sup>

A. P. Rudakov was a research associate at the Leningrad Physicotechnical Institute. On November 26, 1956, while attending a meeting of Komsomol activists, he made the following statement: "We've been accusing Stalin, but there are people in the Politburo who are also responsible for the same offenses." In a conversation during a break, he said, "Our troops have suppressed a real national movement in Hungary."<sup>5</sup>

On December 17, 1956, B. P. Savitskas, a teacher from Lithuania, went to an open Party meeting at his school and made a speech against the Soviet system in Lithuania. He said that the collective farm system would not last long because it was just the same as serfdom, and stated that Lithuania's independence existed only on paper.<sup>6</sup>

A. I. Zemsha was a team leader at a collective farm in the Cherkassy region (Ukraine). At an open Party meeting discussing the December 1956 plenum of the Central Committee, Zemsha exclaimed: "Is this really a Communist Party? No, it's a Fascist Party!"<sup>7</sup>

## 1957

On January 4, 1957, P. A. Pekhoto, an agronomist from the Brest region (Belorussia), attended a meeting for select Party members at a collective farm, where a letter from the Central Committee was read aloud. Pekhoto gave a speech in which he cursed the government and told anti-Soviet jokes.<sup>8</sup>

I. P. Zinoviev was a worker at a dockyard in Gorky.<sup>9</sup> Addressing the participants at a January 24, 1957, Party cell meeting, he said: "Gentlemen Communists, all of you are rotten to the core."<sup>10</sup>

On March 13, 1957, M. F. Zhirokhov, who had a criminal record and was without a fixed occupation or permanent residence, went to a showing of the film *The History Lesson* in Chardzhou (Turkmen Republic). Under the influence of alcohol, he swore at the Party, Lenin, Stalin, and Dimitrov<sup>11</sup> during the film, shouting, "Long live Hitler! Long live Fascism! Long live America!" He continued to rant about the Soviet government after he was detained and taken to a police station.<sup>12</sup>

K. P. Panchenko worked as a locksmith at a locomotive depot. On July 3, 1956, Panchenko spoke about a new tax on livestock, which was being discussed at a meeting of the village of Levandovsk (near Lvov). He said that "in Stalin's time, they choked us for thirty years and now . . . they're fleecing us. . . . But our time will come, and we'll get even with this government!"<sup>13</sup>

M. G. Parakhin was a quality inspector at a Moscow factory. On July 4, 1957, he attended a meeting and spoke out against the resolutions of the July plenum of the Central Committee. He said: "This is Khrushchev's doing, that pretender.<sup>14</sup> He ought to be shot!" In a conversation about the situation in Hungary, he said that a time would come when Communists would be hanged in the USSR.<sup>15</sup>

On July 12, 1957, I. M. Fiodorov, a worker in the Magadan region, attended a village meeting. He stated: "The people do not believe the resolution of the Presidium of the Central Committee. The Central Committee and the Party are slandering Molotov, Malenkov, and Kaganovich."<sup>16</sup>

A. I. Karzhov, a retired man from Abkhazia [an autonomous republic in Georgia], went to a collective farm meeting in July 1957 and expressed his dissatisfaction with the resolutions of the July plenum of the Central Committee.<sup>17</sup>

N. I. Gushchin, a collective farmer from Khabarovsk territory, made a habit of criticizing the living conditions of the Soviet people to those around him. On October 2, 1957, he made a speech at a collective farm meeting, saying that the Party was deceiving the people and that life was better abroad.<sup>18</sup>

S. K. Martyniuk, a chimney sweep from the Grodno region (Belorussia), attended a collective farm meeting on October 12, 1957. After a presentation entitled "Forty Years of Soviet Belorussia," Martyniuk made the statement that people had lived better before the revolution, that they had not eaten moss or tree bark, and that they had had enough bread and bacon. Now, he said, they really do fleece peasants; they'll take your last rooster away from you.<sup>19</sup>

On October 26, 1957, A. Saliev, who had a criminal record and was unemployed, gathered a crowd at a bus stop in front of the train station in Stalinabad<sup>20</sup> and talked for ten to fifteen minutes about how Khrushchev's policies were incorrect.<sup>21</sup>

On December 1, 1957, V. P. Kulakov, a collective farmer, was at a showing of the film *Troubled Road* at the Vyzheles village club in the Riazan region when he went up to the front and said that the movies showed lies: "We've never lived like this and never will." He swore at Khrushchev and called him a "corn peddler." Kulakov also said that Khrushchev was wrong to throw Molotov, Malenkov, and Kaganovich out of office.<sup>22</sup>

V. I. Vinaev was a Party member and district inspector from the Orenburg region. In 1957, while speaking at Party meetings and with his coworkers, friends, and acquaintances, he criticized the resolutions of the Twentieth Party Congress on the cult of personality and the Anti-Party Group.<sup>23</sup>

A. I. Ushmaev, without a fixed occupation or permanent residence, created a disturbance at the Kharkov train station (Ukraine). "In an outburst of anti-Soviet rage, he defiantly tore up his voter's registration papers."<sup>24</sup>

A. P. Astakhov, an employee at a train station in the Cherkassy region (Ukraine), listened to Western radio stations. He repeatedly spoke at Party meetings about the Communists' treatment of non-Party workers, saying there was no democracy in the USSR.<sup>25</sup>

V. G. Kyrmyzy, K. K. Rumeuz, P. G. Bulgaru, and S. Z. Reutsoy were collective farmers from the Odessa<sup>26</sup> region (Ukraine). At a meeting on the annual report and elections, they created a disturbance, shouting, "Down with the Party and the Communists."<sup>27</sup>

V. M. Boshko, a collective farmer from the Nikolaev<sup>28</sup> region (Ukraine), replied to an invitation to attend an election meeting by saying: "The Soviets have lied to our faces for forty years."<sup>29</sup>

1958

V. D. Krasilnikov was a welder from the Ulianovsk region. On February 6, 1958, he spoke at an electoral meeting while inebriated. He criticized the way things are in the Soviet Union, the electoral system, and Khrushchev. He then created a disturbance in the hallway. In 1957-1958, he was detained more than ten times for hooliganism.<sup>30</sup>

G. V. Gruby was a collective farmer from the Pavlodar region

(Kazakh Republic) who often allowed himself to make anti-Soviet remarks between 1956 and 1958. On June 14, 1958, he attended a farm meeting at which the results of a competition were announced. The brigade that won was led by an ethnic German.<sup>31</sup> Gruby was drunk and began to shout: "You reward the Germans, but we fought against them in the war!" Then he declared that "we feed seven million Communists with our bloody calluses."<sup>32</sup>

On July 18, 1958, V. E. Sveshnikov, a Moscow mailman, was walking on the Arbat<sup>33</sup> during an officially organized street demonstration "against the aggression of the United States and Great Britain in Lebanon and Jordan" and began shouting, "Down with Khrushchev! Down with the Party!" He shouted that he was "for America and that the government keeps giving out apartments to the damn Yids while he gets nothing."<sup>34</sup>

### 1961

On November 7, 1961, A. P. Tsotadze, an assistant conductor, and T. G. Machitadze, a superintendent of the Zestafoni district Party committee (Georgian Republic), started a riot on a train going from Leningrad to Sochi, beating up a passenger and a steward and yelling, "Down with Khrushchev! Long live Stalin!" Witnesses described this event as an antigovernment rally.<sup>35</sup>

### 1962

I. K. Khadzhinov was a collective farmer in the Donetsk region (Ukraine). On June 19, 1962, at a meeting of his farm, he asserted that he was "against all authority, viewing it as a coercion of the people." He wrote a letter to the chairman of his collective farm, demanding "that he yield his position to me . . . and I will be the elder in the 'Prophet Elias' agricultural community."<sup>36</sup>

V. I. Magomedov was a worker from Makhachkala (Dagestan autonomous republic of the RSFSR). On September 14, 1962, "while drunk, he rode his bicycle to the offices of the regional and city committees of the Party. There he created a disturbance, gathering a crowd and . . . shouting that he hated Communists. He exclaimed that they had killed his mother and committed violence ever since taking power. He incited the crowd to beat up Communists."<sup>37</sup>

On November 7, 1962, D. D. Konovalov, a worker, "shouted calls

for anti-Soviet action” while marching in a parade across Red Square in Moscow.<sup>38</sup>

1968

On May 1, V. I. Goncharuk was “marching in a parade through Liberty Square in Kherson (Ukraine)” when “he tried to unfurl a home-made banner with anti-Soviet slogans and incited anti-Soviet actions.”<sup>39</sup>

1969

I. E. Krasniansky worked on the construction of the Krasnoiarsk hydroelectric station. On October 30, 1969, he attended a meeting where the results of the month’s work were being discussed. When a resolution was taken that certain workers not receive bonuses, Krasniansky began to rail against the leadership of his team, the Communists, the Party, and “a certain government leader.”<sup>40</sup>

N. V. Bondar taught in the department of philosophy at Uzhgorod University (Belorussia). In April 1969, he criticized celebrations preceding the centennial of Lenin’s birth. As a result, he was called before a departmental meeting, where he criticized the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.<sup>41</sup> After that, he was fired and moved to the city of Cherkassy, where he worked in a boiler room and wrote anti-Soviet letters to his friends and acquaintances. In April 1970, he addressed a number of letters of criticism to Party and state leaders. On November 7, 1970, marching past the tribune in a column of demonstrators in a parade, he unfurled a banner that read, “Shame on the criminal leadership of the Communist Party!”<sup>42</sup>

## Documents

• 71 •

Vitaly Lazariants’s Banner: “Withdraw Soviet Troops from Hungary”

A special memorandum from the deputy prosecutor of the Yaroslavl region to the deputy prosecutor of the RSFSR. November 15, 1956.

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On November 7, 1956, during a parade in Yaroslavl, Vitaly Emmanuilovich Lazariants carried a banner past the podium. The banner, which

Lazariants had created himself the day before, contained a demand to withdraw Soviet troops from Hungary. Lazariants was born in 1939. He is a member of the Komsomol and a tenth-grade student.

Lazariants has previously written poetry with anti-Soviet content.

On November 8, 1956, a criminal case was started against him. Evidence shows that this case can be prosecuted under Article 58-10 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Soviet Republic (RSFSR).<sup>43</sup> Lazariants was arrested on November 13, 1956.

Currently, the investigation of this case is being directed by the investigation department of the Directorate of the KGB for the Yaroslavl region under the Council of Ministers of the USSR.

GARF, f. A-461, op. 2, d. 10996, l. 1. Typewritten original.

## • 72 •

### Lazariants Is Found Guilty

From the notes of the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the RSFSR concerning the case of V. E. Lazariants. June 15, 1957.

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The court has found Lazariants guilty on two charges. First, he is guilty of making a poster in his apartment on November 6, 1956, which reads, "We demand the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary!" and taking it to the parade in Yaroslavl on November 7, 1956. [. . .] While marching with fellow student demonstrators in Sovetskaia Square, Lazariants unfurled this banner and carried it past the podium. Second, in ninth grade Lazariants composed a poem with anti-Soviet content that slanders the Soviet way of life. The poem states that socialism is the dirt of the twentieth century. [. . .]

Under questioning, Lazariants said: "I do not consider myself guilty . . . I made the banner at home. On November 5 of this year, I went to the store with Markova. . . . I heard two women talking to each other. One woman said that our troops had entered Budapest, and the other lady said, 'But go ahead and try to say that aloud.' As a Komsomol member, I know that I have the right to protest something if I don't like it. So that's why I had the idea to protest. . . . No one saw me make the banner. In the first version, it read: 'To avoid war, we demand the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary.' . . . On November 7 of this year, I wrapped the banner in paper and went to the parade. When

we got to Sovetskaia Square, at the end of the second podium, I threw the banner away.”

GARF, f. A-461, op. 2, d. 10996, l. 17. Typewritten manuscript.

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### Stepan Zakrevsky's Use of Cross and Icon to Replace Lenin's Portrait

From the special memorandum of the deputy prosecutor of the Dzhabul region (Kazakh Republic) to the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR concerning the case of S. S. Zakrevsky.<sup>44</sup> March 7, 1957.

The investigators have determined that on November 10, at 8 a.m. local time, Stepan Silvestrovich Zakrevsky . . . took a brass cross and an icon belonging to his landlady, Urusova, without her permission, and left the building. . . .

Zakrevsky went to a kindergarten and tore down a banner from the gate. The banner contained an appeal from the Central Committee, stating, “Working people of the USSR! Let us unify under the leadership of the Communist Party and the Soviet government! Let us mobilize all our energy and creativity for the great project of building Communism!” [. . .]

Leaving the kindergarten, Zakrevsky headed to an office building, where he attempted to tear down a banner that hung on the wall. He was unable to do so and headed toward a club.

Zakrevsky found a ladder near the club. He set it so the top was near the window above the doorway, went up the ladder, and tore down the portrait of V. I. Lenin. He threw the portrait to the ground, breaking the glass and the frame. He then put the brass cross and the icon where the portrait had been. Zakrevsky came down and trampled the portrait while making anti-Soviet statements.

On November 12, 1956, before issuing the arrest warrant, I personally interrogated Zakrevsky. He made the following statement: “By tearing down the banners and the portrait of the founder of the Soviet state, I wanted to awaken the people and show them what to do in the future.

“It wasn’t until I was middle-aged that I realized that Lenin’s program only deludes the people and leads them to struggle against God. This program has led the people to prisons and daggers.



“I developed my convictions, dissatisfaction, and anger while imprisoned in correctional labor camps.”

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 78491, l. 2-3. Typewritten original.

• 74 •

Boris Karpov's Sign: “Down with the New Prices!”

A special memorandum of the prosecutor of the Leningrad region to the prosecutor of the RSFSR and the head of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR. June 5, 1962.

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I write to inform you that on June 1, 1962, at 8:30 a.m. on Lenin Avenue in the city of Vyborg, Leningrad region, two soldiers detained a person who was walking with a sign hung around his neck. The sign, which measured sixty by eighty centimeters, stated, “Down with the New Prices!” in red paint.<sup>45</sup>

Later the man who carried the sign was found to be citizen Boris Pavlovich Karpov.<sup>46</sup> [ . . . ]

Karpov was detained and placed in the custody of the KGB. He explained that he had made the sign because he had experienced temporary hardships and had no place to live. [ . . . ]

On June 2, 1962, the judge of the Vyborg city court sentenced Karpov to fifteen days' confinement according to the decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR of December 19, 1956.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 93347, l. 1-2. Typewritten original.

## Leaflets and Anonymous Letters

THE DISTRIBUTION of anti-Soviet leaflets and anonymous letters was one of the most prevalent varieties of deliberate agitation and propaganda. Of the 4,500 oversight records on anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda from 1953 and 1986 registered in our database, nearly 1,100 cases (one in every four) concern the distribution of anonymous documents. (We have not included charges against prisoners in camps, which will be discussed later). According to our data, 29 percent of cases involved anonymous letters, and 71 percent involved leaflets; approximately 80 cases included both actions. The statistics do not tell us that distribution of leaflets was more common, only that these cases were more aggressively prosecuted.

The available data do not give a full account of the distribution of leaflets and letters. The KGB was unable to uncover all the authors of these documents, not all of those uncovered were prosecuted, and not all convictions are reflected in the oversight records. Moreover, if we look exclusively at the number of verdicts issued, we get an inaccurate view: the widespread application of “prophylactic measures” in the 1960s–1980s distorts the figures. From reports sent by the KGB to the Central Committee, it is clear that the number of authors of leaflets and anonymous letters who were identified greatly exceeded the number prosecuted. Until the end of the 1950s, the number of identified authors more or less coincided with the number of prosecutions, but from the beginning of the 1960s, the ratio began to change significantly. According to the KGB’s data, in the first half of 1965 only 13 people were prosecuted for distributing anonymous anti-Soviet documents, but 492 were “identified” as distributing such documents (405

of them underwent “prophylactic measures”).<sup>1</sup> In 1967, two years later, 114 people were prosecuted, and 1,198 people were identified by the KGB.<sup>2</sup>

In most the sources do not make it possible to judge whether the summary data on leaflets relate to the leaflets’ authors or to their distributors. Typically, the investigations did not go deep enough to elucidate such nuances. In this chapter, however, we are focusing on actions committed by individuals who are not participants in any underground organization possessing the technical means to distribute leaflets. These are individual actions: somebody would write a leaflet by hand and paste it in a visible place, mail it out, or otherwise distribute it. In the majority of such cases, the distributor of the leaflet was also its author. Even if he was copying someone else’s text, it was his own personal action all the same.

In the oversight records, prison and labor camp inmates comprise 17 percent of all those convicted of distributing anonymous anti-Soviet documents. For leaflet alone, the prisoners’ share of convictions was higher, nearly 30 percent. We will not be dealing further with this rather specific category, however. Typically, the “anti-Soviet” crimes committed by prisoners were impassioned expressions of outrage at the verdict against them (no matter how grave the crime may have been) motivated by the desire to get even. Most of these “political” acts were committed with intentional lack of secrecy: one prisoner wrote a leaflet and handed it to a case officer; another shouted out an anti-Soviet slogan while standing in line with other prisoners; a third got himself an anti-Soviet tattoo on the face; a fourth wrote a letter to Khrushchev, in which he used obscenities, and signed his name. Typically, a prisoner engaged in such an act to prompt a fresh consideration of the prisoner’s case under a different article of the Criminal Code, resulting in transfer to a special section of the camp for political prisoners, or to attract the attention of the camp administration and win a transfer to another camp. Inmates believed that it was easier to serve time in the camp for political prisoners; moreover, during the period of mass rehabilitation, there was also the hope that of being released along with the political prisoners. For many prisoners, a transfer to another section was vital because they had made enemies who threatened their lives, they were victims of homosexual demands, or they had lost at card games. A person in this situation could get away from his current place of imprisonment if a new criminal case was started against him: being under accusation, he would be isolated and

transferred to a prison, and he might later be convoyed to a new place after the verdict was issued. For prisoners who were already sentenced to a considerable term of imprisonment, the new sentence for “anti-Soviet activities” was generally subsumed under the previous one, and they did not have to serve more time. (This calculation did not always work. If a prisoner had already been categorized as “particularly dangerous” and had more than one conviction for a crime that could receive the death sentence, the new breach of the law could be seen as an aggravating circumstance, which would result in his execution.) If we add to this calculus the naive admission of one of our heroes that “he had committed his crime under an ‘anti-Soviet’ article because it was the easiest to commit,” it becomes clear that cases on anti-Soviet crimes in the camps are only marginally related to the problematic dynamic between the state and its opposition.

According to KGB data for 1962, the majority of people who distributed anti-Soviet documents were workers, followed by college and high school students, and then white-collar employees, retirees, and people without fixed occupation (table 4). By 1965, students had risen to the top of the list, although the workers’ share remained high. Among the “uncovered” authors, we find an unexpectedly high percentage of Party and Komsomol members (20–26 percent).

KGB memoranda for 1962 show that high school and college graduates made up a quite significant percentage (40 percent) of those who distributed anti-Soviet documents, according to data for 1962.<sup>3</sup> This is not all that surprising, since a person has to have a certain level of education to write, especially to write well and to the point. That said, some anonymous letters and leaflets strike the reader with their awkwardness and utter lack of clarity (this is especially true of the anti-Soviet compositions of prisoners).

A similar calculation from the cases of the Soviet Procuracy’s Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security gives the same general breakdown of the occupations of anonymous letter writers and authors of leaflets, which confirms that the materials we selected for publication are quite representative (see table 5).<sup>4</sup> Moreover, these materials allow us to extract a set of characteristics that distinguish the authors of each genre of anti-Soviet anonymous document.

The reports sent by the KGB to the Central Committee did not differentiate between leaflets and anonymous letters. This made sense, not only because the KGB had its own goals and tasks but also because there is no hard-and-fast line between the two kinds of docu-

TABLE 4. Authors of Anonymous Anti-Soviet Documents Identified by State Security in 1962 and 1965, by Social Group

	<i>1st Half of 1962</i>		<i>1st Half of 1965</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<b>By Occupation</b>				
Workers	364	35.0	123	25.0
White-collar employees	192	18.5	98	19.9
Collective farmers	60	5.8	37	7.5
High school and college students	210	20.2	128	26.0
Retirees	105	10.1	57	11.6
People without fixed occupation	108	10.4	49	10.0
Total	1,039	100.0	492	100.0
<b>By Party and Komsomol Membership</b>				
Party members	89	8.6	68	13.8
Komsomol members	116	11.1	59	12.0
Nonmembers	834	80.3	365	74.2
Total	1,039	100.0	492	100.0

*Source:* Compiled according to KGB reports to the Central Committee.

ment. We could propose the following definitions: an anonymous letter is mailed to a specific addressee (or dropped into a mailbox or under a door, or left in an office) and exists as a single original or in several (very few) copies, while leaflets, which are stuck on walls or left lying in places where they will be visible, are addressed to the public and meant to for as wide a distribution as possible. In reality, however, we have come across a number of intermediate and mixed kinds of document: a leaflet with two or three handwritten copies; a handwritten anonymous letter sent in dozens of copies to numerous recipients; a document whose author not only mailed it as an anonymous letter but also stuck it on walls as a leaflet (the author mailed more copies, in this case, than were stuck on walls); leaflets dropped into apartment mailboxes or mailed to real or imaginary addressees, and so on.

The nature of our particular sources also blurs the distinction between the two genres. Oversight department records rarely cite the texts of anti-Soviet documents in full; most cases contain only quota-

tions and brief summaries or simply mention that such texts exist. Oversight investigators preferred the term “anti-Soviet document” and did not specify what type. Given all this, the concepts of “anonymous letter” and “leaflet” as used here are somewhat tenuous.

Of the authors of anonymous letters, 12 percent had a criminal record, 13 percent were Party members, and 1 percent belonged to the Komsomol. The average age was forty-four, and 9 percent were women. Fifty-one percent were residents of large cities (that is, regional centers and capitals of republics), and 18 percent (just over a third of all the urbanites) lived in Moscow and Leningrad.

As for the authors and distributors of leaflets, 15 percent had a criminal record, 5 percent were Party members, and 13 percent belonged to the Komsomol. The average age of those convicted was twenty-nine, and 11 percent were women. Forty-seven percent lived in large cities, and 11 percent (almost a quarter of the urbanities) in Moscow and Leningrad.

Of those convicted of distributing both kinds of document, 10 percent had a criminal record, 64 percent lived in large cities, and 16 percent in Moscow and Leningrad. Their average age was thirty-eight years.

Roughly speaking, high school and college students tended to write leaflets, while retirees made writing anonymous letters (not all of which were anti-Soviet) a favorite hobby (table 5). Those who distributed leaflets were younger and included a larger number of Komsomol members and students. Industrial workers accounted for a quarter of authors in each category (and a third of those who distributed both kinds of documents). Few authors were collective or state farmers, and only a small proportion of authors were of the intelligentsia (and they wrote more anonymous letters than leaflets). A higher proportion of authors writing in both genres were had no fixed occupation. Since it is among the unemployed or irregularly employed that we find many of those with previous criminal records (14 percent of those who penned anonymous letters and 37 percent of those who wrote leaflets), we may conjecture that these people were carrying on a tradition of leaflet writing learned in prisons and camps.

The different occupational breakdown of authors in the two genres is undoubtedly related to the less severe punishment for writing an anonymous letter. A letter was safer to write than a leaflet: it was addressed to a specific person and left a loophole for the author, who could try to deny the presence of anti-Soviet intent (especially when the

TABLE 5. Authors and Distributors of Anonymous Anti-Soviet Documents by Occupation, 1953–1986 (%)

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Authors of Leaflets</i>	<i>Authors of Anonymous Letters</i>	<i>Authors of Both</i>
Humanities-oriented intelligentsia	8	5	7
Technical intelligentsia	10	7	10
Medical personnel	1	1	2
Industrial workers	23	24	34
Transportation employees	2	3	2
Employees in the service sector	14	8	7
Collective and state farmers	2	4	6
Students	3	18	6
Retirees	13	3	9
Employees of law enforcement agencies	1	0.5	1
Other	6	3	5
Persons without a workplace	12	15	8
Workplace unknown	5	7	2

*Source:* Based on analysis of the records of the Department for Oversight over Investigations of State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR.

*Note:* This table does not include data on prisoners, members of underground organizations and groups, sect members, or authors of nationalist leaflets.

case was under criminal investigation) or who could argue that he meant to criticize specific shortcomings or was simply sharing thoughts with the addressee (he “wrote down what he saw in reality, but did not know that this reality was anti-Soviet”).<sup>5</sup>

A leaflet was another thing entirely. Its very form implied a deliberate action against the state. Understandably, many authors of leaflets were members of the most mobile social group, youth, which was also the one imbued with a romantic and revolutionary spirit by Soviet propaganda. Although approximately 15 percent of leaflet cases involved groups, only 5 cases among all these we found involved people writing anonymous letters together.

Nonetheless, both kinds of activity were punishable by law; in fact, the writing and distribution of both leaflets and anonymous letters were offenses under the same article of the Criminal Code. Nor was anonymity a guarantee of safety: authors were tracked down whether they signed the documents or not. Thus, in either case, the authors

needed to have made some kind of decision to cross the boundaries of the permissible.

Making a leaflet was a difficult task. Some one-off leaflets provoked by a particular event were written by hand, sometimes in block letters, each copy being made either separately or with the use of carbon paper. "Professionals" made multiple copies of leaflets on typewriters, used rubber stencils, or made photographic copies of their leaflets (by shooting the text with a camera and printing it as a regular photograph). Sometimes they used homemade hectographs. We even know of some cases in which small underground printing presses were set up, usually using typefaces that had been stolen from somewhere.

Access to copy technology of any kind in the USSR was extremely difficult—precisely because of the fear that copying would serve anti-Soviet purposes. The KGB required all photocopiers in state institutions to be kept in separate rooms, with reinforced doors and keypad locks. The employee who operated the copy machine was the only person allowed in the room, and the employee spoke with those ordering copies through a small window in the door. To make copies, a person had to fill out a form with the exact number of pages to be copied and receive approval from the director of the institution. Orders were recorded in a special log. KGB agents read the log on a regular basis, verifying the recorded page counts against the machine's counter.

The situations and motivations that led people to write leaflets varied greatly. A person might be worn down by the difficulties of everyday life or hung over, or have just had a fight with a spouse. Authors usually wrote on sheets torn out of school notebooks (the most widespread source of paper, especially in the homes of people whose work did not involve intellectual labor; the majority of Soviet people even wrote letters on sheets torn out of notebooks). Typically, leaflet authors made two or three copies and posted them in public places around their village of residence: on a wall or door of the village store, club, school, or collective farm administration or simply on a fence.

The wife of a schoolteacher from a village in the Krasnoiarsk region provides a poignant example. She could not find a job in the village where her husband taught (there are tens—sometimes hundreds—of kilometers between populated areas in this region), and the family, which included small children, was very poor. The husband became depressed and started to write anti-Soviet notes in his diary, and the wife wanted to hang herself, but her husband convinced her not to do so, telling her, "We have to keep struggling." She took his advice lit-



erally, and in February 1962 she wrote out five leaflets about food shortages, lines in stores, and high prices and posted them around the village. The young woman was very lucky: her case did not go to court and was closed “given the lack of evidence of a crime”—one of the very few instances that we know of in which a case was closed in its earliest stage. This may have happened because a local KGB agent felt sorry for the schoolteacher’s wife and did not want to make a case against her.<sup>6</sup>

We might ask why people wrote anonymous letters and leaflets. Why would someone send letters containing furious denunciations of the Soviet state and Communists—sometimes with obscenities—to the editor in chief of *Pravda* (the Party newspaper), to the Central Committee, or to Khrushchev himself? We can understand the psychological need to curse the government, which could be blamed for all of a person’s troubles. But behind such somewhat irrational behavior probably lie subconscious beliefs about how things are connected and about the power of words.

Many researchers, writing on a variety of topics, have noted the special place that literature—the written word—holds in the Russian consciousness. It has been argued that for various historical reasons, writing has taken on a religious function rather than a merely cultural one. This tendency to attribute supernatural power to the written or even spoken word dates back to ancient beliefs, which were expressed particularly in spoken magic (that is, incantations). Russian curse words have a similar genealogy.

If a curse not only insults but also, in some sense, does harm, we can accept the logic of, for example, sending Khrushchev a scolding, obscene anonymous letter (and calling him a pig virtually meant casting a spell). A letter criticizing the Soviet social order or Communists was, in effect, “calling evil by its name,” which was supposed to cause the evil either to disappear or to lose its power, since pronouncing (or even knowing) the name gave one power over the evil.

The theme of truth seeking, which was ubiquitous in anti-Soviet texts and speeches, is a legacy of Russian folklore. Time and again, people would say that “there is no truth [*pravda*] in the USSR,” that “you can’t find truth anywhere in our country,” that “newspapers lie.” The Russian concept of truth means more than accurate information: it includes a certain concept of justice (not in the juridical but in the moral and religious senses), as well as the hidden “true [*istinnyi*] meaning” of things, made manifest by the process of naming them. The

process of “casting a spell with truth” is culturally very significant. In my opinion, it is this concept that served as a subconscious reason for the Russian public’s swift disappointment with the results of perestroika. People had expected that naming problems and societal flaws aloud (or in print, or, most importantly, from imposing government podiums) would make them go away almost instantly. The problems did not go away, and people were baffled and disappointed. Thus, an anonymous letter to a representative of the state was a subconscious act of “casting a spell on evil forces.” At the same time, the intention behind letters addressed to foreign radio stations or the foreign press was more pragmatic and modern. Such letters denouncing and exposing Soviet Communism would be used in Western propaganda, read over the radio, or published; that is, they were largely appeals to public opinion, not to mystical forces.

A leaflet (as well as its lesser form, graffiti on the wall of a building or a fence) was also a public form of expression. The author expected that when people read it, they would stop giving routine support to the unjust state; in particular, they would not vote in elections. This logic evokes the rationalist worldview of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. However, this simplistic thinking could not be as prevalent and consistently reproduced if it were not based on the same subconscious belief in the reality of “the uttered truth.”

The anonymity of anti-Soviet leaflets and letters was not solely the result of a desire to escape punishment for sedition. If the “truth” was expressed, that had meaning in itself, and identification of a specific author might invalidate the truth by reducing it to someone’s personal opinion. This is why many of the authors of anonymous documents wrote on behalf of “all the people,” “all the laboring masses,” “the proletariat,” “the collective farmers,” or another social group, or signed the letter with a pseudonym like “The Furious One” or “The Just One,” making the author a representative without personal identity. In some cases, the authors practiced a peculiar form of imposture by recounting autobiographies that were false but reproduced elements of a typical biography of an “ordinary Soviet person” (for example, an urban white-collar worker might write as if he were a worker at a large factory). All of these choices resonate not only with a depersonalized archaic consciousness but also with the values of Soviet ideology; people learned from earliest childhood that the “social” was higher than the “individual,” that the personal dissolves into the collective and only thus acquires value. Representatives of the proletariat were val-

ued more than their “allies,” the peasants, while peasants, in turn, were undoubtedly more “of the people” than were offspring of intelligentsia families.

Leaflets that called people to struggle on behalf of a fictitious party or movement were very common. They exhibit the authors’ need to inscribe themselves into some kind of larger group or to embrace a recognizable ideological platform, identifiable by the name of the organization (All-Union Democratic Front: A Revolutionary Social-Democratic Party, Socialist Union for Freedom, Party of Justice for the Soviet People, Underground Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Pure Marxist-Leninist Party, Party of True Communists—to give a few examples). This need to be part of something larger than the individual coexisted with the idea of a romanticized revolutionary underground, motifs for which were absorbed from official propaganda. The names of organizations listed here clearly evoke the legendary beginnings of the Revolution, the “Leninist” period, which propaganda represented as a time of happy lives full of high purpose. The names suggested that the mythical “golden age” of the Revolution, which had been spoilt by “bad people,” would someday return. This cyclical sense of time, which was psychologically significant for many authors of leaflets, was a rationalized vestige of a mythological perception of reality—suppressed by education and a new type of upbringing but also reanimated by Communist propaganda.

Thus, people wrote letters anonymously not only because they were afraid (although this was undoubtedly a factor) but also because speaking in one’s own person was somehow immodest: “Who are you to talk? Your opinion doesn’t matter.” A collective opinion was a different matter; it was much better to be a depersonalized part of “the people.”

When writers of letters to newspaper editors and Party and state organizations started signing their names more often, this was a sign that the previous system of thought had begun to crumble. The belief that a personal opinion could be significant, implying that the individual mattered, along with a readiness not to be like everyone else, showed that changes had taken place in the Soviet mind-set, that it was beginning to be transformed and “modernized.”

Commentary by O. V. Edelman

## Documents

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Why Is *Pravda* Hypocritically Silent about the Situation in Our Country?

An anonymous letter from P. N. Yarushevich<sup>7</sup> to the editors of *Pravda*. January 4, 1953.

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In the December 1 issue of last year, that is, 1952, *Pravda* ran a photograph of a delightful child with the heading, "This child lives in a Greek prison." The last words of that heading—implying that the imprisoned child was a tragic symbol of Western freedom and civilization—leads us, *Pravda* readers, to some gloomy reflections.

We learn from *Pravda* that they persecute patriots in Greece.

But what's going on in our country? Why is *Pravda* hypocritically silent about what things are like here? Doesn't *Pravda* know that similarly delightful children are held in our prisons and labor colonies? Our contemporary spirit of democracy, resting on Article 58 of the Criminal Code, creates perfect conditions for the restoration of bureaucratic plutocracy by allowing it to greedily enrich itself and by opening the way for intentional and unintentional crimes. Not to mention that even completely innocent people are confined in the camps in order to suppress their [forbidden] activities. [. . .]

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 55376, l. 4 (both sides). Handwritten copy.

### • 76 •

Many Innocent People Are Still Languishing in the MVD's Torture Chambers

A leaflet written by S. F. Levin<sup>8</sup> in April 1953. See also document 77.

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Comrades! Be vigilant!

The Kremlin doctors were arrested in order to deprive comrade Stalin of the care and treatment he needed when he was ill. The doctors' admissions of guilt were obtained with the usual techniques, which have long been used in the MVD's torture chambers. Many of us have experienced these techniques firsthand.

Who needed comrade Stalin's death? The new dictator, Malenkov, and his friends did. Comrade Stalin's body hadn't yet cooled when they began to divide power among themselves. At the same time in Moscow, a new

Khodynka was taking place: fifteen hundred people died in the crowd by the House of the Soviets.

Now Malenkov is trying hard to consolidate his power. He has released hundreds of thousands of criminals from prison, who will be his support base from now on. To disguise his crimes, he is creating a panic about chauvinism and anti-Semitism.<sup>9</sup>

Under the pressure of public opinion, he was forced to take the noose off the poor doctors' necks and admit that the MVD was using inadmissible methods of investigation.<sup>10</sup>

Comrades! Many innocent people are still languishing in the MVD's torture chambers. Many lives are still threatened. Fight to save them! Fight those . . . [omitted word, presumably obscene] and stool pigeons! Fight the bloody dictators! Fight for the truly free Soviet motherland!

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 79588, l. 30. Certified typewritten copy.

. 77 .

Our Policies Are the Most Just, but Our Propaganda Methods  
Are the Most Draconian

An anonymous letter from S. F. Levin to the Central Committee. March 1956.

We Soviet patriots demand that the shameful, barbaric practice of jamming foreign stations be ended. This iron curtain cutting off live radio was created by bloody Stalin, who was more afraid of truth than of anything on earth.

You stand for peace and international cooperation, but you still don't lift this iron curtain. Are you afraid of the truth too? But the truth still reaches the people, and the people are gradually losing trust in you. Or are you afraid of the bad influence that Western propaganda could have on the people? But an old bird is not caught with chaff—our people are not children. Even a quarter of a century of the Stalinist circus did not fool them.

Lenin was not afraid of criticism, wherever it came from. He even used Averchenko's wicked satire to benefit the Soviet state.<sup>11</sup> Lenin loved the people and believed in them. But the narrow-minded Stalinist dictatorship despised and feared the people.

Our country is the best, our ideas are the most progressive, our policies are the most just, but our propaganda methods are the most draconian, most demagogical, and most false. It's appalling!

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 79588, l. 31. Certified typewritten copy.

## You Are Killer Whales

An anonymous letter from P. M. Chuvakov,<sup>12</sup> sent to the Central Committee.  
March 1955

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Bulganin and Khrushchev,

I don't know if you're any good as politicians, but you're shitty masters of the country. Fifteen percent of the population is unemployed in Moscow,<sup>13</sup> and if you add the peasantry, they are getting an axe to chop off your heads so that you don't insult the people that you order about, promising them the moon. About bread, groceries, their lives, and so on and so forth. Now we see how much is left of that property that our fathers and grandfathers and we ourselves fought for, fighting for the existence of the Soviet state. They took it all away from us, leaving us just our skins, but we won't give them to you, we need them as long as we haven't got rid of you. We workers have nothing to lose—we are not afraid of that bomb you talk so much about. Of course people live while they're alive, and in general, what have we got to lose. Just think about it: it doesn't make a difference to us if we kick the bucket today or tomorrow, but it does to you scumbags. You need power, you need workers' blood, peasants' blood, you swine get drunk on it, but your end is near if you don't give up those crazy projects you have under way; just let us survive until April, then we'll put on a nice show for you. You don't have to think about it before you step over the corpses of workers that you claim to represent anytime, anywhere, so you should know that what gave birth to you will also destroy you. None of us need the chatter in the newspapers that expresses everything in figures; what we need is reality. How many times have you lowered prices on goods, but everything stayed as it was, life just became harder, which you don't even notice, sitting behind those walls that still protect you.

But that's not everything: you should know about the mood of the people who are unhappy with the policies you institute. Remember once and for all that your guns are not pointed at marshals, generals, or officers, but at soldiers whose families suffer in silence because of the freedom of speech, while a sharp axe is raised over your head. We just have to lower it, which is not a threat but the real truth, and that will open everyone's eyes. If you fight for seats in the government and call each other bad names, do you think you can hide a cat in a bag?—No, you can't: one day it will climb out. Look at the countryside far from Moscow, and the towns where people are half starving, living in misery, with nothing to wear. Of course, that doesn't concern you, but if you think about it, it's you that got us there in the first place, you and no one else. Of course, there are

such people, and there are lots of them in your vicinity—I call them hypocrites, even if they do have ration cards. They talk in favor of your policies in your presence, but when you're not there they speak against you. It's all as clear as day to you, but you run around talking about the Virgin Lands and forget about all the rest; you forget that there are some who can't move like the young, who can be turned in any direction. You old people have seen good things too, but you expected better things, and what have you achieved? That no one pays attention. After such righteous indignation, you can and should get what's coming to you, what I described above.

You should give it some thought and recognize that you're alive—and by “you” I mean all those who don't work, don't produce anything, but hold high positions—but you don't understand a thing. You don't have to look far for an example, for there are millions of examples. Just look at how many machines there are in motor pools, construction sites, workshops and factories: there are billions of them, but the machines are sitting in the snow, outside on the ground, they are dekulakized,<sup>14</sup> broken, made unusable. What can I say to managers like this, who are nothing but saboteurs. It's all the responsibility of the managers, who have Party membership cards, but what can they get from them except a reprimand or a transfer from one workplace to another? Nothing. Just look at the machine-tractor stations:<sup>15</sup> things are just as bad there. Combines, tractors, and all the agricultural machines that are crucial are broken; who's in charge there, saboteurs like you? Go ahead, choke us with your state loans, which you impose to support the national economy at the expense of working people, take that blood, which was given to help humanity; you've trampled it into the mud, that's a fact—it was done with the people watching, and the people see it too and draw their own conclusions, and you know what they are. About a person who shames you with the truth, you can say, What a scumbag: but this is honest and direct criticism; it's telling you that we are not going to achieve a prosperous life but will end up broke. You managers are losers; pressure and deception won't help you get anywhere. And for this appalling state of things we should chop off your heads. Think what it means for the whole territory of the USSR. Materials, machines, equipment—so many things have been let go to rack and ruin that we could have lived comfortably on that money, but in this pigsty we won't ever have anything, no matter how you try to convince us. People are people no matter what orders you give, and you are jackals from the steppe, or vultures. You think you're the vanguard of the proletariat because you have destroyed that class, pursuing your own self-interest. You don't think at all about us, you have no time to think, you have to show off how businesslike you are, tilling the Virgin Lands, but what will come of it, you don't say. You opened up a little brothel for the

youths so that they would have fun out of doors—look, you just sent young girls and guys to the Virgin Lands so that their generation will be debauched and damaged, but you probably keep your own kids at home, you scoundrels. That's clear enough. They should have stuck you out in those Virgin Lands so that you would come to your senses and wouldn't surprise us with those antics; all of this may be nice for you, but it's bitter for us to watch it happen; the newspapers said that Beria wanted to destroy you guys, and he should have; all of you scoundrels should die because you're part of the same damn gang. Look at the construction sites, mines, wood-processing facilities, fisheries, oil fields—what in the world is going on there?—and look at other natural riches—what are they doing to them?—and you know about that too, don't you? So why don't you shut up. You can't escape the people's response.

That trend that the people are angry about, the trend toward unemployment and suppression of our civil rights—you're the ones that will be destroyed by it. We can see through your sweet promises; we can see what you're driving at. We will smile and applaud you when we see you, but we will keep an axe ready so that we can chop the devils' heads off. There is only one way out. If you're a piece of shit, then what are you doing leading the country, and there are so many of you bureaucrat types. Wherever you look, there's some fifth-wheel asshole. I'm calling a spade a spade because of my indignation at what you've done over thirty-seven years.

Tell me now, will any of you ignoramuses finally lead us to Communism or capitalism? What are you going to do—keep quiet or give us more of your lying propaganda? The people want to know. Your stomach can't handle this, it disgusts you. You shitty Marxists have chosen the path of criminals, so go ahead, declare a state of siege throughout the Soviet Union, and introduce rationing—then things will be even better. Get ready for the axe by your bed.

Only in a letter can a worker speak frankly to you, using our famous "freedom of speech."

You have to remember Stalin, too, like a drowning man grabbing a straw, making his tearful "brothers and sisters, fathers and children" speech in 1941,<sup>16</sup> but now we're smarter and we tell his successors that we're no brothers of yours, no sisters, no fathers, and no mothers. You should stay away from kids like that, they're nothing but scum; they were not born of the Russian people but are dirt that knows it's dirt. Who are your mothers, brothers, sisters, and fathers? Who gave birth to you? I think you are killer whales, and I'm not the only one; this is an appropriate animal to compare you to, for it is a predator that looks like you and is not born of humankind but is a wild animal by its nature. As such, its life is solely devoted to surviving, eating anything that falls into its mouth.



And you are like this animal; the difference is that you've learned how to chatter in Russian a lot and camouflage yourselves as human, but you haven't got it right—to be human you have to be able to feel, and killer whales don't have that sense. So now we need to summon all our strength to destroy you.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 78493, l. 20–23. Certified typewritten copy.

. 79 .

Ashkhabad Was Destroyed by an Explosion at an Atomic Facility

From the resolution of the senior assistant to the prosecutor of the Kirov region on the case of V. I. Savin.<sup>17</sup> March 9, 1957

Savin [. . .] has been found guilty of making twelve anti-Soviet leaflets on May Day in 1955 while at the apartment of citizen Radvillo (at the 101st kilometer of the Omutninsk district, Kirov region). In his leaflets, he maliciously slandered the living conditions of the Soviet people and the peaceful policies of the Party and the Soviet state and called on others to overthrow the Soviet state. On May 2, 1955, Savin posted one such leaflet on the door of a store in Peskovka village and dropped another into a mailbox, where it was found by postal employees. [. . .]

Savin has admitted his guilt. During the preliminary hearing and in court, Savin explained: "I wrote an anti-Soviet leaflet and made a total of twelve copies while at the 101st kilometer of the Omutninsk district, in Radvillo's apartment, on May 1, 1955. To do this, I took a school notebook with twelve pages, put carbon paper between the sheets, and made twelve copies of the anti-Soviet leaflet with a marking pencil, in block letters. . . . When I was in Peskovka on May 2, 1955, I dropped one leaflet into a mailbox and stuck the other on the door of the grocery store. . . . I did this so that policemen would run around and look for the person who could have done it, because I had gone to the police several times asking them for a residence permit, and I was turned down everywhere, so I decided to take revenge."

Later Savin testified that he had forged his identification documents and for this reason could not get a residence permit, and also that he had listened to broadcasts of Voice of America and, being angry with the state, decided to write and distribute the leaflets.

The content of the leaflets is as follows:

"Comrades! We are broadcasting the latest message from Voice of America. We are celebrating May Day, drinking and having fun, but

meanwhile a thousand poor Russian people don't even have bread. Look at train stations; look at how many miserable people just released from imprisonment are dying from hunger there because no one will hire them. And think how many of them are dying in the camps from backbreaking labor and hardships. They have rebelled several times, in different places of imprisonment, and every time they were shot in a country that prides itself on its humane values. Isn't that so? Do you know that during construction on the Amur River, ten thousand young men and women died?<sup>18</sup> And at a time when the Communist head honchos are making loud claims about peace and banning the bomb, that's when they bring their armed forces up to the borders and produce atomic and hydrogen bombs. For example, Ashkhabad was destroyed by an explosion at an atomic facility.<sup>19</sup> In Norilsk, a hydrogen facility is running; its number is 503/1.

"Down with Communism, that plague of the people! Long live true democracy!

"MOAC agent *Sinichkin*."

As Savin explained, MOAC stands for "Militant Organization of Anti-Communists" and was borrowed by him from Voice of America broadcasts.

In his appeals (in particular, the appeal of January 2, 1957), Savin stated that he wrote anti-Soviet leaflets under the influence of his father, I. P. Savin, who turned out to be a British spy. After Savin's arrest, I. P. Savin committed suicide for fear of being exposed.

During his February 29, 1956, interrogation, Savin testified that that statement about his father's treasonous activities was a lie that he invented to get his verdict rescinded or his sentence reduced.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 67339, l. 17-18. Typewritten original.

## • 80 •

### *Pravda Should Be Renamed Hogwash*

From the resolution of the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the RSFSR on the case of M. I. Dudchenko.<sup>20</sup> March 21, 1957.

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Dudchenko was found guilty of writing and sending four anonymous anti-Soviet letters to the Central Committee and the editors of *Pravda* between March and November 1955 while living in Rostov-on-Don. [. . .]

In court, Dudchenko asserted: ". . . All of my doubts and hesitations about the political leadership of certain figures date back to the Twenti-

eth Party Congress—specifically, to the exposure of Stalin. Like everyone else, I was brought up to love Stalin my whole life. Stalin had been a leader and a teacher to the Soviet people. . . . Who, then, brought us up to love Stalin? Primarily, it was his brothers-in-arms, Khrushchev, Bulganin and others, and we believed them. Take any of their articles written prior to the Twentieth Party Congress: they begin and end with Stalin's name. [. . .]

"In my letters, I wrote that the people as a whole hate the Central Committee, but I can't tell you why I wrote this. I wrote without any real purpose. . . . I began to doubt the correctness of the Party's politics as demonstrated by the actions of certain leaders: Khrushchev and Bulganin. I didn't go to anyone to talk about my doubts, I didn't tell anyone about them, but I wrote those letters, which are accusing particular leaders, not the policies of the Party.

"After the Twentieth Party Congress, some scholars at the Academy of Sciences expressed their opinion, and look what happened to them. This is why I was afraid to go to Party organizations and state my doubts. Before I started working for the Party district committee, I was certain that elections were conducted democratically and correctly. But when I saw how candidates were really selected, I was horrified. . . . Of course, it was stupid of me to write anonymous letters, but I don't consider that my letters were directed at the Soviet state." [. . .]

The anonymous letters (copies) read as follows:

"To: Khrushchev and Bulganin

"On August 7 of this year, you organized a global drinking party,<sup>21</sup> and now you're bragging about it to the whole world. Your drunken mugs are displayed in all the newspapers. Are you really so stupid that you can't think what the Soviet people, who live in exceptionally difficult conditions, will say about you? It's one thing to get drunk, but why announce it in the newspapers? You're stranglers of the people, nothing more. You prosecute someone for stealing one hundred rubles, but you yourselves spend millions on drinking and living it up. You're not waiting for Communism, you're already living it, but you promise Communism to the Soviet people ("You shall find freedom in heaven").<sup>22</sup>

"You're scumbags—that's what the people think about you. You're shady adventurers. You've sucked the blood and sweat from the people and grown yourselves bellies and snouts like pigs. You bathe in butter, but you sow corn for us.

"You call yourselves Leninists, but you've strangled Lenin's cause.

"Lenin wouldn't get drunk when the people were in need. Remember the time when Bonch-Bruевич raised Vladimir Ilyich [Lenin]'s salary and got reprimanded?<sup>23</sup> Just look at yourselves. Fine Leninists you are! Scumbags! Now Americans travel all over the country and see all our abject

poverty. When any of them sees dilapidated shacks or collective farmers dressed in rags, they take photos of them. That's shameful. It would have been better if you had given the people's money to old people and the cripples who beg for money, but you just drink it all away.

"That's what you should talk about at the Twentieth Party Congress. You call on us to criticize and self-criticize<sup>24</sup>—try criticizing yourselves for once.

"Tell us about unemployment, about what you would do with those 640,000 [unemployed people], or couldn't you care less about them?

"It's you that are the enemies of the people.

"F. Belousov

"P.S. I enclose your photos. Take a look at your drunken snouts (especially Khrushchev's and Zhukov's). Maybe you are sober right now."

"Dear comrade from the Central Committee,

"Please be sure to forward the letter to its addressees. Let them know what the people think about them."

"To the editors of *Pravda*:

"Every day we, the laboring masses, have to read the so-called Communist empty talk about the 'good' and 'happy' life here in the USSR, which your newspaper and other papers publish. It's sickening to read these words when we see swarms of unemployed people appear who have to eat horsemeat [to survive]. And a worker who makes 500–600 rubles can't even afford to buy horsemeat. And there are millions of people in our country who make 200–300 rubles.

"The newspaper blab a lot about freedom: freedom of speech, freedom of the press. All of that is hogwash. What kind of 'freedom' can we talk about when we know what hypocritical practices go on among members of the government; such things can happen only in Fascist or Communist regimes (the needless deaths of great men: Voznesensky,<sup>25</sup> etc.).

"And how was Malenkov's government formed? It is just mockery, that 'freedom.'

"You've driven the country to abject poverty, and now you're chattering day and night about the Virgin Lands and corn.

"You explain to us that we have food shortages because of the large growth of the population. It's an embarrassment to listen to this idle talk (it turns out that Malthus was right all along).<sup>26</sup> A great agricultural nation that cannot feed its own population—what a disgrace!

"They imposed the same kind of living conditions on other nations, too. See, Tito is a bad guy because he won't dance to our tune.

"And life is 'bad' in the United States and other countries. They have

unemployment there, but the difference is that in those countries they pay money to the unemployed, whereas in ours they don't. They push people to commit crimes, and then they put them in prisons, which are already crammed full.

"People are terribly depressed. These days wherever you go, you can hear bitter jokes about that 'happy life.' People aren't inhibited about saying such things anymore. And why would they be: 80 percent of the people live a miserable existence.

"No, dear friends! Even though your newspaper rambles on about our people's patriotism and their love for the Party and that useless government, this is just idle talk. Hogwash. Listen to all the jokes about this love that are going around.

"So we have 'freedom' of the press in the USSR. Could you please publish my statement in your newspaper? No, you'll take the coward's way and pass it on to state security: a criminal like this must be tracked down.

"Don't go looking for that criminal. Eighty out of one hundred Russian citizens would sign my letter. And, alas, there are too many letters like this to track down every author. Death to Communism, and freedom to the people!

"Kalinsky

"P.S. What I wrote, you newspapermen know perfectly well. In fact, you know it better than I do. I wrote not to convince you but to add my voice to the voices of the suffering people.

"Given what I wrote, I ask you to appeal to the Central Committee for your newspaper to be renamed *Hogwash* instead of *Pravda*.<sup>27</sup> Then things will be fine and dandy."

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 77030, l. 14-18. Typewritten note.

## • 81 •

### Either Sack the Stores or Start a Second Revolution

From a special report from the deputy prosecutor of the Moscow region to the deputy chief prosecutor of the USSR on starting a criminal case against F. F. Abrosimov.<sup>28</sup> January 17, 1957

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On December 7, 1956, the representative of the KGB Administration for the Moscow region in Serpukhov launched a criminal case against Fyodor Fyodorovich Abrosimov under Article 58-10, part 1, of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR. [. . .]

The case was launched on the basis of an anonymous letter written by Abrosimov and sent to *Kommunist*, the newspaper of the Serpukhov region, on October 20, 1956. The content of the letter was as follows: “Comrade Editor, could you please answer through *Kommunist* when you’re finally going to learn how to do business as a Russian person should, that is, not stand in lines for two hours or more, for example, for bread, sugar, and a number of other foods? People are squashed like sardines in a can in the stores, and there’s no order at all. That’s the first thing. And the second thing is, when are you going to stop getting on the nerves of Russia’s workers? We are facing a choice: either sack stores to teach you how to do business, or start a second revolution to free us from the Bolshevik yoke. For thirty-nine years, you’ve tortured the Russian people: we can’t breathe anymore. Give us a chance to breathe a little, as we did in pre-revolutionary Russia. That’s all for now (enough for the first time).”

In a note explaining his actions, sent to the secretary of the Serpukhov city Party committee, Abrosimov admitted that he had written the letter and explained it by stating that he had worked two shifts at his factory, was very tired, and could not get any bread at the store after work because of the long line. He came home without bread and was very upset, and wrote a letter to the editor.

Abrosimov described his action as thoughtless and apologized. [. . .]

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 77137, l. 1. Typewritten original.

## • 82 •

### The Events in Hungary Are Close to the Russian People

A special report from the deputy prosecutor of the RSFSR to the deputy chief prosecutor of the USSR on the arrest of S. I. Osipov.<sup>29</sup> November 13, 1956. See also document 83.

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I hereby report that on October 31, 1956, the Leningrad Administration of the KGB arrested Sergei Ivanovich Osipov under a warrant from the Leningrad city prosecutor. [. . .]

The grounds for the arrest were as follows.

On October 30, 1956, at approximately 2 a.m., Osipov was detained while pasting leaflets on top of a theater poster on the corner of Vtoraia Linia Street and Sredny Avenue.

The leaflet contained the following text: “Comrade Russian citizens. The Russian people understand and sympathize with the events in Hun-

gary, where the working class has come out against the undemocratic Communist regime.

“We’ve had enough lies and deception about the happy and prosperous lives of the people. Under the banner of the people’s happiness, on behalf of the people, and in the name of the people, they are destroying that same people.”

A second leaflet was confiscated from Osipov when he was taken into custody. The text of that leaflet was as follows: “The events in Hungary, where the working class has come out against the unpopular Communist regime, are close and understandable to the Russian people, who have been driven to the brink of abject poverty. They are the Khrushchevs and the Bulganins, whose hands, like Stalin’s, are red with blood, covered in Russian people’s blood, and now they are defending their palaces and their millions. They have turned into enemies of the people. Down with Khrushchev. Long live the free Russian people. Await our leaflets signed, ‘The Russian People.’”

Under interrogation, Osipov admitted that he had prepared the leaflets himself and pasted one of them on the poster, and that he did this because he was drunk, having previously had 750 grams of vodka with his wife as well as 250 grams on his own.

Osipov also stated that at home he had handwritten letters to comrades Khrushchev and Tito, the writer Ovechkin,<sup>30</sup> and others, which he had prepared while sober.

In the letter to comrade Tito confiscated from Osipov, he had written as follows: “. . . Tito decided to break free from the iron claws of the Communist Moloch, which had doomed the Yugoslav people to the unthinkable tragedy that the Russian people are enduring in their socialist paradise under the sage leadership of the Communist Party (another fifteen to twenty years of this paradise . . . and the country will turn into an uninhabitable desert). Tito and his circle did well to free themselves from the disgraceful instructions and decrees from Moscow and not take the Leninist and Stalinist path . . . and after all of this unheard-of, disgusting series of events, Khrushchev complains that all this was arranged by our enemies and those agents of imperialism, Beria and Abakumov.<sup>31</sup> . . .

“This blatant lie, which is apparent to any minimally literate person, comes from the mouth of a government leader, who had been acknowledged to be wise. . . .”

An investigation of Osipov’s case is currently under way.

### His Anti-Soviet Statements Were Not the Result of Mistakes

From the resolution of the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR on S. I. Osipov's case. August 26, 1960.

On April 28, 1960, the deputy prosecutor of the RSFSR filed a protest at the Presidium of the Supreme Court of the RSFSR with the objective of lowering Osipov's sentence to five years' imprisonment. However, on June 8, 1960, the Presidium of the Supreme Court of the RSFSR declined the appeal, stating that the manuscripts confiscated from Osipov and the leaflets that he posted contain malicious slander of the Soviet state's policies, that Osipov is a university graduate and has had good political preparation, that from 1931 to 1940 he was a Party member, and that his anti-Soviet statements were not the result of mistakes or incomplete understanding of select political issues but rather of his hostile attitude toward the socialist social order.

This conclusion of the Presidium of the Supreme Court of the RSFSR merits agreement for the following reasons:

During a search of Osipov's apartment, state security confiscated anti-Soviet anonymous letters addressed to a number of well-known persons, various manuscripts in which he expounded his anti-Soviet ideas, and the works of V. I. Lenin, Engels, *The History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks): Short Course*, and other texts. Osipov had made notes and remarks, also anti-Soviet, in these texts.

For example, in a leaflet confiscated from Osipov as he was being detained, and also in a leaflet taken down from the wall as he was being detained, he wrote: "Whoever tears off this leaflet is an enemy of the people. [. . .] Await our leaflets signed 'The Russian People.'"

In a manuscript [. . .] Osipov wrote that the conditions of life in the Soviet Union amount to criminal exploitation of the peasants, such as no monarch or landowner ever dreamed of, that workers slave away at their jobs, collective farms are deserted, fields and meadows are overgrown with trees, and workers have a hard time feeding themselves on their wages, much less their families, and so forth.

In a letter to Sholokhov,<sup>32</sup> he wrote that the Soviet people are cruelly exploited and mercilessly robbed, and, as a result, they are morally degraded.

Osipov's scribbles in his notebook [. . .] are devoted to Joseph Stalin. In this manuscript, he talks about his hatred for and anger with Stalin, insults him in all kinds of ways, and goes on to write that he has led the Soviet population to abject poverty, creating slave-like conditions of labor,



choking free thought, history and social science, art, free artistic expression, and more.

In his notebook on philosophical questions, [. . .] Osipov wrote a “critique” of Marxism, calling Marxist teaching dogmatic and irrelevant to real life. He went so far as to say that society had made progress under capitalism, but under socialism it was falling back.

In many of his letters (to Prokofiev<sup>33</sup> and others) and notes, Osipov argued again that under the banner of the people’s welfare, the people in the USSR are being destroyed. Osipov also wrote about this in a letter to N. S. Khrushchev.

Osipov wrote anti-Soviet comments in the margins of books, newspapers, and magazines that were confiscated from him, as well as in articles on political topics. On the cover of a brochure by V. I. Lenin, “Who the Friends of the People Are and How They Fight against Social-Democrats,” he wrote: “Who the Marxists Are and How They Fight against the Friends of the People.”

From all that has been stated here, it follows that Osipov has a hostile attitude toward the Soviet socialist order and has been writing down his thoughts for a number of years in the works that were confiscated from him. The statement that he made in court and in his appeal, that he wrote all of this while drunk, is untenable. [. . .]

I ask you to reject Osipov’s appeal.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 74112, l. 14 (reverse)–16 (reverse). Original manuscript.

## • 84 •

### Workers, Go on Strike!

A special report from the deputy prosecutor of Moscow to the prosecutor of the RSFSR and the deputy chief prosecutor of the USSR on the arrest of B. V. Krylov.<sup>34</sup> December 1, 1956.

On December 1, 1956, the prosecutor of Moscow [. . .] issued an arrest warrant for Boris Vasilievich Krylov. [. . .]

On the night of December 30, 1956, Krylov posted eight maliciously anti-Soviet leaflets in the Komintern and Dzerzhinsky districts of Moscow. [. . .]

The authorship of the leaflets was determined by handwriting analysis and Krylov’s admission.

The leaflets read as follows:

1. “Down with the *gendarmes*! Down with the gluttony of bureaucrats! Down with Khrushchev’s clique.

“Workers! It’s your business to put things to order in the country. Secure a better life!!

“Strike. If you want to be the masters of the land, go on strike!

“Long live the workers!”

2. “Workers! Do you want to be real democrats? Go on strikes! Seek the support of your fellow workers! Chase out all the ‘masters’! Down with the *gendarmes*! Down with the gluttonous rulers! Down with the bureaucrats! Teach them some self-respect! Go on strikes! Strike in an organized way! Long live the workers!”

3. “Down with Khrushchev’s clique!

“Down with the gluttony of administrators!

“Down with the pack of *gendarmes*!

“Bait those dogs, beat them, destroy them!

“Don’t waste time!

“Demand higher pay!

“Long live a second 1917 [revolution]!”

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 74137, l. 1. Typewritten original.

• 85 •

Rise Up, Rise Up, You Russian People!

From the statement of the investigator of the Investigation Department of the Directorate of the KGB under the Council of Ministers of the USSR on the dropping of the case against E. Ya. Shatov.<sup>35</sup> June 10, 1957.

On December 28, 1956, the Moscow KGB Administration arrested Efim Yakovlevich Shatov. [. . .]

The cause of Shatov’s arrest was numerous anonymous anti-Soviet documents that he had prepared and distributed. [. . .]

During the preliminary investigation, Shatov admitted that he had prepared and distributed the aforementioned anonymous documents in 1956.<sup>36</sup> [. . .]

However, when accused under Article 58-10, part 1, of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR,<sup>37</sup> he only partially admitted his guilt. Under interrogation on January 7, 1957, he testified as follows: “I do not plead guilty to preparing anti-Soviet documents, keeping them in my apartment, or distributing them. I do admit that in 1956 I prepared, kept in my apartment, and distributed documents in which I criticized certain measures of the Party and government and particular members of the Soviet government and leaders of the Communist Party.” [. . .]

Below we cite several excerpts from anonymous documents distributed by Shatov:

“We are not dumb cattle whose sole purpose in life is to moo ‘For’ unanimously. Citizens! Stand up AGAINST glittering promises that are never fulfilled! Stand up AGAINST the so-called Leninists.”

“Down with the capitalist ministers! Down with the lords!

“Raise the banner of the Soviet social order! [. . .]”

Rise up, rise up, you Russian people,

We are not afraid to fight for freedom.

We will overthrow the nobility and their entire vile race!

Our rulers are the source of all our troubles.

We need to replace these rulers

With honest and loyal Leninists,

And throw the top leaders down the hill,

And clear the Soviets from filth.

The rulers stopped caring about the people:

Their own skin is dearer to them.

The country is ruled by a bigwig . . . (naming a secretary of the Central Committee),

And that good-for-nothing f . . . (naming a secretary of the Central Committee),<sup>38</sup>

They are subverting our Soviet social order

By supporting the rich and the ‘aristocracy.’

As for those who are in need, they only

Gladly promise them eternal peace.

In their striving toward freedom, the people will not be defeated,

Although rifles will be used against us.

If we can’t attain freedom through peaceful means,

We will take it through a general strike. [. . .]

[The file also has an evaluation of Shatov’s physical condition with a statement that Shatov cannot appear in court given his poor health. As a result, the investigator concluded that the case should be closed.]

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 76978, l. 5–7. Certified typewritten copy.

## • 86 •

### I Am an Old Party Member

A resolution of the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR on the case of P. I. Golovanov.<sup>39</sup> April 20, 1960.

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Pyotr Ivanovich Golovanov [. . .] was found guilty of writing and sending three anonymous anti-Soviet letters in 1947 and 1956, at a time when

he was unhappy with Soviet government measures connected with the raising of state loans. He was also found guilty of having in his home German Fascist newspapers and magazines that contained anti-Soviet articles and of illegal possession of a Walther pistol<sup>40</sup> and bullets. [. . .]

The investigators established that Golovanov wrote three anonymous anti-Soviet letters and sent them to comrade Khrushchev at the Central Committee of the Party, comrade Kozlov, secretary of the Leningrad region Party committee, and comrade Bazovsky, secretary of the Frunze district committee of the Party (with copies to comrades Khrushchev and Kozlov).

In the letter to the secretary of the Central Committee, comrade Khrushchev, Golovanov wrote: "I am an old Party member. I used to be proud of my membership. But for more than thirty years, the Party has been degenerating, and there are more philistines, careerist types, bureaucrats, and simply swindlers among its members. . . .

"You cloistered leaders, you have failed, too: you are not leaders but shameful caricatures of leaders. You are taking our country to moral disaster. Millions of Soviet people curse and laugh at you; they believe no one, believe in nothing. . . . It is very sad for me to admit that I, like many Party members and millions of our people, do not respect our Party.

"Only love for our long-suffering motherland holds back many of us who are on the brink of fighting against, you lousy leaders.

". . . Subversive anti-Soviet organizations have been organized in many of our big cities. They gather materials about the ugliness, hypocrisy, and outrages of our lives. . . ."

Golovanov went on to write of alleged improprieties in the raising of state loans, claiming that working people felt no enthusiasm about pledging contributions and that many refused to pledge. At the end of the letter, Golovanov wrote: "Leaders, what do you think you're doing? Can't you see that this is extraordinarily effective anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda, the kind that our evil enemy can only envy! After the death of the unforgettable Joseph the Despot, you made a mess of economic questions, and many others, too.

". . . Personally, I am deeply convinced that millions of Soviet people would buy bonds for the motherland voluntarily if you only knew how to ask them properly, and that would be very useful help to the state. Think about it before it's too late!"

In court, Golovanov testified that he kept the Fascist newspapers and magazines and the pistol as mementos of the war and that he wrote and sent the anonymous letters in order to note the shortcomings in the work of Party leaders.

In his appeal, which he addressed to the Central Committee, Golovanov sets out his biography and writes of his work in counterintelligence during the Great Patriotic War<sup>41</sup> from 1941 to 1946. Without denying his

crime, he asks that the accusation under Article 58-10, part 1, of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR be removed from his case on the grounds that he made a mistake out of confusion and lack of understanding of the situation. With regard to the pieces of Fascist and anti-Soviet literature confiscated from him, he writes that, "like many soldiers, he picked them up to keep as unique examples of Hitler's lies," and that they had lain undisturbed in his home since 1945, and he had not shown them to anyone.

At the present time, Golovanov has been released from imprisonment and lives in Leningrad.

Given that Golovanov is a university graduate and a former Party member, and that he is quite competent in regard to political issues and knew what he was doing, I believe that there are no grounds for reopening the case and filing a protest to remove [the accusation made under] Article 58-10, part 1, again of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 74202, l. 20-21 (reverse). Handwritten original.

## • 87 •

### You Are Losing Russia

An anonymous letter by G. N. Pushkarev<sup>42</sup> to the chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, K. E. Voroshilov, late 1956–early 1957.

Comrade Voroshilov,

The people are really offended that you are losing Russia. They want to inform the government that it is not looking out for Communism but only for itself.

On December 20, 1956, Dulles<sup>43</sup> agreed to the USSR's proposal about disarmament and the use of photo reconnaissance and asked Britain to speed up implementation. It looks as though they have figured out your weak spots, and once you reduce our army and weapons production, they will clobber you. Of course, it's all well and good for Khrushchev: he has used his position to make a landowner's nest in Kiev<sup>44</sup> and is waiting for the Americans; it's too late to talk to him about Communism. He even picked a partner for himself, the tsarist officer Bulganin, and they are giving away the MTS,<sup>45</sup> the nuclear plants, and our secrets to the capitalists for free, making it all the easier for them to up and choke Russia to death. America is many thousands of times richer and stronger than we are, and it wouldn't give away its riches to anyone; it keeps its secrets at home—it doesn't even let our athletes fly through its territory, and rightly so.

2. [*sic*] Our government is so weak that they gave West Germany away

to the Fascists, not saying a word about our people, and now they are demanding 4,043 people back,<sup>46</sup> but who is going to give them back now, and anyway they wouldn't come because no one cares about the Russians that fought to make you that warm nest, although you just strangle them with famine and the tax you put on childlessness.<sup>47</sup> You should have put Russians in a good position right at the end of World War II, but you have forgotten about them, or else you think that they will fight for you even when they are hungry and have only one rifle for every five people, and that without a breechblock. Now everyone is educated and understands that we should live like Khrushchev.

Conclusions:

1. We should [not] disarm, for we will perish.
2. We should not give away our MTS and nuclear plants for free.
3. Tito should be driven out of the USSR.
4. Give the Russians a good life.

Sobolev

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 84595, l. 20 (both sides). Handwritten copy.

• 88 •

The Arrest of a Schoolboy: "He Distributed Malicious Anti-Soviet Leaflets"

An informational memorandum from the deputy prosecutor of the Moscow region to the deputy chief prosecutor of the USSR and the deputy prosecutor of the RSFSR on the arrest of A. A. Latyshev.<sup>48</sup> March 22, 1957. See also documents 89–91.

On March 15, 1957, with the approval of the regional prosecutor, the Moscow region KGB Administration arrested Anatoly Aleksandrovich Latyshev. [. . .]

The grounds for the arrest were that in February 1957, A. A. Latyshev prepared and distributed several malicious anti-Soviet leaflets signed "O.O.R." in the town of Dmitrov.<sup>49</sup>

Two similar anti-Soviet leaflets were found in a search of Latyshev's apartment.

A. A. Latyshev's authorship of the anti-Soviet leaflets has been confirmed by handwriting analysis [. . .] and his own confession on March 12 and March 18, 1957.

Attachments: a copy of the anti-Soviet leaflet.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 78034, l. 1. Typewritten original.

. 89 .

The Schoolboy's Leaflet: "We Are Honest Russian People"

A leaflet written by A. A. Latyshev.

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Comrades and friends!

We ordinary people address you. We know that because of our leaflets, Communist propaganda will call us counterrevolutionaries, but you shouldn't believe this. We are honest Russian people, who write this because we see all the abuse and oppression of our people.

You shouldn't believe propaganda, either: don't think that the Hungarian people, who tried to cast off the yoke of Communism, were counterrevolutionary too. The Hungarian people paid a very dear price for that attempt: 25,000 Hungarians died for freedom; 150,000 fled abroad; and 5,000 soldiers, who were acting blindly on orders from above, will remain forever in the soil of that distant country. Think how many mothers shed tears now! But there is no freedom in our country, either. Thousands of political prisoners languish in the chambers of the Soviet Gestapo. We are not allowed to listen to Western radio stations, which tell the truth.

Our collective farmers receive 100 to 200 grams of bread for each labor-day, plus a few kopecks from Khrushchev. We don't have the right to express our thoughts. We vote for whoever the Communists shove in our faces. Our writers compose to order.

Our slogans are: "Freedom to the Russian people!" and "No single-party government system."

GARF, f. R-8131, d. 78034, l. 2. Certified typewritten copy.

. 90 .

Investigation of the Schoolboy: "The Influence of Foreign Radio Stations"

A report on A. A. Latyshev's case sent by the deputy prosecutor of the Moscow region to the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR. April 16, 1957.

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[. . .] Regarding the case of Anatoly Aleksandrovich Latyshev, I report that he comes from a working-class family. His father, Aleksandr Filipovich Latyshev, was born in 1896 in the town of Dmitrov (Moscow region) to a family of middle peasants<sup>50</sup> and worked as a cafeteria employee, a hospital attendant in a psychiatric ward, a motor mechanic, and, for

one year, a policeman. He fought in World War II, currently receives a pension of 210 rubles a month, and has a vegetable garden of 0.13 hectares, where he has set up a greenhouse.

The mother, Sofia Mikhailovna Latysheva, b. 1901, is a native<sup>51</sup> and a housewife. Besides Anatoly Latyshev, the couple have another son, Aleksei Aleksandrovich Latyshev, b. 1922, a Party member, and a daughter, Maria Aleksandrovna, b. 1925, who is married and lives separately from her parents.

Anatoly had quite a comfortable life, with a Neva radio and a TV. He often listened to foreign radio stations.

He did well at school and was a Pioneer leader. There were no complaints about his behavior at school or at home.

Latyshev often wrote news items about the life of his school for the regional newspaper.

The investigation has determined that Latyshev wrote the leaflets under the influence of foreign radio stations.

The investigation on this case will be completed in the next few days.

GARF, f. R-8131, d. 78034, l. 3. Typewritten original.

• 91 •

A Report on the Schoolboy's Case: "He Admitted His Guilt"

A special report on A. A. Latyshev's case from the deputy prosecutor of the Moscow region to the deputy chief prosecutor of the USSR and the deputy prosecutor of the RSFSR. June 4, 1957.

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Further to our special report of March 22, 1957, I inform you that during the preliminary investigation, Anatoly Aleksandrovich Latyshev admitted his guilt, expressing a mood of depression and stating that even if he were released now he would still throw himself under a train.

In court, Latyshev reconfirmed his guilt and said that he had committed a serious crime against the motherland and that he had written the anti-Soviet leaflets solely under the influence of the broadcasts of the American Voice of America radio station. He also noted that during his two and a half months in confinement, he had come to a full recognition of his guilt and promised the court to erase this shameful spot from his biography.

Given Latyshev's sincere remorse, as well as the fact that he was not yet fifteen when he committed the crime, and [given] his good behavior at school prior to the arrest, the prosecutor (who had supported the accusation in court) asked for a suspended sentence.



On May 30, 1957, the Moscow regional court sentenced Latyshev to a SUSPENDED SENTENCE of two years' imprisonment under Article 58-10, part 1, of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR and Article 53 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR,<sup>52</sup> and Latyshev was released.

GARF, f. R-8131, d. 78034, l. 7. Typewritten original.

## • 92 •

### Why Did We Overthrow the Tsar?

A report from the deputy prosecutor of Moscow to the deputy chief prosecutor of the USSR on the arrest of I. I. Panov.<sup>53</sup> February 26, 1958.

I hereby report that on February 18, 1958, the deputy prosecutor of Moscow, comrade Salonin, authorized the arrest of citizen Ivan Ivanovich Panov. [. . .] I. I. Panov is the perpetrator of five anonymous anti-Soviet letters, which he sent in February and May 1957.

In the letters Panov wrote:

“To comrade N. A. Bulganin:

“We residents of Moscow have written to tell you to carry out our orders immediately:

1. Banish all Jews from Moscow.
2. All Ukrainians, too.
3. Reduce the population of Moscow.
4. Supply all the stores in Moscow with all foodstuffs and manufactured goods.
5. Give housing to the entire population of Moscow.
6. Give medals to those who have worked in production for at least twenty years.
7. Do this if you value your lives.

“Regards,

“Residents of the city of Moscow

“You have until February 28, 1957, or we will do it all ourselves.”

“To comrade Bulganin:

“From the workers of all cities of the Soviet Union.

“We want to ask you a number of important questions: Why did we overthrow the tsar? Life is harder now; you have started to rob the people and don't want to be accountable to them. A worker earns a living for himself and his family through backbreaking labor, but most of the

day he practically works for free and enriches his exploiters, and those exploiters are none other than you and your friend Nikita Khrushchev.

"Your dachas line all the roads, and entire regiments and battalions of people are there to protect them; this is completely unnecessary.

"Under the tsar, there were counts and landowners, but it only took two dogs to protect a house, and now it disgusts us even to enter your homes, and where's your economics, or are you allowed to do this?

"A worker should have to work no more than seven hours a day, and he needs time for leisure, for cultural development, for exercising his rights as a human being and a family man, but that bullshit artist Khrushchev said at the Twentieth Party Congress that in 1957 the workday would be reduced and workers' vacation times would be increased, but all of that is just on paper, and all your bullshit has become repulsive to all the working people of the USSR.

"Our demands:

1. Reduce the number of people who protect the roads and your dachas.
2. Increase taxes for excessive housing space to forty rubles per square meter, since two people now live in forty-meter-square rooms, which is unbelievable, or else they rent it out for personal gain.
3. When will groceries appear in Moscow's grocery stores? Otherwise we will have to starve.
4. Abolish the income tax and the child tax throughout the Soviet Union until 1960.
5. Take away all privately owned cars, since there have been a lot of accidents resulting in human casualties in Moscow and the Moscow region.
6. Lower the cost of public transportation, for example, the subway and the trams.
7. Return the titles of officers working for the Administration of Internal Affairs (UVD) of Moscow in 1955.
8. Get the Yids, Ukrainians, Chinese, and Chuvash out of Moscow, and stop registering people from out of town and ex-prisoners released from jail as residents.
9. Stop pressuring people. That shouldn't happen here. For example, people of fifty and over should be released from political instruction.
10. Stop robbing honest folks, and never do it again.

"Your response should be broadcast on the radio."

Under interrogation, Panov confirmed his authorship.

## It's a Disgrace

An anonymous letter by V. G. Petrianov<sup>54</sup> to the editors of *Pravda*, April 1957.

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To the Central Committee of the Party

I would like to make some critical comments about our government, starting, of course, with the Party.

The Party's propaganda constantly tells us that the Party is tirelessly and continuously concerned for the people's welfare, that it has no other interests than the people's well-being. When you compare their propaganda with people's actual lives, everything is back to front. Newspapers and magazines give all kinds of statistics indicating immense growth. This is already the sixth five-year plan period in which such statistics have been featured. Recently, the Twentieth Party Congress ended. That congress was "unanimous" and was presented as a great triumph. Everything is fine, everything is calm, as though our country were thriving and nothing untoward had occurred. How could it have happened that the Party is good, the Party is dear to us, but a cutthroat and a murderer stood at the helm of that same Party for thirty-five years? Of course, many people believe in the Party even now, but many did not, and now, of course, they will not believe in it in the future.

How did it come to pass that someone did whatever he felt like before your eyes, threw the entire country into an abyss and killed your comrades, while you were afraid and kept silent, hiding behind each other's backs? You may not be ashamed of yourselves, but all the people are ashamed for you. You are "reaping what you sowed."

For thirty-eight years you've incessantly repeated to the world that he was a "friend, our own father, our dear leader," but who was he really? An enemy of the people.

And you didn't just see what went on and stay silent—you helped him and facilitated his dirty business. Evidently you want to say: Look, we have exposed him. And once more we're in the right. No, you're in the wrong, and the people won't forgive you for it.

You have created a life of enslavement for the people, especially for the peasants. You use all kinds of means to squeeze the lifeblood out of people.

Take the most important question, the one that's always on the people's agenda: food supply. There is no improvement in sight. Prices are rising, but there is nothing to eat, and the stores are as empty as they have always been. There is no meat, fish, flour, butter, or cereals.

Meanwhile, you keep singing the praises of the collective farming system. You even call us the collective farming superpower. Yet in your collective farming "superpower," people have starved and continue to starve.

Flour is sold only three times a year, and they sell you, or “give out,” as the saying goes, just three kilos per person. Moreover, one has to stand in line at least for two days to get it.

So that’s what you call “concern for the people’s welfare.”

In tsarist Russia, where they tilled the land with a wooden plow, there was plenty of flour at any time of the year, and they even delivered it to your door, and not in paper packages, as they do now, but in cloth bags.

What are we to make of this?

Hundreds of thousands of tractors and combines are working out in the fields, but there is no bread.

In some large cities, you can still buy baguettes, but in many cities, and, especially, in the villages, you’d be hard pressed to find one. Some foods have been in short supply for a long time, and some we just haven’t seen in years. As for the administrators of regions, cities, and districts, they always have everything. They are like bloodthirsty lions. I wish you could put everybody in the same living conditions, from Khrushchev to the ordinary worker. If Khrushchev’s and Bulganin’s wives had to walk everywhere, standing in lines all day long and often coming home empty-handed, then they’d believe us. But now even city officials don’t stand in lines but get everything delivered to their homes, and that’s why no one wants to know about the people’s needs.

A few days ago, a man went to the store and couldn’t believe what he saw. The shelves were fully stocked with sausage, and there were no lines. What a miracle! But it turned out to be “that” sausage.<sup>55</sup> The man rushed forward, but someone told him: “That sausage is made out of old nags,” and a third says, “If only they would feed this sausage first to Khrushchev and Bulganin and then to us!” But if we eat up all the horses, what will we eat then?

A lot of people say that when Khrushchev and Bulganin were in India and Burma,<sup>56</sup> they should have bought elephants and monkeys, which are plentiful over there—the Russians will eat anything and thank you for it. But Khrushchev and Bulganin were probably enjoying their fine receptions and garlands too much to think about such an initiative.

Now they pay for their reception with goods: everything is exported over there.

We are amazed: for centuries, all sorts of fish were abundant in Russia, but all of them disappeared. Where are the carp, pike, perch, bream, sturgeon and starred sturgeon, salmon and chum salmon roe and pressed caviar? We haven’t seen them at all for years. Sometimes they sell them, or else they “give them out” to us,<sup>57</sup> but they’re the kind of fish that we used to consider inedible.

And where did the meat go? For ages, there was plenty of it, and now all we have are figures in the newspaper about increasing production, but

no meat. And where are the millet, buckwheat, and rice? For ages we didn't think anything of them, we couldn't even see the bottom of the bag, and now there's none. And where are the regular and drawn butter? You name it, it's missing.

For days, people wander from one empty store to the other, and then they go to the market, where everything is expensive but always there.

Or take manufactured goods. Before, the shelves in the stores were bulging with various good-quality woolen fabrics, and tricot fabrics, too, and where did it all go? And what about shoes? They disappeared completely. If something appears, there is a terrible line for it. They make shoes that are 80 percent rubber or made out of different leather substitutes—where is the leather, which we used to have plenty of? Rubber messes up people's feet. Why are the prices of all goods so high?

The prices have been lowered to six times less than they had been, but they're still two and a half times more than they were before the war.

That's a price cut for you!

Shvernik said at the Twentieth Party Congress that salaries had increased by 91 percent in comparison to the prewar level. There's a tall tale!

We probably say and think that they won't get it in any case. But take salaries and pensions: surely you see what's going on. Some people were practically turned into Soviet capitalists, living lavishly while others (and they are the majority) starve. Is that what Lenin fought for? Of course, if he were alive, he wouldn't have let this mess happen.

Here is an example: Someone makes 700 rubles a month, the government loan costs him 70 rubles, the income tax is 46 rubles, the child tax is 42, so a total of 156 [*sic*] is taken out of his paycheck, and 544 rubles end up in his pocket. That's just enough for one person to survive. But what if he has an old father or mother? And he has to pay rent and utilities from these wages, and buy potatoes for 2 rubles a kilo at the market. And not everyone earns this much. They get 600 or 500 or 400 or 300 rubles a month. How are you supposed to live on that? And your obligations amount to 10,000 or 20,000 or 30,000 a month. That's how it is.

What we sought turned out to be our undoing. That's why there is so much abject poverty around, and it's growing every year. There are old men and women among our beggars, and soldiers, and the disabled. There are old people who cannot get jobs and aren't paid a pension—they're told that they don't have a long-enough job record. That's the kind of absurd situation that you can find only in our "rich country."

And take the law about the child tax: what a wild idea! Khrushchev himself bragged that he came up with the idea. I wish he had thought up something useful, but this is an idiocy that the people don't need.

You created an unwieldy bureaucratic apparatus. You churn out ministries like hotcakes. You appoint your friends and family to positions all around.

Or take a look at our youth. They are ready for anything, they're not afraid of any difficulties. They went to sow the Virgin Lands, they are traveling all over the country. These are truly heroic exploits. But what are the results? There was nothing before, and there is still nothing.

Are you still oblivious to the fact that you have ruined the villages? Everyone has fled from them. Spring comes, then summer, and everyone from the towns is forced to go and work like convicts in collective farms. Is that really the answer? It's time to come to your senses and create normal living conditions in the collective farms and bring back the people who have fled from the villages. Living conditions there were worse than they used to be under serfdom. People worked for five or more years for no money; they got no bread and had to eat potatoes, vegetables, and different surrogates. They haven't seen sugar and a number of other foods in years. Who would go to live in a village? The horrors of that life make people panic. There are endless taxes. Everything the collective farmers earn goes to pay taxes. But in his speech, Khrushchev is so sorry for American farmers, who go bankrupt and leave for the city to find jobs.

He shouldn't be worrying about them: our people are worse off. Why close your eyes to the truth? The people know it all. The people wonder what in the world is going on.

Everyone expected and hoped for improvement, but then there was this bolt from the blue: Stalin turned out to be an enemy of the people. You can't understand it even now; they took down his portraits, but to this day they still award the Stalin Prizes. It would be better if they had kept quiet about it. Meanwhile, the people say that they prayed for thirty-eight years to a devil-god instead of god. They made fools of us so shamelessly and brazenly—there's never been such idiocy in history. Even people in the vanquished Germany live better than we do. It's time to give people a real life, not just in words but in practice. The people have a right to it, and you are obligated to do it.

Soon there will be a new loan. Pledges from miserly wages will be made "unanimously." You'll see how the government throws money left and right. Everyone gets credit; they build plants, factories, and palaces for everyone, but your own people get fleeced and don't have room to breathe. All of Asia and Europe have become our dependents: just be our friends, and we'll give you everything, the Russians will make more. And now you're placing your hope on corn.

Khrushchev is a corn peddler; he has made fools of us all with his corn. But corn won't save him. He won't escape from damnation. It's a disgrace—the collective farms ruined people's entire lives, but that's not enough: you have to spread this vile system to all the satellite states.

It's a disgrace.

• 94 •

There Is No Reason to Close His Case

From the resolution of the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR on the case of A. E. Drogaitsev.<sup>58</sup> June 12, 1959. See also document 95.

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He is found guilty of writing and sending two anonymous anti-Soviet letters to the editors of the *Pravda* and *Sovetskaia Rossiia* newspapers in July 1957.

In May 1958, he wrote another anonymous letter, also anti-Soviet, and sent it to the editors of *Pravda*. [. . .]

Drogaitsev admitted his guilt and testified at a court session that he wrote this anonymous letter and sent it to the editors of *Pravda* and *Sovetskaia Rossiia* because he disagreed with the July plenum of the Central Committee, but he had no counterrevolutionary intent. [. . .]

Drogaitsev's case was taken out and reviewed in response to his appeal. In the appeal, he does not deny his authorship of the anonymous letters but writes that he was convicted erroneously, for he did not have a counterrevolutionary objective when writing. He asks [the Procuracy] to dismiss his case and release him from imprisonment.

Having reviewed the materials of the case, I find that the Drogaitsev was correctly convicted.

There is no reason to dismiss his case.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 86152, l. 12 (both sides). Typewritten original.

• 95 •

We Ask You to Discuss the Issue of Democracy Inside the Party

Anonymous letters by A. E. Drogaitsev to the editors of *Pravda* and *Sovetskaia Rossiia*.

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I. To the editors of *Sovetskaia Rossiia*:

We ask you to discuss the issue of democracy inside the Party.

Why do they equate Khrushchev and our Party?

If the majority of the members of the Presidium of the Central Committee decide to remove Khrushchev from the position of first secretary, this is considered to be an anti-Party group.

Khrushchev's sole business should be growing corn, and even that, only in the south.

All the press and all the radio stations are flinging loads of dirt and foul words on comrade Molotov.

But from ordinary Soviet people you hear only indignation. Do blind men like Khrushchev and his kind really think that the people have more trust in them than in comrade Molotov, Lenin's only surviving brother-in-arms and a most illustrious leader of our Party and the people? Of course not. The pygmies Khrushchev, Furtseva, and others, they're not worth even the hair on comrade Molotov's head.

They won't get away with their anti-Party actions against comrade Molotov. They think that once they've snuck into power under the guise of Leninist unity, they can deceive the Party and the Soviet people. Everyone says, How could it happen that comrade Molotov gave more than fifty years of his life to struggle for the people, and now he's going against the people? No, no one believes this dirty slander about comrade Molotov.

Comrade Molotov should make a speech on the radio, or you should publish his speech at the plenum in which he subjects Khrushchev to scathing criticism for his anti-Party and far-from-Leninist actions.

Now it has become known that at one point Khrushchev was a Trotskyite.<sup>59</sup> His recent actions after Stalin's death show that he has remained a Trotskyite.

He only dresses up in a Leninist toga. But the ears of an inveterate Trotskyite stick out from behind that screen.

That is demonstrated by the fact that he blackened all of our Party's achievements of the past forty years. Khrushchev undermined the prestige of our Party. Unpleasant things followed from this: the events in Hungary, Poland, Yugoslavia, and so on.

Khrushchev is in a hurry to leave his mark on history: he makes speeches wherever he goes, with and without good reason. But that doesn't increase his authority, for he does not say anything smart, but makes empty talk. His crude actions repel all honest people. He appoints his own people—his sword bearers—to all positions, according to connections and personal loyalty. The people will not forgive him for this.

Non-Party workers and white-collar employees

## 2. Why do they hide the truth?

The unbridled and slanderous campaign against the most illustrious figures of the Bolshevik Party, comrades Molotov, Kaganovich, and others, has already been going on for a week.

This slanderous campaign exceeds all past ones in scale and methods of slander. Even the methods and scale of Goebbels and the Voice of America pale in comparison to this mendacious falsification.

Khrushchev, a usurper and an out-and-out Trotskyite, and his clique



skillfully mask their true goals with Lenin's sacred name. And that's understandable: otherwise, the people would immediately expose them and throw them onto the dustbin of history. That's why Khrushchev's clique is forced to wear the mask of Lenin. But you can't ignore the facts. Everybody is asking why they hide the true statements of comrades Molotov, Kaganovich, and others from the people. Well, it's because the Trotskyite Khrushchev and his clique are afraid of the truth.

But you can't hide the truth. History will put the Trotskyite Khrushchev and his clique in the stocks. No matter how hard Khrushchev tries to hide his Trotskyite ears behind the screen of Leninism, of Leninist unity, they still stick out. The Trotskyite clique cannot deceive the masses much longer.

Deep down, the people support the most illustrious Leninists, comrades Molotov and Kaganovich; and the Trotskyite Khrushchev shouldn't kid himself that he can deceive the masses by disguising himself as a Leninist. The people do not believe this.

*Petrakovsky, non-Party*

June 7, 1957

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 86152, l. 13-14. Certified typewritten copies.

## • 96 •

### He Lost His Patience

From a memorandum on the case of P. S. Kuzmin,<sup>60</sup> written by the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR. July 24, 1958. See also document 97.

The court found Kuzmin guilty of working (in addition to his main job) as the guard at a warehouse of the office of communication at the Bakharrevka train station of the Sverdlovsk railroad and writing two anti-Soviet leaflets because he was unhappy with the politics of the Soviet state. He did this on the night of October 24, 1957, while on duty at the warehouse checkpoint. Kuzmin inserted one of the leaflets behind a torn oilcloth on the door to Car no. 2 and put the other under a rag that hung by Car no. 13.<sup>61</sup> On October 24, 1957, these leaflets were found by B. and S., who lived in these cars, and were given to K., a squadron captain.<sup>62</sup> [ . . . ]

In his appeal to the Party Control commission of the Central Committee of the CPSU [Communist Party of the Soviet Union], Kuzmin does not deny writing the anonymous letters but states that he wrote them because

the local state organizations did not provide him with housing space and he “lost his patience” and wrote the anonymous letters.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 82931, l. 7–9. Handwritten original.

• 97 •

The Material Wealth of Our People Goes to the Wrong Places

An anonymous appeal written by P. S. Kuzmin.

1. An appeal by the workers of Molotov,<sup>63</sup> Kazan and Kirov!

We workers, peasants, and intelligentsia, declare for all to hear that we cannot bear this intolerable and strenuous situation any longer. What happens now? As before, low-paid workers don’t make enough to live on—for example: 300 rubles, what can you do with 300 rubles when lunch in a public cafeteria costs 4–5 rubles, and even then, you barely get enough to be full? In stores, prices are completely out of sight. Food is twice as expensive as it was in 1939–1940, and eight [times] more expensive than in 1928. Life is getting harder and even harder for workers and peasants. What is the reason? The whole reason is that all the material wealth of our people goes to the wrong places. When a person dies, he doesn’t need anything anymore, but while you’re alive you should live well—that’s what the Communists, denying the Bible, teach you. In the Bible, it says that you will go to heaven, but workers and peasants don’t have anything good in this earthly life either, and in the afterlife they’ll be completely done for. So what happens? Five million people are already living under Communism: that’s the government and the ministers. Ten million people live under socialism. That’s the administrators, generals, engineers, colonels, and some directors. Meanwhile, 185 million people wait for socialism to come, and a million of them don’t even know what socialism is, much less Communism.

They blab on the radio and write in the newspapers that the Soviet people live well and want peace, not war, but it’s the 185 million people that want peace, while the 15 million generals, admirals, colonels, and all kinds of civilian officials don’t want peace, because it’s not to their advantage. If there is peace, then all the generals, admirals, colonels, and all the other good-for-nothings will have to be demobilized, but are they really going to do unskilled civilian labor, where you have work for society’s benefit personally, with your own hands?! This is why 185 million ordinary Soviet people live in terrible conditions.

And that’s why the peasants and workers of the Molotov and Kirov [regions] and the Tatar autonomous republic [of the RSFSR] demand:

1. Wage increases for workers such as firemen, menial workers, mechanics, warehouse managers, horse drivers, and stokers who make 300–400 rubles a month, because it is impossible to live on that.
2. Complete freedom for the peasants, so that they won't flee from their villages to the city (often, they sell their houses in the villages and move to the towns: such people make up 55 percent of the population of the city of Molotov, for example). They're not running away because they have a great life, right?
3. Cut the size of the army by 75 percent, since it consumes all the people's wealth. The people bear the weight of the army on their shoulders. If the USSR does not attack, then no one will ever attack it.

On behalf of the workers, those 185 million people:

Workers and peasants! Free yourselves with your own hands!

ON THE OTHER SIDE:

Down with the hangers-on!

Long live the worker and peasant!

This appeal has been circulated in Georgia, Kirgizia, Western Belorussia, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and the Saratov region. In the next few days, it will be circulated in Moscow and Leningrad.

Workers and peasants must live well on this earth; when they die, they won't need anything (Lenin).<sup>64</sup>

Factory workers and office workers, post this appeal in a visible spot.

We know who will answer for this. Don't be afraid. All are for you, and you are for all. O.K.R.K.<sup>65</sup>

2. We are for the workers; we are always with the workers.

Workers and peasants do not want war, but the fat-bellied managers do not want peace, because they stuff their pockets full of cash at the workers' and the peasants' expense. For example: an administrator or a colonel gets 5,000 rubles or more a month for doing nothing, while a peasant or an ordinary worker makes 500–600 rubles a month. He [the peasant or the worker] pays all kinds of taxes from that amount. He never gets any help. Prices on foods and basic consumer goods at the stores are out of the reach of workers and peasants.

Our question is: What did our fathers and brothers fight for?

This is why the Molotov worker demands:

1. Cutting food prices by 50 percent.
2. Giving peasants complete freedom.
3. Revoking all kinds of taxes.
4. Disbanding the army, which is a huge expense to us. No one is planning to attack the USSR, and as for the military men of the USSR, they do not want peace.

Workers from all enterprises of the city of Molotov

ON THE OTHER SIDE:

Down with the hangers-on. Long live the workers and the peasants.

Glory to Molotov, Malenkov, Kaganovich, and Shepilov.

[You] bear full responsibility for failing to publicize this.

Post Office Branch: The People

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 82931, l. 11-13. Typewritten original.

• 98 •

My Statements and Conclusions Are Foreign to the People and Get in Their Way

From the resolution of the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR on I. I. Bagretsov's case.<sup>66</sup>

June 20, 1958.

Bagretsov has been found guilty of actively engaging in anti-Soviet activities—namely, making and distributing anti-Soviet documents and counterrevolutionary agitation from 1957 to the day of his arrest.

In 1957, he wrote four anonymous letters and sent them to the editors of *Literaturnaia gazeta*, *Pravda*, *Izvestiia*, and *Komsomolskaia pravda*. In the letters, he slandered the way things are in the USSR and the condition of the laboring masses in our country and makes threats against Communists.

In the fall of 1957, seeking to distribute anti-Soviet leaflets on a mass scale, Bagretsov composed an anti-Soviet text and intended to replicate it with the use of typographic stencils, which he kept in his home until the day of his arrest. In this handwritten text, Bagretsov calls for a struggle to change the existing Soviet social order, gives a distorted representation of Soviet reality, and allows himself to express slanderous thoughts about the Party and certain members of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU.

In January 1958, Bagretsov set up a printing press and used it to make anti-Soviet leaflets containing hostile attacks on the Party and certain Party leaders and aiming to subvert the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. He printed more than 130 leaflets, some of which were distributed among the population of Leningrad by being mailed in envelopes and dropped them in apartment mailboxes.

When Bagretsov was detained on February 13, 1958, twenty-four leaflets with the aforementioned content were found; all of them were placed in envelopes to be sent to individual citizens of Leningrad.

During a search of Bagretsov's home, a text similar to that of the leaflets was found set up in type, along with a pipe press that had been adapted to print leaflets.

In addition, Bagretsov conducted anti-Soviet agitation among the employees of the printing house. [. . .]

Bagretsov admitted his guilt and testified as follows in court: "I sent the letters to *Pravda*, *Komsomolskaia pravda*, *Izvestiia*, and *Literaturnaia gazeta* in February, November, and the summer of 1957; I wrote a total of four letters, one on the Declaration and the others on the tax on private plots and B. Belotserkovsky's article.

"In the summer, I wrote a leaflet against the belligerent statements of the leaders; there were appeals [to the population] in it. . . .

"I took the type home in January 1958 and set it up myself, and used the pipe-suppression machine to print the leaflets, about 150 copies. I circulated some of them to the addresses that were given in the divorce announcements in *Vecherny Leningrad* newspaper, sending them by mail, and others I just dropped into mailboxes. I was detained on the street and had twenty-four leaflets on my person. . . .

"The recent events had an impact on me, the intellectual ferment among the intelligentsia, the critical articles and books that have recently appeared, all of that made me write these letters . . . the press was in the attic, the typeface on the porch, the notebook between the planks; at first I thought of duplicating it typographically, but then I forgot about it. . . ." [. . .]

The leaflets taken from Bagretsov say:

"Read this and pass it on.

"Dear comrade! The time has come when each of us has to think hard, to cast off the cowardice and timidity that have taken hold of many. What are the Communists doing to us? Is there no limit? . . . The Communists think that they've intimidated the Russians so severely and brainwashed them to the point that whatever they do, the people will accept it. This is far from the case, however; we have figured it all out, and now we will act together. . . . How long do we have to put up with this? For how long will we let the Communists—those rejects of the human race—torture and humiliate us? Let's get rid of our slavish cowardice and raise our voices!

"We will deal our first blow at the upcoming elections. Let us all go as one to election booths and cross out all the candidates, for they're all corrupt bastards. . . .

"Let's save Russia from the folly of the impostor Khrushchev, the toady [Frol] Kozlov, the whore Furtseva, and other inveterate scum!" [. . .]

In the notebook that was confiscated from Bagretsov, he says:

"RSP,<sup>67</sup> comrade Worker or comrade Woman Worker,

" . . . The time has come when we, the working class, must make a

sober judgment of the situation and take our workers' cause into our own hands. . . .

"Instead of the comparatively small group of parasites deposed by the Revolution, we now have millions of blatant, fully fledged parasites—the Communists. . . . These are people who . . . have organized themselves in a party, or, more accurately, a gang, and made themselves a charter in which they agreed on how they would act. . . . Using empty talk, they captured all the newspapers, radios, books, and magazines . . . and cut us off from the entire world; they duped, corrupted, and raped us, but the most important thing is, they turned us against each other so that we couldn't unite in struggle against this mass Communist parasitism. . . . An unprecedented exploitation of the laboring masses has been unleashed through a stream of slander about foreign countries, spouting from the pages of corrupt newspapers, magazines, and radios. . . .

Thirty billion rubles were thrown away into space along with the Sputniks, which will neither clothe nor feed us; Egypt, Syria, China, Korea, Vietnam, and other countries receive full support from us—that is, those countries where they cunningly praise Communists. . . .

Enough blood has been shed. We will not let them shoot us for the benefit of a gang of Communists. We will start fighting for our rights.

Enact reforms in the village—the release of peasants from slavish serfdom.

Raise workers' wages by 50 percent.

. . . Make fundamental changes to our foreign policy, which is leading our people to wars and disasters. Be bold! Full speed ahead! Our cause is sacred! The struggle will be hard. If necessary, the socialist party will direct the people to extreme measures, that is, to eliminating Communist evildoers.

In case of need, we propose the major actions below.

1. Seizure and torching of district, city, and regional Party committees, [enterprise] Party committees, and the executive committees of district soviets.
2. Destruction of all employees of the police, the NKVD, the courts, and the procuracy to the last man without trial, for they have already been convicted by the people. There are enough brave people for this. Full speed ahead, without pity or mercy!

You will have an automatic or assault rifle in your hands. . . ."

Bagretsov's anonymous letters, which he sent to *Pravda* and *Literaturnaya gazeta*, contain similar slanderous ideas. [. . .]

In his appeal, written on March 25, 1958, Bagretsov states: ". . . When I sent a leaflet to a particular citizen, I thought that I would find like-minded individuals and accomplices who would distribute leaflets. As it

turned out, that was presumptuous of me, a stupid feeling which I believe stemmed from a superficial and selfish outlook on life. As it turned out subsequently, the working class thinks about life and work in a way that is diametrically opposed to mine. . . . Thus, citizens themselves handed over the leaflets to state security, and this means that no one needs my statements and conclusions: they are foreign to the people and get in their way. . . .

“After these and other quite deep reflections, I regret the mess I’ve made. . . . For this reason, I ask you for humane treatment. [. . .]”

On the basis of everything stated here, I believe that Bagretsov was justly convicted, and his sentence was issued with due consideration of what he had done.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 82679, l. 6–9. Typewritten original.

## . 99 .

### Frunze Leaflet: The Investigation Continues

A reference from the deputy prosecutor of the Kirgiz Republic to the deputy chief prosecutor of the USSR on the distribution of leaflets in Frunze. November 21, 1963. See also document 100.

On September 14, 1963, [. . .] we reported that on September 12, the Committee of State Security under the Council of Ministers of the Kirgiz Republic had launched a criminal case concerning distribution of anti-Soviet leaflets.

The investigation has determined the following:

On the night of September 11, 1963, approximately thirty leaflets were distributed in western Frunze, near the October movie theater, on the front door of the Frunze shoe factory checkpoint, in the yards and mailboxes of a number of private homes on Kievskaiia, Zelenaiia, Alarchinskaiia, Turusbekov, and Timiriiazev streets, and in other places. The leaflets were signed by “The ‘Aureole’ Leningrad Underground Committee.” Their content was identical, and they were all second copies typewritten on white sheets of paper from a 14.8-by-20-centimeter notepad.

The second time, on the night of September 17, 1963, leaflets similar in form and content were distributed in various parts of Frunze: near the taxi station, the Frunze railroad station, the social club of the Frunze factory, and Fuchik Park, on the buses of the Frunze passenger auto park, as well as on Lenin, Sovetskaia, and Yuzhnaia streets and in other places.

Later, on October 2, 1963, a typewritten anti-Soviet leaflet signed by

“the Black Dragon” was found near the Vesna movie theater. This leaflet is a second copy, as are the previous ones.

The investigation has determined that a total of 122 leaflets were distributed in Frunze, of which 69 leaflets were found and confiscated, and 44 were destroyed under various circumstances by the individuals who found them.

Expert analysis of the typeface, based on 65 leaflets, determined that all of them are second, third, and fourth copies made on a Moskva-brand typewriter manufactured prior to 1961.

Twenty-three leaflets were confiscated by state security after the mass distribution of leaflets on September 17, 1963. The leaflets were not touched by the individuals who found them, and there was reason to believe that fingerprints of the criminals were present on the leaflets. However, a fingerprint analysis conducted by a forensic expert did not locate any fingerprints.

In addition, to uncover criminal actions and obtain other evidence about the criminal in the places where the leaflets were distributed, these places were inspected with the use of a police dog, and the persons who had found the leaflets were questioned.

The investigation could not obtain any indication of who the author of the leaflets might be, or who printed and subsequently distributed them. Nor was it possible to find the typewriter that was used in typing the leaflets.

Given that the individual who committed this crime and is subject to criminal prosecution has not been identified, the preliminary investigation of the case launched under Article 64, part 1, of the Criminal Code of the Kirgiz Republic, has been halted.

The search for the individual who committed this crime continues.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 96174, l. 3-4. Typewritten original.

• 100 •

Frunze Leaflet: Lower Prices

A leaflet distributed in Frunze in the fall of 1963.

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For the city of Frunze.

Leaflet no. 1

Citizens of the USSR!

The Underground Central Committee (Aureole) in Leningrad calls on all citizens of the USSR to join it, in view of the fact that every year the



quality of food, cultural and consumer goods, and industrial production worsens, prices rise, and working people's wages fall. As a result, the standard of living of the Soviet people has fallen sharply. On the basis of the above, the Leningrad Underground Central Committee (Aureole) makes the following demands:

1. Increase salaries of doctors, teachers, drivers, retail and food service employees, and all other workers and white-collar employees by 50 percent.
2. Double the stipends of Soviet students.
3. The Soviet government should stop the treacherous export of all consumer goods and transportation, as well as food, under the guise of brotherly help to other countries. Because of this huge export from the USSR, Soviet people have suffered considerable poverty and privation.
4. Down with Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev!
5. All of the above demands could be replaced by the following: Lower the prices of food, cultural and consumer goods, fabrics, cars, and all the rest by 50 percent by May 1964.

The Leningrad Underground Central Committee (Aureole)

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 96174, l. 2. Typewritten copy.

## · 101 ·

### Kharko Has Been Found Guilty

From the resolution of the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of Ukraine on the case on N. I. Kharko.<sup>68</sup> February 27, 1964. See also document 102.

Kharko has been found guilty of writing four anti-Soviet leaflets on October 11, 1963. He distributed three of the leaflets on the street in Kovchin village near the yard of the brigade office of the Komintern collective farm, where they were picked up by Kharko himself and by the collective farmer M. A. Turash on the morning of October 12, 1963.

In two of these leaflets, Kharko slandered the collective farming system and called upon people to unite in order to murder Soviet and Party activists. In addition, in two thefts in August 1963, Kharko stole 130 rubles that belonged to citizen P. [. . .]

During the court session, Kharko admitted his guilt and testified as follows: "On October 11, 1963, I wrote four leaflets. As I walked toward the

well, I threw them out of my pocket onto the street. . . . The next morning, when I was going to the brigade office yard, I picked up two leaflets. . . . Mikhail Turash was walking by at the time, and I gave him a shout and showed him the leaflets. . . . We read them and I suggested that we take them to the brigade. . . . Slezny was there and we gave them to him. . . . I told Turash that I had seen one more leaflet like that, and Turash found it. . . . I called Turash over so that he would read the leaflets.”

Kharko could not explain why he wrote and distributed the leaflets either at the preliminary investigation or in court. . . .

Later, Kharko identified when and under what circumstances he had purloined and drunk away the 130 rubles.

Witness M. A. Turash: “One morning in October 1963, I was walking to work and saw Kharko, who had leaflets in his hands and who called me over and gave them to me to read. . . . I read the leaflets, and then Kharko said that he had seen another leaflet. . . . I picked up that leaflet and gave it to Kharko. . . . We went to the brigade, where the collective farmers began to read these leaflets. Then Slezny took the leaflets and went home.” [ . . . ]

Witness N. L. Slezny: “In October 1963, Kharko came to the brigade [office] and said that they had found leaflets. . . . We all read these leaflets. . . . I took them and went home, and then [went] to hand them in to the collective farm office. . . . Klimenko came to my house and took away the leaflets. . . . The leaflets contained all kinds of nonsense. . . .”

Witness V. S. Klimenko: “I was at the office of the collective farm chairman. The agricultural director said that Brigade no. 1 had found some leaflets. . . . The chairman sent me to pick up these leaflets. . . . Slezny gave me the leaflets.”

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 96485, l. 9-11. Typewritten copy.

## • 102 •

Kharko's Leaflet: Comrade Collective Farmers, Look Around You

A leaflet written by N. I. Kharko.

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An appeal to all the civic people.

Comrade collective farmers, look around you, take a look at your lives, and open your eyes to what your masters are doing.

Our masters have gone back to the way things were in the olden days, they have begun building large-scale capitalism in the Soviet state, and at the expense of other people's labor, [they have] begun to extract a surplus

for themselves. Comrades, look at what the local bosses have come to and what they do to people: they have taken the path of deception. You work day and night, and it benefits only the Soviet *pans*<sup>69</sup> and leaders.

Comrades, organize [*sic*] yourselves, be more supportive of each other, look out for the kind of people who could help; there are lots of them everywhere. The Chinese people understood what the collective farming life and slavery were like and decided to split off from these collective farming bullshit artists. Seek your fortune—it's in your own hands."

In another leaflet appeal,<sup>70</sup> Kharko writes that the "*pans* are returning, and if we keep silent, the Soviet capitalists will enslave us completely. Destroy petty leaders and bullshit artists, chase away the *pans*, beat them and kill them wherever you go."

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 96485, l. 13. Certified typewritten copy.

## • 103 •

### Present an Ultimatum to the Soviet Government!

A special report of the deputy prosecutor of the Kazakh Republic to the head of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR on the distribution of leaflets in Alma-Ata. May 5, 1964.

On the night of April 2, 1964, in Alma-Ata, unknown criminals created a large number of slanderous, anti-Soviet leaflets and distributed them by pasting them to the gates and walls of industrial enterprises and administrative buildings. The text of the leaflets is as follows:

"We appeal to you! Citizens! We've had enough! We've suffered enough! It's time we stopped living in abject poverty! The time has come! The people's anger must be expressed openly; it's time we stopped whispering behind our hands; all the Soviet people must stand as one and present an ultimatum to the Soviet government and Khrushchev on the rights and power of the Soviet citizens. Lenin and all of proletarian humanity didn't establish the Soviet state so that Khrushchev could take trips seeking out new 'friends' and hosting dinners for esteemed 'guests' while the people live in abject poverty and misery!—No!!! It wasn't done so that the people would eat black bread made out of corn, but so that they would eat white bread made out of wheat and earned with honest labor!!! So let us fight for V. I. Lenin's dream and legacy. Be bold! Comrades! The people are with you.—We who loyally continue V. I. Lenin's cause. [Signed] Not-Khrushchev."

Leaflets with this content continue to be posted to this day.

A criminal case has been launched, and all measures are being taken to get rid of the authors of these leaflets.<sup>71</sup>

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 97303, l. 1. Typewritten original.

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If You Forgive the Party a Million Innocent Victims Each Year,  
That Will Take a Hundred Years

From the resolution of the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR on the case of G. I. Ermakov.<sup>72</sup> October 9, 1975.

Ermakov has been found guilty of preparing ten anonymous anti-Soviet letters, distorting his handwriting, and sending them to the editors of Soviet newspapers and Party organizations between October 1970 and March 1974.

In a letter that he addressed to the Fifth Writers' Congress,<sup>73</sup> Ermakov stated, "... So go ahead, continue to degenerate: we will do without you, but you will be punished in full for corrupting the young. . . ."

"From the first days of its rule, the Communist Party has been hanging on through deception and terror. Its whole history is nothing but crimes. If you forgive it a million innocent victims each year, that will take a hundred years. And whoever would forgive such a thing? There is bound to be a day of reckoning. It's only a matter of time. . . ."

In other letters, which Ermakov sent to *Literaturnaia gazeta* and *Pravda*, he wrote:

"... Every system is in someone's interest. Ours was intended to serve the people. But a small group of vile individuals has outrageously usurped power. Some people believe that the heinous Central Committee keeps people living without rights and in semi-poverty on purpose. . . . The people are muzzled, the entire country lives behind barbed wire. . . ."

"... A. I. Solzhenitsyn is a contemporary Radishchev<sup>74</sup> and, in terms of his courage, even an Aleksandr Matrosov.<sup>75</sup> . . . In the name of millions who were tortured to death in Soviet concentration camps, he declared that this can't be tolerated: to put people through a bloodbath and then apologize for the 'mistake' and continue your old heinous deeds. We, too, can blow a spark<sup>76</sup> into a giant fire. . . ."

"Newspaper men . . . I wouldn't kill them all, but would keep them in a concentration camp for maybe twenty-five years until they learned how

to write honestly. They say that a log has already been brought to the Kremlin<sup>77</sup> and the mammoth with bushy eyebrows<sup>78</sup> will carry it, but the log is hollow. No, bastards, we won't always take it. . . ."

In his statement Ermakov argues that the prosecution against him is unfounded and that he did not write or send any anti-Soviet letters. He states that some of the anonymous letters incriminating him were written and sent from Leningrad at a time when he was on a business trip in the Arctic. Accordingly, he asks that the verdict issued by the Leningrad city court on July 9, 1974, be rescinded and his case dismissed.

This request cannot be granted for the following reasons:

The materials of the case show that during the preliminary investigation and in court, Ermakov fully admitted his guilt and testified that he chose his criminal path under the influence of anti-Soviet broadcasts by foreign radio stations and that he wrote all the incriminating anonymous anti-Soviet letters deliberately, distorting his handwriting, and then sent them to their addressees. [ . . ]

During a search of Ermakov's apartment, a diary was found and confiscated. In it, he had summarized the content of anti-Soviet foreign radio broadcasts by Deutsche Welle,<sup>79</sup> the BBC, and Voice of America. [ . . ]

According to the report by the head of the personnel department of the Central Navy Research Institute, at the time when all the anonymous letters were sent out, Ermakov was in Leningrad and not on a business trip.

## Authors and Their Suggestions for the Improvement of Life

IN THEORY, Article 58 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR covered only crimes of “agitation and propaganda.” This would seem to suggest that simply having an opinion or a text that had not been shown to anyone was not a prosecutable act. In practice, however, there were many cases in which words in a diary or a notebook with “anti-Soviet content” constituted sufficient evidence for a conviction. The materials were usually uncovered during a search conducted for other reasons (for example, an accusation of anti-Soviet speech), and the papers often served to prove the rooted and deliberate nature of the crime. Only on rare occasions did the Procuracy of the USSR drop this point from the charges, when it could not prove that the author sought to distribute the illicit texts. At the same time, many individuals were charged exclusively because of texts found in their possession, even if no one but the author had ever seen them.

In this chapter, we shall tell the stories of several authors who wrote such texts. Unlike the Soviet investigators, we have not included diaries or correspondence with friends and family. We focus instead on people who attempted to put their thoughts in writing in either a literary genre or the form of a newspaper editorial.

In these writings, we find a persistent search for the means to create an ideal society, under the name of Communism or otherwise, and to create a solution, once and for all, for society’s problems. The authors were, by and large, not particularly well educated nor particularly skilled as writers, but lack of education and literary training only make the texts more interesting as the source of insights into the

logic with which the average Soviet citizen made sense of his or her world.

We give a brief biography of each writer before presenting his text.

Commentary by O. V. Edelman

## Documents

### *A. Ya. Pavlovsky*

One day, an elderly man wanted to write something down about his life: not really a memoir, but something along the lines of an autobiographical novel. He was not interested in literary glory. He did not even show his manuscript to anyone. The manuscript was written in the same old notebook that he used for his diary. As investigators later determined, he worked on it from December 1952 to January 1953. In May 1953, he was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment according to Article 58-10 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR for composing and keeping the manuscript. In the words of the case file, "He prepared an anti-Soviet manuscript in which he presented a slanderous view of Soviet reality. Specifically, he defamed the passport system of the Soviet state, among other things. He kept this manuscript in his apartment."<sup>1</sup>

The prosecutor noted biographical details in his official statement: "Aleksandr Yakovlevich Pavlovsky, also known as Beinarovich, Pavlov, Gromov, Petrov, Shefranov, and Shafranovsky, born in 1888. . . . Did not complete higher education. An agronomist. Former member of the Socialist Revolutionary Party. Previously prosecuted five times for anti-Soviet activity: in 1921 he was arrested in Moscow and exiled to the Vologda region, and escaped; in 1921 he was arrested again and exiled to the Solovetsky Islands for two years; in 1925 he was exiled to the city of Irbit for three years, and escaped; in 1933 he was arrested again under Articles 58-10 and 58-11 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR and sentenced to one year's imprisonment; and in 1934 he was exiled to Kazakhstan for two years. Before the arrest, he lived in the city of Kursk. He is retired."

During the trial, Pavlovsky offered the following testimony about his writings: "I acknowledge my guilt in that I wrote slanderous inventions against the order established by the Soviet state. This was caused by the fact that in 1946 my wife died, and it was hard for me. In my dreams, I saw her walk by me, and I got scared and didn't tell anyone about this, but decided to lay it all out in my manuscript. I di-

rected my slanderous inventions at my internal passport [which contained information about his past], which made me a marked man. I thought that I would be arrested again in the fall. . . . I wrote the manuscript alone, and no one knew about it.”<sup>2</sup>

The case file that we have does not contain the actual manuscript, but it contains a short summary written by the prosecutor, with quotations from Pavlovsky’s work.

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Skitalets Goes to Moscow (December 1952–January 1953)

From the resolution on the case of A. Ya. Pavlovsky by the assistant to the prosecutor of the Department for Special Cases of the Kursk region. January 30, 1954.

Pavlovsky’s manuscript is a sizable notebook, where he lays out anti-Soviet judgments in the form of a narrative about a trip that “Skitalets”<sup>3</sup> made to Moscow.

It begins as follows: “The exile of Mikhail Aleksandrovich Skitalets came to an end. He responded to this event calmly, without any great enthusiasm. He knew full well that if someone fell under Article 58-10-11, he would remain in its shadow . . . for his whole life, or at least until the Constituent Assembly.”<sup>4</sup>

After receiving his passport, Skitalets said to his wife: “‘You know, Varia, when there was still the Pale of Settlement,’<sup>5</sup> they called such passports ‘outlaw’s tickets’ [*volchii bilet*]; in our times, of course, these are socialist passports.”

Further on, when Pavlovsky describes a visit to the theater in Moscow, he writes: “They watched *Swan Lake*, *Easy Money*, and *The Land*.<sup>6</sup> Varia did not really like the last play, but she wanted her husband to see ‘honest people’ being slandered and watch his reaction.”

Speaking about an acquaintance of Skitalets, a chemical engineer named Raisa Mikhailovna, Pavlovsky writes: “Two affirmative-action careerists [*kare’eristy-vydvizhentsy*], harassed Raisa Mikhailovna. They wanted the position she ought to have as director of the lab.”

Further on, Pavlovsky writes that in a conversation with Raisa Mikhailovna, Skitalets stated: “No historical event or social order is repeated in the same way as it was fifty or one hundred years ago. If slavery or the feudal system were revived, all of that would be encased in such philosophical packaging that the official optimists would call it socialism. Show me your philosophy, and I’ll tell you what kind of constitution you



have. . . . You find these kinds of words and thoughts in Fouillée's writings."<sup>7</sup>

Pavlovsky goes on to say: "She took out a volume of the Soviet encyclopedia, opened a page with the word 'passport,' and began to read. After reading all about how the word 'passport' was defined, she noted, 'Well . . . it's not some kind of muzzle, and, of course, it's not the Pale of Settlement; our passport, indeed, is something worse altogether. So Fouillée needs an emendation: "Show me your passport," and then I can guess about what kind of philosophy and constitution you have.' Raisa Mikhailovna was an admirer of A. A. Bogdanov's thought, and not just an admirer; she actively propagandized Bogdanov's philosophical views and Lunacharsky's ethics and aesthetics."<sup>8</sup>

When describing a conversation in the apartment of Skitalets's acquaintances, Pavlovsky writes that Skitalets asked, "How many dishes are made out of soy beans, how many professors research sour milk in Moscow, and what success has Serafima had in proving that the protein contained in lentils is no worse in quality than the protein contained in eggs?"

He goes on to explain: "Raisa and Tania were chemists and did not like grand, unrealistic projects [*prozhektorstvo*]. he questions that came up were close to their hearts, and the conversation grew very lively.

"Tania spoke about how Professor T. and his assistant failed to prove that keeping grain under the open sky is cheaper than keeping it in a grain elevator. She also spoke about the prices they used to calculate the cost of building materials. Over one hundred train cars of grain rotted because of them, and they received prizes for their harebrained scheme."

Describing Raisa's photo albums, Pavlovsky writes: "In the second album, there were photos of remarkable people. A photograph of A. A. Bogdanov held pride of place."

Narrating further, Pavlovsky writes that at evening tea, after viewing the photo albums at Raisa's, Skitalets left the table. His wife burst out: "See what kind of a person he is! If we were speaking about organizing a union of the working peasantry, he'd be here talking until morning."

As is well known, the Union of the Working Peasantry (UTK) was organized by Socialist Revolutionaries in Tambov Province. It was the basis of Antonov's gangs.<sup>9</sup>

In October 1918, Pavlovsky moved to Tambov. There he had a secret address, engaged in illegal Socialist Revolutionary political activity, and distributed Socialist Revolutionary literature. Pavlovsky admitted this in an interrogation on April 3, 1953 [. . .].

When writing that Skitalets kept a diary during his visit to Moscow, Pavlovsky states that Skitalets "realized that while he was in Moscow, there could still be some excitement. His notes could fall in the wrong

hands, so he decided to write in code and decode it later. . . . 'Police ranks' became 'degradation enzymes.' . . .

"He encoded his visit with a man from the Lugovoy Institute and his visits to the theater and especially to the play called *The Land*."

In his manuscript, Pavlovsky ascribes the following words to one of the female characters, Raisa: "'Think of how much men and women could have done if they made Lavrov's<sup>10</sup> thought the foundation for their actions and their activity. Or at least what he expounds in his work *The Socialist Revolution and the Tasks of Morality*.'"

Further on, Pavlovsky ascribes the following words to another female character, Varia, Skitalets's wife: "It's not just individuals who act like sheep but the whole system. In a society where the individual is subjected to the collective, even crushed by this collective, it should be considered normal and inevitable that not only the wife but also the son and the daughter should report about the behavior of the father, or whoever it is, to the proper authorities."

In Skitalets's conversation with his wife, Varia, Pavlovsky's Skitalets says: "'If you took a group of some Europeans and placed them in the conditions in which we Russians—the majority of us—live, they wouldn't be able to stand it; they'd perish. But we endure it, and we even joke and laugh about it.'"

Further on, Pavlovsky attributes the following words to Varia: "You know, we . . . have honed a sixth sense. We can feel it when we're being followed at a distance by a spook, or, as they call it nowadays, a 'guardian angel.'"

Finally, when describing the scene of Skitalets's departure from Moscow, Pavlovsky writes: "Raisa said: 'You're behind the times. There's a new theory and continuously operating factors.'"

"'I know, I know, recent theory is more effective, but the working class is no better off for it,' Mikhail said."

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 42766, l. 16–20. Copy. Typewritten.

## K. Semenov

Konstantin Konstantinovich Semenov (born in 1926), who lived in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, was a sailor who traveled to distant ports and, in 1957, served as the senior mate on a fishing vessel. He had a difficult period in his life: In 1948, he was convicted of embezzling state property and was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. In 1952, his sentence was annulled. Subsequently, his case was submitted to supplementary investigation. Semenov was declared not guilty, and the case was closed. Even so, by this time he had spent three years in

confinement, and apparently feeling the urge to give some sort of meaning to his life experience and share it with others, he decided to try his hand at literature. Starting in 1955, he wrote a few short stories in his spare time. As he and his family emphasized later, these were merely amateurish drafts. On October 10, 1957, Semenov left a folder full of his stories in a local restaurant. The texts were found, given to the proper authorities, and determined to be anti-Soviet. Additionally, it was revealed that the author had shown a few of his stories to family members and had discussed them in correspondence with his brother. On February 5, 1958, Semenov was sentenced to six years' imprisonment under Article 58-10, part 1, of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR. He actively sought a review of his case, arguing that the indictment drew on brief excerpts from unfinished works, which could not be used to judge the whole. His writing, he argued, was influenced by his exposure to Stalin's cult of personality. He wrote about unlawful repressions that the Party had already deplored. Semenov sought help from the writer S. S. Smirnov, editor in chief of the weekly *Literaturnaia gazeta*. Smirnov wrote to the Procuracy of the USSR in Semenov's defense. Nevertheless, the decision to rehabilitate Semenov was not made until 1965, when he had already served his sentence in full.

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### The Vise and Other Stories (1955–1957)

From a memorandum on K. K. Semenov's case by the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR. 1962.

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K. K. Semenov's authorship of said notes has been determined by his confession, experts' conclusions, and the testimony of witnesses.

The following notes, which were composed in the form of short stories and personal letters, have been appended to the case as material evidence:

1. The typewritten manuscript entitled "The Vise" ["Tiski"] was left by Semenov in a restaurant.

In this short story, the author describes the abuse of prisoners at their places of confinement. All the employees of these institutions are represented as sadistic people whose only goals are the battery, humiliation, and murder of prisoners.

Further on, he tells about the arrests and convictions of individuals for anti-Soviet activity on the basis of unsubstantiated accusations. While in confinement, these persons make statements that they call honest and truthful, both in conversations among themselves and in discussions and confrontations with officials.

For example, during interrogation by a colonel in the state security, an arrested man named Liadov speaks "courageously and bravely" about how much he liked everything he saw in the USA. Discussing the presidential election campaign in the United States, for example, Liadov says: "I've never seen anything like this in our country. I saw that everyone back here speechlessly submits to the powers that be. They constantly praise the ruling party, and I've never heard any voice speaking against it. For me, the electoral process was amazing. I am convinced that America, with its social order, no matter what you call it, is far more democratic. There's no comparison. None!"

Making a few comments on this discussion, the author adds that, for example, "the colonel breathed heavily, as if feeling a strong slap in the face, but he said nothing," and "the colonel interrupted the speaker, feeling that Liadov's arguments were very convincing and that he could not counter them," and the like.

As Liadov continues to speak, he makes a claim: "I believe the system created in our country by the authorities and the ruling party is not distinct in any way from the system created by Fascists in Germany. . . . The country is ruled by a military-political dictatorship. A group of Party leaders has snatched control of power. It took all rights from the people, stifled all democratic liberties . . .," and so on.

The author comments that the state security employees who listen to Liadov "become green with anger," "open their mouths with surprise," and "were amazed at Liadov's revelations, his firm statements, and brave response."

Liadov goes on: "In Eastern European countries, parties that our rulers find acceptable have been brought to power by the force of the occupation army. . . . The moment you withdraw our troops from Eastern Europe, the power of the Party that has been imposed will end. . . ."

Once again, Colonel Kozlov "yells," "growls," "hisses like a snake," and "becomes blue in the face with anger," while Liadov speaks as "calmly," "confidently," and "energetically" as before.

During an interrogation by the same colonel, another arrested individual, Valentin, claims that "the country is ruled by a criminal gang of cut-throats with Stalin as their leader." . . .

Throughout the entire narrative, the author calls these persons honest Soviet people. He attributes to them not only criticism of Stalin but also direct slanderous attacks on the Party, the State, and the Soviet way of

life. In several instances, the author adds personal comments: "The country was studded with labor camps. Barbed wire and guard towers were everywhere you went. In Ukraine and in the Ural Mountains, on the Pechora River and in Mordovia, in Siberia and in the Kolyma region, on Sakhalin Island and on the Kamchatka Peninsula—everywhere the common people groaned, having been driven behind barbed wire. The ruling party put the lives of the people, their liberty, and their happiness on the line for the sake of its own might and its claims that the USSR is a world power. . . . The ruling faction believes that Communism will soon take hold of the whole world, and they have wagered the destinies and lives of millions of people in its name. . . . Noisy claims about building Communism filled the newspapers. The gang leaders and the rulers promised hills of gold to the people. The radio, newspapers, magazines, and books praised the existing system and social order. . . . But at the same time, all over the country, tens of millions of disenfranchised working people were bent under the strain of [working in] labor camps fenced by barbed wire. . . . The deceived and harrowed people groaned . . .," and so forth.

2. In the short story "Komsomol Girl" ["Komsomolka"],<sup>11</sup> which was confiscated from Semenov, the author writes about the life of a boy who was convicted of stealing a tractor part. He tells of how this boy, who was known by the nickname, "Komsomol Girl," was beaten in the camps, and of how he decided to take revenge against the employees of the camp by causing an explosion.

3. In the short story "The Fugitive" ["Beglets"] Semenov wrote about a person called Nikolai who had already been sentenced as a boy to six years of imprisonment for his refusal to attend a trade school (FZO). Nikolai escaped several times. Once he got into the building of the railroad ticket office. He and two other muggers hit the watchman on the head with a rake and stole thirty-two thousand rubles from a safe. However, they were soon detained.

When describing the trial of these muggers, the author represents the judges and the prosecutor as bloodthirsty executioners, and the defendants as people who became criminals through the fault of the judicial and investigative authorities.

The elderly guard that they hit on the head with a rake apologizes to them in court for appearing as a witness and says to them: "I pray to God to forgive MY sin!"

At the same time, the defendants act insolently in the courtroom. They insult and assault the judge. However, despite this, the author constantly seeks to elicit sympathy for the defendants and indignation with regard to the judges and the prosecutor.

During his final plea, the defendant reflects on the prosecutor's arguments, saying, "With this, the prosecutor has shown what the system that

he defends is capable of. It can not only make a thief, mugger and gangster out of an honest man but also slander him, drag him through the dirt. I committed a robbery. I do not deny it. But why did I do it? Well, the reason is that I was placed in such conditions that I had to escape and needed to steal. . . . I stole from the state because it stole from me, and its judges made me a criminal. The leaders talk a lot about rights and the people, but they close their eyes to what their satraps, these dogs'—he pointed at the judges and the prosecutor—are doing when they put millions of innocent people in prisons and camps . . . These judges and prosecutors are robbers, thieves, and murderers sanctioned by law, just like their bosses. . . . You scum, you are choking everyone, but you'll get what's coming to you in the end!"

While describing these hostile tirades and how the defendants threw themselves on the judge and the prosecutor, the author also attempts to present the situation in such a way that the public in the courtroom seems to feel more and more empathy and compassion for the defendants. After the guards use physical force on the defendants, who had been worn out by the judge and the prosecutor, the public begins to shout: "What kind of trial is this! My God, what a mockery the trial is! Prosecuting innocent people who have already done time for nothing!" The public "throws cigarettes, bread, and sausages through the barrier to the prisoners. A young guy who was standing close even pushed through a bottle of wine."

4. The short story "Ruin" ["Gibel"].

5. The short story "A Brief History" ["Korotkaia istoriia"].

6. The short story "Monica" ["Monika"].

These short stories have no hostile content.

Regarding the general qualities of Semenov's short stories, one should note that while constantly displaying his knowledge of the criminal world, the author also shows obvious hatred for and anger with officials of the state, especially judicial and criminal investigators. Whenever he speaks about any of these individuals, he invariably characterizes them negatively—not only with respect to their behavior ("he screamed," "he growled," "he became green," "he became blue in the face," and so on) but also with respect to their appearance ("fat, red-haired, freckled, with a heavy chin and thick, slobbery lips," "smug, doughy, dumb faces," etc.). At the same time, the author tries to represent prisoners as people who deserve compassion and respect even at the moments when they commit murder, robbery, and other crimes.

In his short stories, Semenov makes generalizations on the basis of selected, exaggerated, and deliberately inflated facts. In doing so, he aims to tarnish the entire system of state authority. Semenov defames the Soviet social order. He attempts to represent as intrinsic the deviations that were allowed during the period of the cult of personality and that have been un-

covered by the Party. This is especially evident in his short stories "The Vise" and "The Fugitive."

Semenov offered these short stories to his brother, V. K. Semenov, to read. V. K. Semenov resides in Moscow. The brothers corresponded about these short stories.

The brother of the accused reproached him, stating that his position was incorrect because it did not lead to an accurate evaluation of the facts as he saw them. This evaluation, V. K. Semenov stated, was only possible from the standpoint of Party consciousness. [. . .]

In response to these statements, the accused wrote to his brother: "I have been writing a lot, but I can't possibly give my scribbles an ideological foundation. Your advice that Party consciousness and ideological consciousness are needed just won't work with my writing. I adopted one rule: to be a realist and try to depict reality the way it is, and then ideological consciousness will follow. I reread all of Marx and all of Lenin and Engels and Stalin, and I saw how far reality deviates from their teachings. Why should I adjust life to fit the doctrine?" [. . .]

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 86804, l. 72-77. Typewritten original.

### *D. I. Popov*

Dmitry Ivanovich Popov was born in 1897. He joined the Party in 1920, was a war hero, and held positions as the director of an agricultural institute, leader of the Party office in a factory, and collective farm chairman. Then he retired and lived in Dnepropetrovsk. In 1957-1958, Popov wrote a book (272 typed pages) entitled *The Party and the State of the Dictatorship of the Working Class*, a work that he typed and then photographically reproduced, making more than one thousand copies. He mailed typed copies to the Central Committee of the Communist Party, the Central Committee of the Komsomol, the Leningrad regional Party committee, the Central Council of Trade Unions, and the Institute of Marxism-Leninism. He sent photocopies to less notable organizations and individuals. In his home, Popov constructed a hiding place, where he placed the original copy of the typed manuscript, the photo negatives, and seventy copies.

Under interrogation in court, Popov admitted that he had written and copied the book, but denied that "this is a work of an anti-Soviet character. . . . I do not believe that we live in conditions corresponding to the transition to Communism. Stalin's cult of personality is the result of the system in our country, and I wanted to prevent and

get rid of any future cult of personality. . . . I took this unlawful path because I alone cannot do anything. I am a freedom-loving person and therefore am a strong supporter of expanding the sphere of freedom. . . . I was driven to it by my excessive ideological zeal. A warm love for my motherland led me to write this work.”<sup>12</sup> Popov was sentenced by the Dnepropetrovsk regional court to five years’ imprisonment under Article 7, part 1, of the law “On Criminal Responsibility for State Crimes.” In late 1959, he sent a voluminous letter from prison. It was addressed to the Central Committee of the Communist Party and spoke about the harm brought by the existing political repression.<sup>13</sup>

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The Party and the State of the Dictatorship of the Working Class (1957–1958)

From the memorandum on D. I. Popov’s case by a prosecutor in the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR. March 11, 1960.

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The contents of Popov’s anti-Soviet book, 272 pages long, typewritten.

In the preface, addressed to the members of the Central Committee, the author writes: “By publishing this book, we speak out against the regime that has been established in both the Party and our country. . . . We shall not tolerate the unlimited dictatorship over the people that has been imposed in our country. The people are tired and demand change. . . . Understand that when the whip is cracked, and the people are treated like cattle, with cries of ‘Forward to Communism!’—it makes a mockery of Communism.” . . .

In the section “Goals and Objectives,” the author accuses the Central Committee of deviating from Leninism. “The current Party ‘leaders,’” he writes, “realize that that the line they chose quite some time ago, called the Leninist line, clearly contradicts the teachings of Marx and Lenin about the state and the Party. . . . It’s fashionable to hang the label of revisionism<sup>14</sup> on any criticism of the existing order. The result is a curious situation in which total revisionists blame all others for revisionism.” . . .

In the section “The Party,” the author suggests that “the current character of the Communist Party is less democratic than the Party Charter of 1919.” The author notes that the Party Charter states that “violations of Party discipline are incompatible with being a member of the Party”—in effect, threatening Party members with expulsion for any violation of



Party discipline, which encourages arbitrariness in the Party. In the same way, the development of democracy in our party after Lenin's death followed the rule of 'one step forward, two steps back.'<sup>15</sup> . . . There is no dictatorship of the proletariat in our country now, only the dictatorship of the leaders' clique in the Party. The state got stronger in our country over time and lost touch with the population, organizing itself like an army. The people found themselves disarmed and deprived of freedom. A permanent army came into being, along with such police-type organizations as the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) and the Ministry of State Security (MGB), bureaucracy and prisons, and extraordinary and secret trials. These tentacles have a special power of coercion, and this special power fell into the hands of the highest Party officials. Under these conditions, even a recommendation from the Party becomes a directive, enforced by all the power of these special organs of coercion. . . . All of the close colleagues of Lenin, with whom he built the Party in the underground, were declared enemies of the people and destroyed. This is how Kamenev, Zinoviev, Bukharin, and Rykov died. . . . Trotsky was sentenced to death in absentia and murdered abroad."

In the section "Stalin Died, but His Regime Lives On," Popov writes that Beria "was secretly tried and liquidated, without even having had the chance to defend himself before the Central Committee. . . . Nikita Khrushchev rose on the bones of Beria and is confidently heading toward a personal dictatorship." . . .

He goes on to say: "The violent punishment of Nagy<sup>16</sup> took place shortly after a meeting of Khrushchev and János Kádár. World public opinion places responsibility for this act on the USSR, and this, of course, is justified."

The section "Criticism of the General Line of the Party": On the question of the industrialization of the country, Popov writes about the need to reevaluate the tempos of the development of light industry in order to increase them relative to those of heavy industry. Later he suggests that the state should allocate "special lots of land to interested organizations and individuals for firewood, lumber, minerals, and similar resources. . . . For this, a special law would be issued by which any group of people could form a cooperative to produce consumer products."

In the section on the Party's foreign relations, Popov calls the policy of peaceful coexistence opportunistic.

In the section "Intraparty Democracy," the author writes that "the Central Committee should lose its unlimited power over the Party and the country. It is essential to put an end to the prohibition of factions within the Party. It's obvious that the emergence of factions inside the Party is a form of criticism."

Later, Popov speaks against democratic centralism in the Party and

against the Party's control of the press. He calls for the empowerment of trade unions.

In the section "On Freedoms and Individuals," Popov writes, "Can it be said that the workers of our country have free speech? . . . No, that cannot be said. Freedom of speech is enjoyed only by the political elite, and even then, with qualifications. Instead of a realm of freedom, Soviet citizens are handed a mess of pottage."

In the section "What Is to Be Done?" the author writes, "The path to freedom is difficult and dangerous. . . . Do you think these dictators will willingly agree to lose everything? But if the people rise up, they will be forced to step aside; otherwise, a civil war is unavoidable. . . . So the first and most important task is to open the eyes of the people and open the eyes of Communists. We must make every effort to increase the scope and range of our work.

" . . . In the first stage, our movement must be underground. This is necessary because of the relentless, autocratic dictatorship that reigns in our country. Should we organize strikes? Yes, we're going to organize strikes, but they will be short-term, making a point, and accompanied by meetings.

" . . . Particular attention should be paid to Moscow, which is the nexus of the dictatorial regime's control. It would be a tremendous victory to bring the workers of Moscow under the flag of our movement and might even prove decisive.

" . . . Our spark will kindle a blaze. August 1956–August 1958."

GARF, f. R-8181, op. 31, d. 86559, l. 44–46. Typewritten original.

### *M. Kulmagambetov*

Makhmet Kulmagambetov was born in 1930. The son of a poor Kazakh peasant, he received his higher education degree from the philosophy department of Kazakh State University in Alma-Ata. For four years he taught philosophy at the university and then at a pedagogical institute in the city of Chardzhou. On the whole, he had a successful career, but his love of reasoning was his undoing. Using nothing but Marxist theory, Kulmagambetov began saying "terrible" things: "He applied a revisionist approach to a range of questions pertaining to Leninist-Marxist theory and political economy. He made statements in front of his colleagues and students that under socialism in the USSR, the labor force is still a commodity, surplus value still exists, and unemployment has not been eliminated," and said many other things. Kulmagambetov's behavior was discussed at a department meeting and at the Party bureau of his institute. He received a warning but did

not change his behavior. He was fired and headed to Moscow, where he held various jobs, including work on a geological expedition in 1961 and a job as an electrician at a mining and processing complex. All this time he continued to “maintain his anti-Soviet fabrications” and “slander Soviet reality.”

In November 1962, Kulmagambetov was arrested when a police search revealed that he had many anti-Soviet manuscripts and photos that “negatively characterize our everyday life”: shots of drunks, beggars, and queues for products. Kulmagambetov admitted that he wanted to write a book about life in the USSR and publish it abroad. On April 17, 1963, he was convicted by the Kustanai regional court to seven years’ imprisonment. Short excerpts from Kulmagambetov’s notebooks were quoted in the prosecutor’s brief.

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### Musings of an Ordinary Mortal (1957–1958)

From the resolution on the case of M. Kulmagambetov by the assistant to the prosecutor of the Kazakh Soviet Republic. January 20, 1965.

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Kulmagambetov writes in his musings and notes:

“Many ordinary Communists know that the existing order is unjust and rotten. Some people respond to this depravity by feeling dejected, while others strive to adapt and satisfy their essential needs via jobs and rank. The latter will pay dearly when the people’s patience reaches its limit. [. . .]

“Fascism’s cynical ideology is better than the hypocrisy of Communism, with its philanthropic ideology, with its words and its deeds that are duplicitously overlaid with rhetoric about human progress. [. . .]

“People cannot argue about the correctness of the Party line when they have no freedom of speech or freedom of political views.

“We have ‘freedom.’ You are free to defend the Party line at all costs and to criticize views that are contrary to the Party line. You can call the enemies of the Party ‘enemies of the people’ and put them behind bars and even execute them. It’s not all that different from freedom as the Inquisition understood it. [. . .]

“The greatest accomplishment that a sociologist can have in our country is to rehash the principles of Party thought—its little ideas—just as the Party likes it, and to support them with more and more new facts and go to great lengths to prove the ‘genius’ of Party resolutions. [. . .]

“Once, on a trolley in Moscow, a young Russian lad was harassing

Jews. He was doing it loudly, for all to hear. He sang a little song: ‘Your name’s Ivan, I’m Ivan too; we both have eyes of blue. The Virgin Lands go to the Ivans, Sochi to the Jews.’<sup>17</sup>

“Without true democracy and freedom, you cannot have any kind of socialism. How can you even think of political freedom when you can be persecuted as a political criminal just for having views that are critical of the government and state policies? [ . . . ]

“The critics of revisionism have more passion than persuasiveness. They rely more on quotations and references to authorities than on any serious analysis.

“The anti-revisionist campaign, which took place in the media and in universities, attests to serious anxieties in the pro-Soviet camp. So, a little mouse has terrified an elephant?! But is it a little mouse??? [ . . . ]

“Oh, how deeply the cult of personality is embedded in our brains! Our people stopped thinking about politics a long time ago. The Führer—that is, the Central Committee—does the thinking for us. The people rejected one god—after his death, it’s true, but even the dead Stalin has considerable influence. God save us from being the kind of Marxist that Stalin (Khrushchev) was. But another god has appeared. The excessive flowering of monuments to Lenin attests to it. [ . . . ]

“Furthermore, a trial in our country is not a trial, but a military tribunal. That’s why the label ‘Bonapartist regime’ describes our situation so well. [ . . . ]

“The surest way to destroy a country is to give authority to the demagogues. [ . . . ]

“‘He is a bold talker, impudent, coarse, made to lead fools.’” (Stendhal, *The Red and the Black*, p. 350).<sup>18</sup> [ . . . ]

“The assertion that labor is not a commodity provides the theoretical underpinning of confusion in wages, the robbing of the working population, and the lowering of the standard of living to a bare minimum, to an animal-like existence. [ . . . ]

“It’s true that we don’t have capitalists, but we have Party parasites. Instead of feeding one state apparatus, we feed two. There’s the district committee and the district executive committee; then there’s the regional committee and the regional executive committee.<sup>19</sup> We have those who make 15,000 rubles and those who make 300 rubles a month. [ . . . ]

“The Party is degenerating. It’s merging with the state apparatus, and in reality it’s already one of its parts. [ . . . ]

“Party-mindedness is a principled lack of principles. [ . . . ]

“Aren’t the trade unions outmoded? Haven’t they become just another unnecessary bureaucratic agency? They are supported financially by the working population, so they should protect its interests. If the trade unions don’t do an adequate job of this, then they have neither the moral nor the legal right to exist. [ . . . ]

"Since I am an ordinary mortal, it's difficult for me to live. Sometimes I feel ready to do something really drastic—perhaps to go and tell everything to the foreign press." [. . .]

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 94406, l. 15-21. Typewritten original.

### *Yu. V. Golosov*

Yury Valentinovich Golosov was born in 1938 in the Moscow region. A member of the Komsomol, he graduated from high school. On October 20, 1962, police searched Golosov's apartment on the outskirts of Moscow. The search came following accusations of a nonpolitical crime, but the police found a manuscript with anti-Soviet content. Golosov admitted that earlier that year he had decided to write down his views on various political issues, but had quickly given up writing and had not finished the project, nor had he shown the manuscript to anyone. During interrogations, the investigator obtained testimony that Golosov had made anti-Soviet remarks in conversation. He even said that he wanted to flee the country. A new charge was brought against Golosov under Article 70 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR.<sup>20</sup> However, the prosecution decided to limit the charges and to pursue a conviction for the nonpolitical crime. In March 1963, the charges under Article 70 were dropped.

In the manuscript, Golosov uses a style of journalism that was fashionable in the 1960s. The text follows a deliberately informal style and is full of lyrical digressions and verbal sketches of landscapes. Golosov supports his thoughts with the opinions of "common people" and "real workers," as was fashionable in Soviet editorials. Despite the Soviet form of his writing, Golosov was able to find ways to formulate his own opinions. It would have been easy to simply take state propaganda and reverse positive for negative, as many people did. But Golosov breaks free from such thinking. He was able to do so because of his pacifist beliefs.

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The World and Peace (January 1962)

From the manuscript of Yu. V. Golosov. January 1962.

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[. . .] Man is such a complex and little-understood creature. He develops in a constant and relentless struggle with himself, only rarely and re-

luctantly thinking about his fellow beings. Was it always like this? Not at all! Man becomes enemy to man as he rises up the social ladder. We don't need to analyze this fact again, for it is explained in all political economy textbooks. But are there people on earth who are happy? Happy in the most banal, natural meaning of the word? Yes, for sure!

They are Amazonian Indians, who live in clans. They're free from the influence of civilization. They don't see the differences between each other, between people in general. . . . They are children of nature. [. . .]

Can such equality and happiness exist at the highest rungs of the social ladder? Well, yes, but not in the same way. Both the Communists and the so-called capitalists say that in order for equality and happiness to prevail, they need to be given new meaning and new content. I don't know what conditions exist in the West for realizing these principles. According to the Communists, capitalism has reached its highest stage in imperialism, and it is rotting. They [imperialists] have abject poverty, repression of liberties, lack of confidence in the future, and all the rest. The world has heard about this from the Communist International for sixty years now. So, capitalism is dying—slowly but surely—and humanity (all of it?) places its hopes in Communism. The first country where Communism will be built is Russia, or the Soviet Union. I live in this country, so I will try to depict its potential in light of the objectives of the Party Program, declared at the Twenty-second Congress of the Communist Party, which shall bring peace, labor, liberty, fraternity, and happiness to the people.

#### I. THE WORLD

. . . I am running into the cold, wet, and dirty blackness of the night. There's not a star in the sky to show me the way. My feet are soaking wet and sloshing in my loose-fitting shoes. Thoughts are buzzing in my head: "I love sitting in the warmth at home and listening to the rustling of the rain outside. So why . . . ?!" Oh, how I am ashamed, pained, and worried for you, people of the earth—the World!

The world and peace: the Russian word *mir* combines these two meanings so nicely. The world is another name for our little planet Earth; human thought, the greatest thing there is in life, animates its dead geological formations and ocean abysses. Everything comes from the world, even its illegitimate children: the world wars, the global imperialistic camp, and the global socialist camp. All of that is at odds with mankind, but mankind alone bears responsibility for the fate of these bastards. Mankind, and not Rockefeller or Khrushchev or Kennedy or Mao Zedong or Adenauer, and, of course, not Enver Hoxha or Chiang Kai-shek.<sup>21</sup> Some stroke of fortune, perhaps God or providence, has put these bigwigs in charge of entire nations. They muddy the waters of human life, which are already dark with dirt and blood. They keep trying to catch a big fish in these waters, promising that they'll feed their peoples with this fish and that some fish will even be left for the hungry and suffering ones.

Those who poach in the human ocean's wilderness preserve forget that stunning the fish with the forbidden dynamite—that is, with hydrogen—poisons the fish. The poisonous food will destroy the brash hunter . . . not just the hunter, who seeks death, but everyone with whom he shares his kill.

So how can humanity entrust its fate to such dishonest fishermen? How can it trust an individual who does not have the capacity to ensure the nation's prosperity? The tragic experiences of Napoleon, Hitler, Stalin, and others have shown the consequences of trust in such politicians. I will not analyze these experiences. Khrushchev has already done this, since he has had an excellent opportunity to observe the last of these three heroes for thirty years (and since his brain has not atrophied from fatty foods like the brains of his companions). The legacy of Khrushchev's great predecessor gives him no peace. After saying that he'd learned from the mistakes of Stalinism, he set out to formulate (they say, not without help from his son-in-law)<sup>22</sup> plans for the "peaceful" conquest of the entire earth. He wants to bring happiness not only to the Russians but also to their brothers in Christ—the people of the world. I must say, it's a noble task. But as for the methods! One can only deplore them.

Of course, you might say that in testing a fifty-megaton bomb for the cause of Communism, Khrushchev risks poisoning all living things, but he brings down the house with applause from the laboring masses. (These masses have been blinded by the so-called class struggle. They applaud in all the right places by listening for the change in tone and volume of the speaker's voice. They don't think about whether it's even worth the energy.) But isn't K. risking his image as a lover of humanity and miracle worker, winner of the International Lenin Peace Prize?

Of course, you might accuse the world community, which was shocked by the nuclear tests, of a failure to understand the situation. You might even accuse it of shortsightedness or harmful pacifism. But how else can you react to Kennedy's statements about Soviet tests, which have been in preparation for a long time, and to the talk of forbidding these tests, which has also been going on for a long time?

Of course, you can threaten the West with a separate peace treaty with East Germany and demand the removal of the occupation regime in West Berlin by the end of this year. And then you don't sign it. You admit that you willingly created international tension and a war scare.

Of course, in desperation you can turn the whole territory of the USA into a bomb-proof bunker to protect the entire territory of the USA, as Kennedy's administration proposes,<sup>23</sup> and by the same token confirm the possibility of nuclear war.

But . . . what about the human race!!!

Of course, you can't allow all this to happen, you can't stride in seven-

league boots to your own destruction. You can't remain passive and indifferent to your government's reckless schemes. Could it be that you, O humanity, will kill yourself at the gates of the promised land of unity and unlimited human reason?

Someone who is passionately loyal to his government will object: "How is this possible? The Soviet government makes reasonable offers of complete disarmament. It's the Western states that do not accept these suggestions." First of all, we should note that sometimes it's the other way around. Second, significant factors of mutual suspicion and distrust stand in the way of agreement. It's clear that until they are eliminated, serious talk of disarmament is impossible. While suspicion and distrust are present, these talks can only test the nerves of one's adversary.

And each adversary believes that time is on his side in this game. Premier Khrushchev spoke of the matter like this: "Look here, dear sirs, time is on our side—on the side of Communism. Disarm while you can, but don't think we're weaker than you. Put a foot wrong, and you'll be sorry. We are stronger than you!" (?).

And then the newspapers of so-called socialist countries praise this kind of speech, saying he's on the side of "peace and democracy."

At the same time, as soon as the USA makes a speech with some suggestions of its own on the world's problems, the same media explode with angry articles. These articles (which are prepared beforehand) talk about the Cold War, the "balance of power," and the USA's role as "global policeman." (By the way, you can apply these kinds of articles to any statement by a Western official, with a slight adjustment of the text.)

So the question remains: Can we trust Khrushchev, his state, and his ideas? Interest in someone's eccentric personality should not be taken as proof of support, love, or trust in him and his ideas. But that's how some Soviet journalists are prone to portray Khrushchev.

I wonder if real Soviet people trust Khrushchev. Let's see. One time, during the Twenty-second Party Congress, I started discussing global problems with an acquaintance. Back then, I was at a crossroads. I didn't know whose side I was on: with the Communists or against them. That's why I was really affected by the words of a simple twenty-two-year-old guy from a peasant family who had become a technician and was taking classes in the Moscow Institute of Energy: "Do *you* trust Khrushchev? Do you even know what's on his mind? Do you think he wants peace? Can't you see that he is the worst kind of adventurer? How can he be trusted?" Right . . . and I remembered that a bit earlier, I'd heard something like this from a Dnepropetrovsk engineer who was on vacation in Moscow when the congress was held: "The way things are going, Khrushchev will tell the peoples of the world: 'Friends, oppressed ones, have a bit of patience. Don't weep for the victims. They were necessary. In return, we will liber-



ate you from the accursed imperialists, and then we will head together toward the shining heights of Communism.”

The common people of the USSR believe that the path to these heights has too many potholes.

Khrushchev, poke him with a stick:  
He put the ship of Communism in the pits.  
But our people are not upset by this:  
We don't need Communism, not a bit.

These lines were written by a young lathe operator at one of Moscow's military-industrial plants. They are more eloquent than volumes of economical treatises or the Party Program.

The Russian people can respect and tolerate dim-witted and short-sighted sovereigns, tyrants, and dictators. But they will always hate impostors and adventurers like Shemiaka, Godunov, the False Dmitry, Biron, and Otrepiev.<sup>24</sup>

After everything said here, should we even ask if the Western powers trust Khrushchev and his government?

As long as Khrushchev and Khrushchevian Communism exist, there will be no peace!

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 94792, l. 2-7. Notarized typewritten copy.

### *A. A. Kalinov and G. Esmurzaev*

Two people who happen to sit at the same table in a cafeteria starting a conversation. Afanasy Arkhipovich Kalinov (born in 1926) is a native of the Kharkov region. A war veteran, he was twice wounded and remains disabled. After the war, he wandered about the country and endured long and frequent treatments in hospitals. He changed workplaces and lived first in Stavropol, then in the Kirov region, and finally in Kalmykia. There he met Gashim Esmurzaev (born in 1931), a Chechen who had survived deportation to Kazakhstan. Convicted twice of rape and theft, he was avoiding arrest for his most recent theft and living in Kalmykia under the pseudonym Dauletbaev. (He stole a cow from a collective farm. The head of the farm assisted him, then helped him escape and change his identity.)

Both men had their grievances with the state. As Kalinov explained: “My views were influenced by being twice wounded and spending a great deal of time in the hospital. I thought that I had been treated unfairly. When I was recovering, it was very difficult for me. I had no money, and they paid a very small pension.” (Someone from the

Procuracy made an indignant note in the margin of the memorandum: “With the full support of the state.” Kalinov’s pension was eighteen rubles.)<sup>25</sup>

In April 1962, Kalinov wrote a letter, “Call to the People,” and gave a copy to Esmurzaev. Esmurzaev took it with him on his trip to work in the Komi autonomous republic. He showed it to a few acquaintances—travelers and fellow workers. Esmurzaev and Kalinov kept in touch, and Kalinov urged Esmurzaev to distribute the letter and pretend that it came from an organization with many supporters. One day, a reader told Esmurzaev that he was a fool to get mixed up in all this; two other readers hurried off to denounce the author and the distributor to the KGB and the police. On November 27, 1962, Kalinov and Esmurzaev were each sentenced to seven years’ imprisonment.

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*Call to the People (1962)*

A letter composed by A. A. Kalinov and distributed by G. Esmurzaev in the spring and summer of 1962.

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Dear brothers and sisters!

I appeal to you so that you will be able to distinguish the truth from deceit. Let’s take the tsarist period. Our brothers and sisters lived poorly in those days. Why did they live poorly? Because the rich oppressed the poor, or, rather, capitalists oppressed those who didn’t have capital. Capitalists were mean people who didn’t think of their fellow human beings—that is to say, of any of us.

Brothers and sisters! It’s our misunderstanding, we don’t need to be poor, since there are millions of us. Should such a large number of people be poor? No! We have worked and are still working. We gave our labor and keep on giving it—but to whom? To false leaders.<sup>26</sup> We received miserly pay for our work, and we’re still receiving the same pay. Who pays us this tiny amount of money? Those liars. No, brothers and sisters, it isn’t fair that our brothers and sisters suffer, but every hour brings a harder life. One day, we will find ourselves enslaved, and we won’t be able to do anything about it.

To unite and seek a just life, we first need to drive out the fear that has lodged in our brothers and is now lodged in us. We can’t do anything until we expel that fear from ourselves. Then we’ll put faith, hope, and love in the place where we’re keeping fear. This will make us see and give

us the power to believe in ourselves and in others. We must hope that we will find a just life and that we will all be equal—the way life ought to be. Some leaders tell us that there should be no wage leveling. But this is not right. When every person receives an equal amount, there will be no irresponsible workers or loafers (as those same loafers call us).

What is Communism? It is the masses united in a single family, a family founded on the consciousness of the people and not on the actions of rulers. The consciousness of the masses will emerge when the people's needs are met. As of now, the goods are there to meet those needs, but the distributors don't know what they're doing. And we know that existence determines consciousness and not the other way around. What we need are not rulers but just people who can distribute the goods that we produce. We will rule ourselves. What do we need to get there? We have to take action, fast, to chase out the fear that has accumulated in us over centuries. The faster we expel fear and instill faith, hope, and love in ourselves, the sooner we join together in one brotherly family.

Brothers and sisters! We need to believe in and hope for and love one another, no matter where we work or serve, whether we work on the land or in industry, in the sciences or in the army. Whether you are a soldier or an officer, we are all brothers and sisters. The sooner we unite, the faster we will achieve a just life. We don't need any weapons: metal will help us in our work and ease us in our labor. And whoever raises weapons against us is mentally underdeveloped, so he should think about what a stupid thing he is about to do. As soon as we join together, the voices of millions will ring out: "Down with the false leaders!" We will rule ourselves, and that will be the most formidable weapon. When we join together, we will reach the real truth. Then we will put an end to the evil that is money, or, more accurately, insignificant paper that has created so many victims and caused so much loss. We will put an end to that when we force the liars to leave the orators' tribune and put our own distribution man there.

If we don't join together in a short time, it will be very difficult for us. Very few people work in agriculture, and so agriculture is suffering losses rather than making profits. So think about it: Who is going to feed us all? Even now, they feed us only with promises, and they will continue to invent things. There used to be five-year plans, then seven-year plans; now they say that it'll be twenty years until things are better, but we all know what that means. What are we waiting for? Unite, and be reasonable and farsighted.

Each day we are enslaved further. Before they take our private plots away from us, they need to first create a plentiful base of goods. They shouldn't just take away our private plots, because we can't survive without them. All this is being done so that one person can get his name into world history while millions suffer. If we don't unite soon, we will suffer

even more. We are building Communism now, but it's the same collectivization and the same ruin for us. We haven't even recovered from the first injustice when we accept the second. Brothers and sisters, this won't do. Down with the liars! Long live the eternal brotherhood of all the peoples of our planet! Let there be eternal, just, and brotherly life for all the peoples of our planet! Let us join together, making one brotherly family on earth!

Yanikhov

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 98932, l. 14-16. Typewritten copy.

### *I. E. Sokolov*

Little is known about the life of Ivan Evgenievich Sokolov, who wrote one of the most original documents we have come across. He lived in barracks attached to a brick factory in Alma-Ata. In his article "The Dead End and the Way Out," he characterizes himself as a self-taught person who read independently and in a disorganized way. Sokolov quotes Voltaire, who was not among the authors taught to Soviet school-children, yet his writing is full of mistakes. He uses vocabulary that one might consider scholarly, but he does not always use it properly.

From 1962 to 1964, Sokolov conducted an active correspondence with the authorities, like many Russian self-taught people who thought that they had discovered important truths. In a seventy-five-page letter to Khrushchev, he "examined a considerable number of problems in the lives of our people." He asked Khrushchev to "include in the new Constitution certain provisions that would put an end to these problems."<sup>27</sup> With the same intention, Sokolov demanded a meeting with the Central Committee. In 1964, he asked for the opportunity to speak in front of the June plenum and then the February plenum. Sokolov got the impression—the correct impression, we might add—that his letters were not reaching the addressees. He began to appeal to the Procuracy, demanding that his civil rights be upheld. In one such letter, he summarizes the amendments to the Constitution that he proposes:

1. Granting to the people of the USSR those civil rights and liberties that are due to them: (a) the right to form organizations and parties for the organized protection of the people's interests; (b) freedom of speech; freedom of the press; freedom to hold social meetings, rallies, and demonstrations; and other rights (that is, all the rights and liberties that people have in the progressive countries of the world

and that our people, as the de jure owners of the country, must have unconditionally).

2. Changes to the existing electoral system so that it is based on democratic principles. In this way, the people will have a full opportunity to send true representatives of their interests, who desire and are able to protect their interests, to be their deputies in the government.
3. I would like to direct your attention to the egregious and unjust fact that the intellectual potential of our people (our scholars and intelligentsia) remains sorely unused. The intellectuals are not consulted in the development of the socioeconomic and political life of the country. They may be progressive representatives of global science and technology, but they remain citizens without rights, just like our entire people. In the future, they should play a major role in leading and directing the country [. . .].
4. It is also necessary to introduce into our constitution articles on human rights in accordance with the Declaration on Human Rights that was adopted by the U.N. General Assembly on December 10, 1948.<sup>28</sup>

It's likely that the head of the oversight department, G. A. Terekhov, did not have to think twice before appending instructions to the letter quoted above: "Statements made by a mentally [*sic*] ill person. Take measures."<sup>29</sup> Some bureaucrat appended an irritated note to the case: "I DONT [*sic*] understand WHY they send me such great quantities of drivel written by a sick person."<sup>30</sup> It seems that the prosecutors were excellent at psychiatry as opposed to spelling.

Four years later, the deputy prosecutor of the Kazakh Soviet Republic notified G. A. Terekhov that on October 14, 1968, a criminal prosecution was to be launched against I. E. Sokolov "regarding the fact of his distribution [. . .] of handwritten and typewritten statements and literary works that contain slanderous inventions about the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and about the Soviet government. Sokolov sent these works to the leading Party organizations and to the United Nations. He also sent them to students of Kazakhstan State University, the Kazakhstan Agricultural Institute, and other institutions of higher learning in the city of Alma-Ata." In response, the Procuracy of the USSR reported that from 1962 to 1964 it had received Sokolov's letters and suggestions "on creating a 'World Constitution' and transferring 'the commanding heights to world science,'" and so on.<sup>31</sup>

After a review of Sokolov's letters, it was determined that their au-

thor was mentally ill and that his suggestions were the product of a deranged mind. Sokolov was sent for psychiatric evaluation.<sup>32</sup> Not surprisingly, the evaluation established “Sokolov’s mental derangement, which was caused by a chronic mental affliction.”<sup>33</sup> The criminal case against him was consequently discontinued on December 18, 1969, by the Alma-Ata city court, “but because he poses a significant danger to society, the court hereby refers him for compulsory isolation and treatment to a special psychiatric hospital under the Ministry of Internal Affairs.”<sup>34</sup>

Here we publish a shortened version of I. E. Sokolov’s article “The Dead End and the Way Out.” Unlike other works in this chapter, Sokolov’s text does not contain sensational revelations or angry tirades against Communism, Khrushchev, or the state. Nor does his article resemble the usual attempts to turn the ideas of official Soviet propaganda on their head. To the best of his ability, Sokolov has tried to go beyond the framework of this worldview. He was clearly influenced by French Enlightenment philosophers. He quotes Voltaire, and it is possible that he was also familiar with the works of Rousseau and Montesquieu or else had read popularized summaries of their works. Sokolov borrows the detached, objective style of French Enlightenment writing. Even when criticizing the Soviet social system, he remains modest and restrained, stating his case rather than attacking the system. Sokolov builds his thoughts using Enlightenment ideas, such as natural rights and the social contract. Like the eighteenth-century thinkers, he believes that it is possible for an enlightened mind to find rational solutions to society’s problems. In particular, Sokolov was fascinated by the Declaration of the Rights of Man of 1789 and convinced of the importance of constitutional law.

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### The Dead End and the Way Out (1962–1964)

From Sokolov’s article “The Dead End and the Way Out,” written no later than 1963.

#### 1. The Dead End

[. . .] *Doctrines*. For the most part, contemporary nations are guided by biased theories and doctrines. The problem with these theories is that they

aim to satisfy only the interests of one social group. The author presents the thesis of his theory, which benefits that group, as an incontrovertible truth, but offers no evidence. He develops many different versions of this theory to demonstrate and justify its postulated thesis.

For example, in Hitler's Germany, they postulated that Aryan blood had some kind of special purity. This was supposed to give them (the Germans) the "right" to lead the World—that is, the right to global hegemony.

The feudal nobility justified their hegemony by referring to their exclusive, ancient and inherited right to lead the people, to own land and its natural wealth, and to use their serfs' labor. The nobility was convinced that they were the "benefactors" of the enslaved peasantry [. . .]

Capitalists also use theories to justify their ownership of plants and factories. You can see the one-sided and unjust defense of their "right" to obtain an income at the workers' expense in the fact that only they (the entrepreneurs) receive the profits.

The Socialist Revolutionaries considered the peasantry to be the basic dynamic force of society. They argued that peasants had the right to hegemony over other social groups in our country.

Using the Marxist doctrine, the Bolsheviks (at the present time, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) believe that the proletariat should have the right to hegemony. Here in the USSR, this theory has been put forward on behalf of the proletariat. However, it is just a theoretical formula. The real hegemon is the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Thus, the basic tenets of these doctrines may properly be called unjust and biased. Leading an entire people without their consent cannot be justified by any axiom. Despite the occasional finesse of the theories' literary form, the theories are just a hoax, a chain of speculative statements, which are used to "prove" that  $2 \times 2 = 5$  and not 4.

*People and Doctrines.* Following traditions that have been passed on from time immemorial, people have gotten used to abnormalities in social life. Some people do not notice these abnormalities and keep silent. Others see them and are also silent, although they may say to themselves: "This existed before us, and people did not speak out about it. We'd better keep quiet, too, if we don't want to disturb the stability of our private lives."

People keep silent when entire nations are presented with theories that are biased, unjust, and unable to withstand criticism, even when such theories are presented as "incontestable" truths.\* Nor do people speak out when these theories are put into practice with barbaric methods reminiscent of the Dark Ages. These methods often discredit even policies that would be considered positive if more humane methods had been used (for

\* For example, Hitler's theory on the purity of Aryan blood [—I. E. Sokolov's note].

example, the forced collectivization of peasant farms that took place in the USSR from 1929 to the 1930s).

People who have no rights cannot resist even fairly small groups of people who use their doctrines to their own benefit. These groups have taken the initiative; they now stand at the helm of state power. They subjugate other people, making them powerless to govern themselves. They force them, not only to defend their illegitimate theories with weapons, but also to coerce other nations into acknowledging these theories as “just”—and with weapons, not arguments. Violence obligates both those that use force and those that are its victims to call injustice justice. [. . .]

*Contemporary Morality.* People rely on the rules of their ancestors even when these rules are disgraceful. The Roman saying *Homo homini lupus est*<sup>35</sup> continues to be a guiding principle not only for many common people but also for state leaders and those in positions of power. These days, many people say, “Eat, or you’ll be eaten,” and for most people, “the ends justify the means.” We ascribe “positive” qualities to people who reach their goals, no matter what, even when they ignore widely accepted rules and moral principles. We never wonder if someone failed to reach his goals because his conscience did not allow him to overstep certain boundaries. We have developed a habit of ignoring moral principles.

Given this habit, the leaders of contemporary nations tend to use violence, rather than reason and conscience, to resolve contentious problems. [. . .]

*Doctrinaires at the Helm of State Power.* When doctrinaires find themselves at the “helm” of state power, they often go so far as to use every possible means in economic and sociopolitical conditions of the nation’s life for their own benefit. They deprive people of civil rights and liberties. They appropriate resources that the people should be able to use (labor, food, living space, etc.). Without consultation, they adopt constitutions that suit them but do not satisfy the people’s needs. Without the people’s knowledge, they create rules for elections that violate the most elementary principles of democracy. This allows them to choose (in effect, appoint) “deputies” who are useful to them.

*One-Sidedness.* They are complete masters of the ideological order. They control everything that can affect people’s consciousness: literature, the press, art, and education. Nothing new that might contradict their doctrinaire beliefs can reach the people. This includes ideas that can be used to criticize the doctrinaires’ actions, perspectives different from theirs, and frameworks that permit people to see certain phenomena differently. In all areas of life, they present just one side of things, the side that corresponds to their worldview, goals, and objectives. This one-sidedness prevents open criticism. It is like a stick that hits people with one end and knocks down those who wield it—the doctrinaires, the usurpers—with the other. [. . .]



The one-sided orientation is a contemporary form of an age-old evil born of the barbarity of our ancestors. This evil still links contemporary people to animals and their instincts. [. . .]

*The Impossibility of War in Our Times.* Recently, mankind has taken control of the energy of the atomic nucleus. Mankind has found ways to use this energy for destructive purposes. Humanity is like a child who is playing with matches on a powder keg. The danger of explosion and death to the child has become so grave that it is no longer possible to use war to solve disputed issues. Those who spread evil, it seems to me, no longer see war as a means of realizing their risky plans. Both sides are consumed with passion, and neither side will allow itself to be conquered without using all the means of offense and defense. The use of thermonuclear weapons would destroy both sides. If both sides realized this, neither side would initiate aggression against the other.

Society developed in a one-sided fashion. In contrast, science has always used scientific methods and has invariably moved forward, discovering ever-new mysteries of nature. The leaders of nations, consumed with rage, inherited barbaric methods and did nothing but develop and perfect them. Instead of using science to determine the path that humanity should take, ignorant rulers subjected science to their barbaric purposes. In our own times, for example, science has found ways to use the energy of the atom, and rulers have forced scholars to create atomic and thermonuclear weapons.

*The Dead End.* Society has developed abnormally: while developing its intellectual power (that is, the sciences) it has also preserved and perfected the barbaric vestiges of its past in its ruling circles. Now society has reached a dead end, and its customary, barbaric way out—the use of war—is no longer possible.

It seems that the path to further progress has been cut off.

Adversaries divide humanity into two warring camps. The rulers of each camp believe that only their guiding principles are just. They do not even allow that their adversaries have the right to exist. However, the rulers realize that the current situation makes it difficult to subjugate those who hold views different from their own. This is why they attempt to present themselves as peace seekers. They talk about the need to coexist, and exchange hypocritical pleasantries. [. . .]

Can either camp live calmly, work constructively, or create a happy, joyful life for itself? No. Rather than think objectively and strive for disarmament, the adversaries worry about self-defense (and also, perhaps, about attacking the other camp?). The talk of coexistence and disarmament is filled with artificial pleasantries, and it remains mere talk. When it comes to deeds, both camps are armed to the teeth. This militarization comes at the expense of the people's well-being.

[. . .] Nations recognize that they are governed by principles that were dangerous in the past and have become outdated and useless in our time. We have reached a dead end, and the old paths do not lead to the way out. We should look for new paths.

## 2. The Way Out (On the Need for Science)

Humanity should ask science to help it to find new paths to a calm and happy existence. And if humanity had had the opportunity, it would have asked long ago. Unfortunately, in many countries human rights are very limited, and some nations lack the civil rights to which they are entitled. Therefore, they cannot obtain that which is most in their interests.

The [Universal] Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted on December 10, 1948, by the U.N. General Assembly, remains unrealized in these countries. Regrettably, it is also unrealized here in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. In our press (see the December 12, 1948, issue of *Pravda*) it received only a brief mention. The actual declaration has not been published in our country. Of course, the peoples of the Soviet Union do not enjoy the rights guaranteed by this declaration.

Given this lack of rights, science must come to the rescue of humanity of its own accord, in the same way that good Samaritans come to help those who are in trouble. It must not wait for an invitation. People who are unorganized and without rights cannot ask science for help.

First, science needs to help humanity to get rid of its barbaric wars once and for all. Science must help humanity understand that humans should not struggle for existence in the way that animals do. Instead, people must use their minds to shape nature. They have to alter nature and use it in their interests, which are to live reasonably and cooperate with one another. We should remember that our planet's natural resources are more than enough to satisfy the needs of humanity. Science should help people understand this. Or, at the very least, it should make them realize that the struggle over the use of natural resources (as well as any other struggle) makes them similar to animals. In the end, this struggle is absurd. It leads both sides either to mutual destruction or to the dominance of one side over the other.

Second, science should show people that society's problems must be solved with the same methods used to solve scientific problems. Science is logical and consistent. After solving one problem, it moves on to the next, which is related to the first problem or results from it. [. . .]

We should use scientific methods when we overhaul socioeconomic formations that have become outdated and no longer satisfy society's needs. Science gives us the model for consistency as we supersede the bad and the old with the new that is unquestionably better. We should not depart from impartial scientific methods, even if to speed up the realization of our plans. [. . .]

In our time, when humanity is facing the dead end to which barbarism brought us, it is essential to seek help from science. Its help is just as necessary as directions for a person who is lost. [. . .]

*An Institute under the Auspices of the United Nations.* Research institutes for solving scientific and technological problems exist in the USSR and other countries. "Scientific" institutes both at home and abroad develop new methods for waging war and ever more destructive weapons. Yet there are NO research institutes dedicated to eliminating the very need for those "institutes." Such institutes, if they existed, would engage in the objective study of a nation's vital needs and interests and identify the points where some nations' interests clash with the interests of others. These institutes would develop peaceful resolutions to contentious issues between nations. There are *no* institutes researching such questions.

In my opinion, the United Nations should create such institutes. Their attention should be directed mainly at those countries where the industrial, economic, and territorial conditions (that is, living space) create the most acute need to lay claim to other countries' [resources]. A central institute under the auspices of the U.N. should coordinate the institutes of various nations. These institutes would be its branches. [. . .]

In addition to research on the peaceful coexistence of dissimilar nations, the coordinating institute and its branches would develop a set of guiding principles for the people of the world. These principles would make up a global constitution, a fundamental international law that would give people the right to lay claims and defend themselves without wars.

While reflecting on the guiding principles of this global constitution, I thought of Marmontel's words, which Voltaire repeats in some of his works:

Truth shines with its own light.  
Men's minds are not to be illuminated  
With the flame that consumes a victim at the stake. [. . .]

Life is rich with such truths.

While observing life and following truths that "shine with their own light," I came to the conclusion that I should base my guiding principles on certain ideas that nature itself suggests. These ideas make it possible to regulate the interactions between people and groups of people, between nations and groups of nations. I take the liberty of summarizing these ideas.

*The Laws of Nature.*

I. All people are creations of nature and parts of nature. For this reason, they should have the right to use natural resources to satisfy their vital needs. (Otherwise, nature would not have created them.)

Hence:

2. Depriving people of the right to use natural resources to satisfy their vital needs should be considered a crime against the laws of nature.

3. Using natural resources to subject, enslave, or exploit human beings, peoples, or nations should be considered a most serious crime.

In modern times, people have shifted from natural forms of working the land to the division of labor. New categories of the working population have appeared alongside tillers of the land: factory workers, the intelligentsia, and others.

4. All sites of labor that are useful to society should be treated as natural resources. Every person's right to use these sites as means of subsistence is similar to the right to use natural resources, in accordance with Laws 1, 2, and 3.

In striving to follow the main principle of human morality, I would like to articulate one more point. I believe that this point should be considered a law of nature and should be followed by individuals, groups of people, nations, and groups of nations.

5. Nature gave us intelligence so that we could march toward our goals without infringing on anyone else's rights or property, guided only by the simple rule "Live and let live."

*Granting the United Nations Control over Constitutions and Electoral Systems.* I would like to articulate a few more thoughts on shortcomings in the lives of nations so that these shortcomings are noted and eliminated by these nations' governments. When some governments do not take measures to eradicate these shortcomings, the U.N. can accomplish this.

The U.N. should become the people's spokesman and represent their true interests. It should use the coordinating institute to ensure the following: (a) That the constitutions of nations take account of people's needs in the most complete way possible. That these laws make provisions for civil rights and liberties to which the people of all nations are entitled, according to the Declaration of Human Rights that was adopted by the U.N. General Assembly on December 10, 1948; and (b) That each nation's electoral system provides genuine opportunities for people to participate in government by creating true representation and by fulfilling their demands, interests, and hopes [ . . . ].

*Some Thoughts on Private Property.* I also want to express my opinion on the issue of private property. This issue causes irreconcilable hostility between doctrinaire leaders and splits the world into two mutually hostile camps.

When one examines private property according to the laws of nature cited above, one concludes that certain kinds of private property are harmful to society. People attempt to obtain private property by overstepping

the boundaries of their normal needs. Incited by greed, they use parasitic means and methods on other people.

Yet one can also take into account that private property provides people with the opportunity to live freely and independently. It gives people the means to satisfy the normal needs of their families without parasitic behavior. Therefore, private property should be considered legitimate. For people whose way of life is based on private property, the "sacred principle of private property" should be considered just. Depriving people directly or indirectly of the opportunity to provide for their needs [. . .] means depriving them of their human and civil right to a life of freedom (in the economic sense). It should be considered as a violation of the fundamental laws of nature cited above.

In countries where the land, natural resources, and industry have been nationalized, such private lands should coexist on equal terms with collective farms. Practical indicators of the advantage of one form of management over the other should lead to the growth of the form that is more advantageous for the people. [. . .]

I am convinced that agriculture can benefit from collectivism, provided that it arises from the initiative of the peasants, as a result of a desire to replace the bad with the better or when it is capable of providing greater opportunities for the use of agricultural technology. The saying "Unity is power" is very true. If collective farmers could be full masters of their destiny, collectivism could be a good substitute for private ownership of agriculture. (However, I think that because our collective farmers have limited rights, they would return to private farming if they had an opportunity to do so.) [. . .]

*The World's Governing Principles: The Global Constitution.* I see this fundamental law, the global constitution, as the basis for the principles that will be used in eliminating hostile international relations. This constitution is an incomplete but necessary basis for what will be the complete solution to the problem of disarmament. It would lead to the eradication of any reason to wage war. It would give all nations the right to defend themselves and lay claims without resorting to wars.

The coordinating institute under the auspices of the U.N. should spearhead the formulation of these principles. It should engage its branches and the institutions of various (perhaps all) countries of the world in the process.

An international competition would help articulate these principles. Either the best project's version of these principles or a mixture of the principles of several projects judged to be the best would be used in formulating these principles. In this way, the universal guiding principles will have gone through comprehensive criticism and will have been accepted by representatives of the majority of nations in the U.N. They will be ac-

knowledge as the main, fundamental international law, a global constitution. This constitution will help humanity to resolve the problem of disarmament once and for all. We will get rid of war, the evil that has threatened humanity for centuries.

*I Appeal to You!* [. . .] When people receive the civil rights and liberties that are due to them, the light of science and reason will vanquish the darkness of violence, parasitic behavior, and ignorance.

Under the leadership of science, nations will disarm and establish peace on our planet. They will move along the paths defined by science toward humanity's highest ideals and hopes.

To remove vestiges of our barbaric past and establish peace on earth, to ensure calm and joyful existence for the whole of humanity, let there be civil rights and liberties for the nations of the world! *Storm the Commanding Heights of World Science!*

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 92607, l. 8-39. The author's copy. Typewritten.

## Underground Groups and Organizations

**A**LTHOUGH underground groups and organizations had limited power and means, the regime saw them as the most dangerous variety of subversion in the 1950s–1980s. Strangely, despite this concern, the Procuracy’s annual and semiannual reports did not include mandatory data on the number of convictions of members of underground groups, which makes it impossible to isolate that number from the total number of convictions for all anti-Soviet activities. Short reports to the Central Committee on the KGB’s work contain information about the number of “politically harmful” groups (including nationalist organizations) that had been “uncovered and rooted out.” Judging by these data, we can see that the scale of organized opposition to the regime increased significantly in the late 1960s: 3,096 underground groups and organizations were discovered between 1967 and 1971, and 13,602 of their members underwent “prophylactic measures.”<sup>1</sup>

The majority of the groups and organizations described in this chapter were active in the Russian Republic (RSFSR). One reason for this is that information about the situation in other republics may not have been sent up to the center from the procuracies of these republics. Another reason is that organized opposition in the outlying regions of the empire mainly amounted to nationalist movements. Long-running nationalist organizations with ties to countries outside the USSR existed in Ukraine, the Baltic republics, and the Caucasus, but they are too specific a problem to examine in this book; they require separate analysis. The same can be said of underground groups in labor camps.

Classifying which “anti-Soviet” activities constituted organized op-

position to the regime was just as difficult for the Soviet justice system in the past as it is for researchers now. Given the variety of forms of political protest, individual and collective actions are hard to distinguish. If one person decided to create an organization, that would to some extent reflect the presence of similar political views among friends and acquaintances. But the Procuracy's oversight records contain data on only some participants of oppositional organizations and groups; as a rule, information about people who underwent prophylactic measures is not included. This often makes it difficult to draw a line between organizations that were mature and those that were never fully formed.<sup>2</sup>

In the records of the Procuracy's Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security, we found a total of 98 organizations with about 350 participants. The majority of underground organizations were small, averaging 3–5 members. Most of our data match the information on the number of participants of “politically harmful groups” “uncovered” by the KGB and the Procuracy: in 1961, they found 47 groups composed of 186 participants, averaging 3.9 people per group; in the first half of 1962, they found 60 groups, with 125 participants, averaging 3.5 people per group; and in the first half of 1965, they found 28 groups, with 125 participants, averaging 4.4 people per group. The data are broken down differently in later years: 2,196 members of 502 organizations, including members of nationalist organizations, underwent “prophylactic measures” in 1967, an average of 4.3 people per organization; 2,870 members of 625 organizations underwent prophylactic measures in 1968, or 4.5 people per organization; 3,130 members of 733 organizations underwent prophylactic measures in 1969, or 4.2 people per organization; 3,102 members of 709 organizations underwent prophylactic measures in 1970, or 4.3 people per organization; 2,304 people in 527 organizations underwent prophylactic measure in 1971, or 4.3 people per organization. In 1974–1976, the KGB and the Procuracy “uncovered and stopped” 384 groups among college and professional-school students, with a total of 1,232 participants; the average number per group was 3.2. These data indicate that organizations had an average membership of 3.5 to 4.5 people. Such small groups did not require structure, hierarchy, or a formal division of responsibilities. The leader's role consisted largely of searching for and recruiting like-minded individuals. The duration of the organization's existence depended directly on the choice of members, as well as their number. Each new participant in-



creased the risk of exposure. The less the organizers of an underground group played revolutionary games and took on the formal attributes of an underground organization, such as personnel files, registration cards, and pledges, the less likely they were to be repressed.

Very few of the groups engaged in serious illegal activities. As a rule, their work was limited to conversations within a closed circle, discussions of programs, and the composition of articles and leaflets, which often stayed within the same closed circle. Firmly restrained by the KGB, the underground groups of the 1950s and 1960s (which might more accurately be called informal circles) could only dream of getting their message out to a large audience. Only on rare occasions did one of them manage to produce and distribute a large number of leaflets. Even then, underground informal circles were far less efficient at getting a message out than were the authors of samizdat literature, which had a large readership among the intelligentsia and also penetrated other segments of the population.

Many underground groups of the 1950s and 1960s were formed on the basis of existing friendship or family ties. Typically, members of the underground in the Khrushchev period had become acquainted in high school, at college, or at work, or were related. Because they did not have the opportunity to declare their political views publicly, the search for like-minded individuals had to be limited to friends and acquaintances. Under these conditions, clandestine groups often admitted new members on the basis of factors not directly related to political attitude, such as friendship, the personal authority of the leader, or a liking for conspiratorial games.<sup>3</sup>

Role-playing is important for our understanding of the popularity of underground groups, particularly among youth. Study of the oversight records shows that young people aged sixteen to twenty-five made up more than half the total number of participants of underground groups (186 out of 350) on which data are available. By the beginning of the 1950s, a whole generation of Soviet citizens had been born and raised under socialism. The majority of young people had belonged to Communist youth organizations (Little Octobrists, Young Pioneers, Komsomol). According to data of the Komsomol Central Committee, 94 percent of all university students were Komsomol members in the 1956–1957 academic year.<sup>4</sup> State propaganda insistently romanticized underground revolutionaries in tsarist times, presenting them in terms of heroism, self-sacrifice, purpose, moral integrity, and selfless camaraderie. It was only natural that young peo-

ple would start thinking that they lived the most beautiful, complete, romantic, and heroic life possible. Propaganda intended for the youth (literature, films, museums) were veritable textbooks on forming conspiratorial organizations. There young people could learn how to set up an underground press, escape surveillance, and hide illegal literature. Propaganda also served as a source of the revolutionary vocabulary that filled the documents and banners of late Soviet underground groups. Even their names, such as the New Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party<sup>5</sup> and the New Leninists, often came from the same source. In some cases, we have found direct borrowings—for example, when an organization's charter and membership pledge were actually copied from the Charter of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union or Aleksandr Fadeev's novel *Molodaia gvardiia*.<sup>6</sup> Even oppositional groups that had fundamental disagreements with Marxism-Leninism borrowed from that source. Although the content changed, the form remained the same.

These tendencies were further encouraged by a significant trend in official (and in the so-called official but independent) propaganda of the Khrushchev period in which Party ideologists exposing the Stalinist cult of personality emphasized the “restoration of Leninist norms of Party-minded life”<sup>7</sup> and generally promoted Lenin as the true founder and leader of the Soviet Union. Earlier, Lenin had been overshadowed by Stalin, but now he was being brought back to center stage, and with him a renewed, revived, and declassified history of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party that highlighted the names of many revolutionaries repressed or forgotten under Stalin. The removal of the stigma was not complete, and “major villains” like Trotsky, Bukharin, and Kamenev were not readmitted into the official Party history. Nevertheless, scholarly works grew livelier, memoirs came out, and state propagandists started to pay more attention to the topic of the heroic revolutionary underground of tsarist times.

The Moscow State University students Yu. T. Mashkov, V. E. Tsekhmister, N. N. Grigalashvili, and others, accused and later convicted of creating an illegal organization (their trial took place at the Moscow city court from May 8 to May 14, 1959), had taken their models of heroic revolutionaries right out of Soviet books and films. They agreed to hire an attorney only if the attorney shared their political beliefs. After the verdict was announced, they chanted three times, “Shame on the Kremlin . . . !” (ellipsis in the text; probably indicating the omission of a word like “executioners” or “tyrants”).

Poems written by Revolt Pimenov<sup>8</sup> are another example of the revival. He used motifs from Vladimir Mayakovsky's<sup>9</sup> "Left March" and other revolutionary classics, as here, in a poem confiscated by the authorities.

You flame of fires and rebellions, flare up!  
You thunders of revolt, [answer the] call!  
You people living in slavery, awake—  
Left, march, left.  
How long will you suffer without freedom,  
Fulfilling the Central Committee's wishes?  
You are imprisoned in a somber and stuffy prison.  
Left, march, left.<sup>10</sup>

Most underground groups and organizations of the Khrushchev period were attracted by the idea of a golden age of the revolutionary movement in Russia and identified with what they saw as "true" Marxist Leninism. Perhaps it was the last outburst of revolutionary idealism in the USSR. All of the Soviet regime's troubles were laid at the feet of its leaders and the executors whose actions had "distorted" Marxist-Leninist theory. Young conspirators imagined that a just sociopolitical system could be built by returning to "true Leninism." They even invoked Lenin (in keeping with Party political etiquette) in support of their advocacy of a multiparty system.

Although the members of radical leftist underground organizations during the Khrushchev period did not realize it, they closely followed the traditions of the Trotskyite Left Opposition of the 1920s. In their search for "Communism done correctly," they turned their attention to the Communist Party of China. The first Soviet admirers of Maoism appeared at the same time as the first signs of a crisis in the use of Communism as a state ideology and a conflict between the Soviet and Chinese Communist Parties. The loss of familiar reference points was painful for politicized Soviet society. Despite Khrushchev's many attempts to revive the people's faith in Communist ideals, all of society, including the top Party chiefs (or, more accurately, starting with the top Party chiefs), increasingly indulged in the joys of consumerism. The sea change that the Party had initiated, with its marked reorientation of social policy, large-scale construction of free housing, and its increased investments in the production of consumer goods, brought an increase in social stratification and growing privileges for Party bureaucrats. Khrushchev periodically attacked the growing social division, but with little success. The masses reacted to the contradictory

situation in different ways: some escaped into consumerism, and others engaged in the egalitarian critiques of state power that have such a long tradition in Russia.

From 1960 to 1968, only a few radical leftist groups are noted in the Procuracy's records. Perhaps there were more, but no foundation for spreading radical leftist views existed in the USSR at the time. To orient oneself in the contradictions and convolutions of the Soviet and Maoist interpretations of Marxism-Leninism, one had to be not only proficient in political theory but also deeply knowledgeable about the Marxist "classics." Not surprisingly, most members of Maoist and leftist radical groups came from better educated segments of the population; they included instructors of Marxist Leninism, journalists, and scientists, although there were a few workers as well.

The narrowness of the ideological base of underground groups and organizations of the 1950s is partially explained by the state's total control of information. In the 1950s, samizdat literature was not yet widely distributed. There were practically no sources of fresh ideas. The Voice of America, the BBC, Radio Liberty, and Radio Free Europe were popular sources of uncensored information, but foreign radio stations could not help individuals generate new ideas. Only a few underground organizations borrowed the ideas of Western democracy in one way or another. The Soviet system was still quite strong. A crisis of trust may have touched the ruling elite, but the foundations of the Soviet social and political order remained intact. Prevalent anti-bourgeois attitudes had far-reaching historical and national roots.

In the early 1960s, several underground groups classified as terrorist emerged. But they only *expressed* terrorist intentions. These intentions were typically aimed at the head of the Soviet government, Nikita Khrushchev. One of these groups was formed in 1961 and consisted of university students and a graduate student of an elite Moscow college, the Moscow Institute of International Relations. The group's activities were limited to discussions of their plans and the selection of the site where the assassination was to happen: Dimitrov Street (currently called Yakimanka), in central Moscow, along the route from Vnukovo Airport to the Kremlin.<sup>11</sup> In 1960, another group prepared to make the casing of a bomb that they intended to hurl at Khrushchev during his planned visit to Tbilisi in honor of the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of Soviet power in the Georgian Republic. The assassination was motivated by the members' memories of the harsh suppression of mass disturbances in Georgia<sup>12</sup> in March 1956.<sup>13</sup> Only

a handful of such groups existed. To our knowledge, they virtually ceased to exist after the Khrushchev period ended. An exception is S. Zatikian's group of "pure" Armenian nationalists. In 1977, the group caused explosions on the subway and in two grocery stores in Moscow.<sup>14</sup>

Another type of underground group, which was quite widespread, was formed on the basis of a juvenile need for adventures and games—games that the participants knew to be dangerous. Such groups typically had names borrowed from adventure stories or films (the Gadfly),<sup>15</sup> Young Russia, the Capuchin, and so on). Pledges, signs, and other group attributes, as well as a conspiratorial ambience, contributed their formation. Although their pranks were harmless, they attracted the attention of the Soviet criminal justice system, which saw any independent youth group activity as dangerous and which was concerned about the attempts made by members of some groups to obtain weapons.

Student underground groups occupy a significant place among the oppositional organizations noted in the Procuracy's oversight records. The events in Hungary and Poland<sup>16</sup> served as important stimuli for the birth of these groups. In the fall of 1956, leaflets that called for solidarity with the Hungarians were distributed at colleges in Moscow, Leningrad, Sverdlovsk, and other large cities in Russia. Youth oppositionists rarely expressed fundamental objections to Marxism-Leninism, although some organizations reached beyond the boundaries of the Marxist paradigm, among them the Union for Freedom of the Mind, a group formed in Moscow in 1961,<sup>17</sup> as well as Yu. Mashkov's group, mentioned above.<sup>18</sup>

The emergence of underground organizations among workers was a distinguishing feature of the Khrushchev period. Workers in the USSR had always been in a privileged position compared to other population groups besides Party administrators. At the same time, they were the group that was most dependent on the state. The contradiction at the core of this situation was painfully revealed in the mid-1950s. Wage-rates dropped, prices rose, and new taxes were introduced just at the time that the state announced a campaign to raise living standards, irritating many workers. But workers were accustomed to harsh exploitation of their labor by the state: Had their living standards really dropped sufficiently to cause the hostile reaction? In fact, it was not that the absolute standard of living decreased significantly (on the contrary, it continued to rise), but rather that the

discrepancy between workers' expectations and what the state delivered increased.

Traditional methods of protests, such as strikes, did not exist for Soviet workers. But strikes were not formally prohibited, and the criminal code lacked an article under which people could be prosecuted for striking. In the political system based on the dictatorship of the proletariat no provision was made for conflicts between the state and the workers.

The late 1950s and early 1960s were marked by an unprecedented wave of mass disturbances in which workers were active—though, to be sure, they were part of a broader urban crowd. We do not know of cases in which members of underground groups took part in these mass events. However, the association of disgruntled workers in illegal groups and the participation of workers in mass disturbances are closely linked: they represent different stages in the development of conflictual relations.

Illegal organizations of workers in the late 1950s and early 1960s had names such as the Union for the Struggle for Justice, the Organization for the Mass Struggle for Justice, the Party for the Struggle for the Realization of the Ideas of Lenin, the Socialist Party of the Soviet Union, the Union for the Struggle for the Liberation of the Working Class, the Underground Party of Workers and Peasants, the Russian Labor Party, the Union of Honest Laborers, and the People's Party—all derivative of the slogans of struggle for "correct socialism." We can say with some certainty that the vast majority of these workers' organizations did not aim for the fall of the regime, even in the distant future. In their documents, the workers' groups name "bureaucrats" and the "Soviet bourgeoisie" as their major enemies. Nikolai Kostornov, leader of the Underground Party of Workers and Peasants, gave the name "Communist capitalists" to representatives of these dark forces.<sup>19</sup>

The popularity of anti-bourgeois views among the workers during this period shows that a fundamental sociocultural conflict was taking place. When Khrushchev came to power, the Party and state elite completely abandoned the familiar asceticism of the proletarian state's leaders. The condemnation of the Anti-Party Group at the July 1957 plenum of the Central Committee strengthened anti-Khrushchev sentiments among the working class.

The intelligentsia, on the other hand, who had wagered that Khrushchev would be a reformist leader, welcomed the expulsion of mem-

bers of Stalin's ruling circle from the government. A leaflet distributed by Krasnopevtsev's group, a group formed by graduates of Moscow State University,<sup>20</sup> stated that Molotov, Malenkov, and Kaganovich were victims of the arbitrary exercise of power that they themselves had created. The expulsion of members of Stalin's ruling circle from the government not only to some degree confirmed that the regime had set a course for liberalization but also seemed something of a guarantee against any return to former ways.

Among workers who were dissatisfied with the regime, the resolutions of the July 1957 plenum provoked the creation of a number of underground organizations. Among them was the Underground Party of Workers and Peasants," which consisted of miners from the Rostov region. Upon hearing an announcement of the plenum's resolution on the Anti-Party Group, V. Kovalenko, a carpenter who worked at a mine in the Donetsk region (Ukraine), began to seek out members for an underground organization whose goal was to overthrow Khrushchev. Kovalenko was quickly arrested and convicted in November 1957. After the Central committee dismissed Khrushchev from his position at the plenum of October 1964, a political prisoner who was formerly a miner sent Leonid Brezhnev a letter in which he demanded an answer to the question of whether he had been right to oppose Khrushchev's cult of personality.<sup>21</sup> Of course, he did not receive a response.

A crisis associated with the redistribution of social roles and changing priorities in state policies also contributed to workers' dissatisfaction. Most of the positive changes in Soviet society and politics, such as the rehabilitation of the victims of Stalinist repressions, the denunciation of Stalin's cult of personality, and a considerable relaxation of the regime's impositions in the spheres of culture and art, had little connection with workers' vital interests. For workers, the new political direction, which was supported by the intelligentsia and students, effectively meant a lowering of their social status. The promotion of the intelligentsia as the social group associated with scientific and technical progress cast doubt on the continuation of the privileged status of the working class vis-à-vis other social groups. The worsening of workers' living standards could be seen as a result of the sweeping changes in Soviet society and politics initiated by Khrushchev and the new leaders. The workers' disappointment with the government's ability to address the situation at the local level and, more important, its lack of desire to do so, together with the workers' resentment of the

state, led to efforts to organize against the state in defense of workers' interests.

Because few of the leaders of workers' underground groups were well educated, they did not have a clear understanding of the methods and means of political struggle. Having decided to create an underground party, Kostornov turned to Lenin's work *Where to Begin?*<sup>22</sup> Another work by Lenin, *What Is to Be Done?*,<sup>23</sup> was also popular with the organizers of workers' underground groups. Some groups were created by "impostors" (*samozvantsy*), people who posed as representatives of existing and well-developed underground organizations active in other regions. These organizations typically had such imposing names as the Great Party of the Twentieth Century, the Party for the Freedom of the Russian People, or the Underground Party of Workers and Peasants. This strategy was used to unify people whose frustration with the state stemmed from substandard living conditions, but its potential for creating a source of political protest was low. The "impostors" compensated for their lack of a coherent program by self-identifying with segments of society that opposed the "spoiled" Communist elite.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, opposition-minded members of the intelligentsia often created intellectual-educational clubs that were usually without names or any program of action. Participants were united by their desire to collectively develop an understanding of the political situation and to analyze the reasons for the growing crisis. One such club existed in Kiev for a year and a half, from the end of 1956 to the middle of 1958. The engineers P. Klimenko and V. Malinko and a graduate student at a botany institute, O. Rybchenko, met to discuss current international and domestic affairs, Lenin's works, and the Russification of Ukraine. During the government investigation of their club, all of these individuals admitted their views to be erroneous and wrote confessions. As a result, their case was closed.<sup>24</sup>

Another case became famous in the USSR as the "university case." In 1953, the group of graduates of Moscow State University in Krasnopevtsev's group began to study the history of the revolutionary movement in Russia. Starting in 1956, they gathered to discuss the meaning of Party and state policies. In May 1957, they decided to engage in active struggle with the system and distributed leaflets critical of Khrushchev. Soon thereafter (in August and September), all nine members of the group were arrested. A group founded by R. I. Pimenov, B. B. Vail, and I. S. Verblovskaia at the end of 1956 managed to organize a few meetings of the students of the Leningrad Library Science



Institute before they were arrested in March 1957. During the meetings, members of the group read Pimenov's articles and poetry and discussed significant current events: Khrushchev's speech at the Twentieth Party Congress and the events in Hungary.<sup>25</sup>

Commentary by E. Yu. Zavadskaia and O. V. Edelman

## From the Procuracy's Files

1953

On July 30, 1953, I. K. Sipratov (b. 1935), a ninth-grade student from Riazan, was convicted of attempting to create an underground organization called Land and Freedom.<sup>26</sup> He had made four membership cards and a stamp for his organization, devised means of obtaining weapons and money, and owned a dagger and a small sword (*kortik*).<sup>27</sup>

1955

On January 4, 1955, V. G. Kozlov (b. 1934), a member of the Komсомol, and D. D. Moroshek (b. 1933), both medical students in Minsk (Belorussia), were convicted of creating a literary club in 1954 and intending to convert the club into an underground organization. Kozlov had written a document entitled "The Manifesto of Russian Marxist-Leninists." In the document, he called the Party "the Russian Party of Toadies and Dictators" and stated that the Soviet political order was "state capitalism," which he saw as inevitable, "given the total nationalization of the means of production and the low level of consciousness among the masses."<sup>28</sup>

1956

In April 1956, A. M. Kukhtin (b. 1939), a student at a machine-building technical school in Kharkov (Ukraine), was charged with attempting to create an underground organization. (This case was closed on May 22, 1956, because the accused was a minor.) He had made more than 130 leaflets in the name of the Workers' and Peasants' Guard, calling on workers and soldiers to unite and arm themselves against "neglectful bosses and bureaucrats." Kukhtin had intended to distribute the leaflets on May 1, 1956.<sup>29</sup>

1957

On November 29, 1957, E. G. Donichenko (b. 1939) and A. L. Sergienko (b. 1940), both mechanics, S. E. Volodchenko (b. 1937), a painter, and N. N. Malyi (b. 1939), a welder, all from Stalino (Ukraine), were convicted of creating an underground Realist Workers' Club of Democrats in 1955. (They were influenced by the broadcasts of Voice of America.) The group wrote a charter and a document called "Our Tasks," produced a handwritten journal, "The Free Word" ["Svobodnoe slovo"], and wrote articles entitled "What Is Democracy?" and "The Tasks of the Opposition." They distributed approximately two thousand leaflets stating, "Do not trust the Cheka," "Do not trust Communists," and "Vote for non-Party candidates."<sup>30</sup>

I. G. Maksimchuk and S. A. Lugovets, both born in 1939, without fixed occupation, residents of Dzerzhinsk (Zhitomir region, Ukraine), were charged with creating a youth organization called the People's Voice in 1955 (the case was later dropped). The organization was to consist of groups of "politicians" (who were to engage in political struggle), "anarchists" (who were to obtain money), "terrorists" (who would commit individual terrorist acts), and "foreigners" (who would maintain connections with foreign intelligence services).<sup>31</sup>

On September 6, 1957, R. I. Pimenov (b. 1930), an instructor at a technological institute, B. B. Vail (b. 1939), a Komsomol member and a student at a library science institute, K. G. Danilov (b. 1936), a Komsomol member and an employee at the Kursk station, I. D. Zaslavsky (b. 1932), a Komsomol member and a researcher at the Research Institute of Telephone Communications, and I. S. Verblovskaia (b. 1932), a Komsomol member and an instructor at a school for worker youth, all from Leningrad, were convicted of creating an illegal organization that also included seven students from the library science college.<sup>32</sup> In December 1956, the group held four meetings at which they discussed practical actions to be undertaken to democratize life in the USSR, such as the creation of informal circles and groups in colleges, the establishment of ties with workers, and the production of illegal literature and leaflets. They planned to hold a conference in the fall of 1957 to develop an organizational program.<sup>33</sup>

On May 23, 1957, S. N. Sergeev (b. 1926) and V. G. Salnikov (b. 1931), both factory workers from Armavir (Armenian Republic), were convicted of creating an organization at the end of 1956. The organi-

zation, which was independent of the Party committee and the factory administration, was meant to defend the workers' interests and "to rein in the leaders, who have become bureaucrats to the core."<sup>34</sup>

On April 29, 1957, V. N. Tiurin (b. 1927), an instructor at a technical college, from Minsk (Belorussia), was convicted of attempting to create an All-Russian Party of Workers and Peasants in the fall of 1956. The main goals of the party were "to overthrow the dictatorship of the Party bureaucracy and eliminate duplication in the management of production by removing Party organizations from direct leadership over factories." Tiurin wrote the party's program, the party's charter, and the articles "On the Necessity of Socialist Revolution," "An Appeal to the People," and "Our Slogans."<sup>35</sup>

On May 16, 1957, B. V. Lugovoy (b. 1934), an employee at a construction agency, and V. M. Pikanovsky (b. 1937), unemployed, both from Stalino, were convicted of creating an underground organization in February 1957. They intended to distribute leaflets, organize strikes, and initiate an armed revolt with the goal of "fighting for the truth" and improving the people's lives. They had the idea of starting this struggle after watching the film *The Gadfly*.<sup>36</sup>

### 1958

On February 12, 1958, L. N. Krasnopevtsev (b. 1930), a graduate student in the department of Marxism-Leninism at Moscow State University, L. A. Rendel (b. 1925), an instructor at a technical school, V. B. Menshikov (b. 1933) and V. M. Kozovoy (b. 1937), both students in the department of history at Moscow State University, M. A. Cheshkov (b. 1932), a researcher at the Institute for Oriental Studies at the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, M. I. Semenenko (b. 1931), a design engineer, G. G. Obushenkov (b. 1929), who had a *kandidat* degree in history (roughly equivalent to a Ph.D.), and N. N. Pokrovsky (b. 1930), both teaching assistants in the history department at Moscow State University, and M. S. Goldman (b. 1932), an engineer, all from Moscow, were convicted of creating an underground group in 1956. They had developed an organizational program whose aim was to fight against "Stalinist socialism" and, at factories, create workers' soviets that had the right to appoint the administrators. In spring 1957, they established contact with representatives of the Polish opposition. They had meetings, presented papers, and discussed Soviet history and economics, as well as the history of the revolutionary

movement in Russia. In July 1957, they distributed leaflets demanding revocation of Article 58 of the criminal code, a trial of Stalin's associates, the strengthening of the power of local soviets, the workers' right to strike, and so on.<sup>37</sup>

On October 31, 1958, V. N. Vaniukhov and M. E. Evdokimov, workers from Tambov, both born in 1926, were convicted of creating an illegal Great Russian Party of the Twentieth-Century Period in the summer of 1955. They wanted to fight for improvement in the life of the people and "against the measures of the Communist Party." They composed a program and charter and recruited ten people.<sup>38</sup>

On December 1, 1958, A. F. Gagarin (b. 1923), a Party member and a legal advisor for a railroad, P. S. Shulpin (b. 1921), a warehouse employee, A. S. Serov (b. 1913), a road maintenance worker who had been a Party member from 1949 to 1956, and D. G. Gorshkov (b. 1918), who had two previous convictions and worked as a painter, all of them from the town of Syzran, were convicted of creating the underground Committee for the Struggle for Freedom in the fall of 1956. They distributed leaflets in Syzran in June 1957 in which they stated, "We are socialists, but we reject Stalin's and Khrushchev's socialism—that is to say, state socialism. We stand for Lenin's socialism."<sup>39</sup>

On May 8, 1958, S. I. Kobliaev (b. 1930), a welder with a conviction in 1949, and F. M. Kravko (b. 1932), deputy head of a geological expedition with a conviction in 1956, both from the Khabarovsk region, were convicted of creating an underground organization in the spring of 1957. Their goal was the "improvement of the workers' material welfare." They were going to distribute leaflets with summaries of Voice of America broadcasts and spread the group's message to others.<sup>40</sup>

On May 29, 1958, V. A. Dunaevsky (b. 1937), a student at the Tbilisi Polytechnic Institute, S. A. Ananiev (b. 1933), a student in the department of philosophy at the Moscow State University, N. G. Magradze (b. 1932), an instructor at the Tbilisi House of Pioneers, and S. R. Vartazarian (b. 1941), a high school student, all residents of Tbilisi and Komsomol members, were convicted of creating a literary club in the summer of 1957. Dunaevsky and Magradze were going to distribute Dunaevsky's satirical verses as leaflets. Ananiev and Vartazarian composed theses on the economic conditions of the transition from socialism to Communism.<sup>41</sup>

On October 24, 1958, A. G. Barazgov (b. 1918), previously convicted in 1947 and not in employment before his arrest in 1958, N. P. Tits (also known as A. K. Poliakov, b. 1927), an artist and designer,

V. N. Slipchenko (b. 1930), a Komsomol member and an artist, A. M. Deviatov (b. 1933), a construction worker, L. P. Zorkin (b. 1933), a Komsomol member and the leader of a construction worker brigade, and G. G. Gazizulin (b. 1933), a worker, all from Tashkent (Uzbek Republic), were convicted of creating the All-Russian Social-Democratic Party in March 1958. They composed a program and a charter, swore to fight "for the people's interests and well-being," thought up noms de guerre, and distributed more than three hundred leaflets calling for a struggle to expose "enemies of the people who have betrayed the achievements of the October [Revolution]." <sup>42</sup>

On August 8, 1958, A. I. Pluzhnikov (b. 1938), a Komsomol member and welder from Taganrog, was convicted of creating an underground Union for the Struggle for the Liberation of the Working Class. <sup>43</sup>

### 1959

On January 13, 1959, V. S. Polenov (b. 1928), a driver at a special motor pool, V. L. Solonev (b. 1926), a Party member since 1953 and a student at a teaching college, Yu. A. Pirogov (b. 1931), a Komsomol member, a mail carrier, and a student at the Literary Institute, G. S. Ukurov (b. 1936), a Komsomol member and a student at a technical college, and L. P. Sergeev (b. 1931), a non-degree student at the Literary Institute, all from Moscow, were convicted of creating an underground Russian National Party in 1955. Solonev wrote the program called "Thoughts of a Nationalist," where he called the Soviet system "state capitalism" and stated that "the Marxists have turned people into slaves." In 1957, there was a schism in the group. Pirogov and Polenov found Solonev's program to be somewhat anti-Semitic and voiced their disagreement. They developed a program for the People's Democratic Party of Russia, whose main goal was "to overthrow the Communist social order." In April and May 1958, they distributed hundreds of leaflets in Moscow calling for a struggle against the Communist dictatorship. <sup>44</sup>

On January 19, 1959, N. N. Utkin (b. 1906), previously convicted in 1945, director of studies at a mining college, and G. V. Ivanov (b. 1931), an engineer at a small radio station, both from Tula, were convicted of creating the Club for Fighting Shortcomings in the beginning of 1958. Utkin and Ivanov intended for the club to become the foundation of an oppositional party. A. S. Yakovlev (b. 1926), a student at

a mining college with no criminal record, also took part in the club's activities but was not charged. They wrote up a charter and a program, held meetings discussing Party history and the roles of Trotsky and Bukharin, and composed leaflets demanding the revocation of Article 58, the revocation of Party-mindedness in the media, and the dismissal from the government of those who knew about Stalin's misdeeds."<sup>45</sup>

On May 14, 1959, Yu. T. Mashkov (b. 1937), a worker at a printing house, A. N. Bogachev (b. 1939), a Komsomol member and a factory worker, V. V. Popov (b. 1937), a student in the Moscow State University department of law, N. V. Batsullo (b. 1936), a Komsomol member, a draftswoman, and a student at a construction industry college, all from Moscow, V. E. Tsekhmister (b. 1938), a Komsomol member and a schoolteacher in the Irkutsk region, and N. N. Grigalashvili (b. 1931), a mine worker in the Tula region, were convicted of creating an underground organization on November 7, 1958.<sup>46</sup> They intended to fight "state capitalism" in the USSR and believed that Marxist-Leninist dogma "needs to be revised, for it is contradicted by current reality." A total of twenty-three members underwent "prophylactic measures" in the city of Moscow, as well as in the Moscow, Tula, Irkutsk, and Stavropol regions.<sup>47</sup>

### 1961

On April 21, 1961, Sh. V. Mekvabishvili (b. 1928), previously convicted in 1948 and unemployed, A. Sh. Meladze (b. 1926), a library employee sentenced to twenty-five years' imprisonment in 1948 for taking part in an anti-Soviet terrorist group and rehabilitated in 1956, A. Sh. Batoshvili (b. 1919), convicted in 1948 for treason against the fatherland, convicted again in 1953, rehabilitated in 1956, and temporarily unemployed, and M. P. Mdinaradze (b. 1938), an art school student, all from Tbilisi, were convicted of creating a terrorist group in 1960. (Mekvabishvili was sentenced to be shot.) The group had planned to assassinate Khrushchev during his planned visit to Tbilisi in honor of the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of Soviet power in Georgia.<sup>48</sup>

### 1962

In 1962, O. N. Kliuikov (b. 1934), a student at a metallurgical college, and A. M. Ivlev, both from Novosibirsk, were charged with cre-

ating the Union of New Communists in 1961. They wrote a program and a document called "An Address, and were planning to publish a newspaper called *Nabat* (The Tocsin).<sup>49</sup>

In April 1962, A. I. Budiak (b. 1944), a worker, A. A. Evdokimov (b. 1943), a trade school student, E. I. Zhurakovsky, and A. S. Antokhi, all from Tiraspol (Moldavian Republic), were charged with creating the Union for the Struggle for Justice. On May 22, 1962, the case was closed and transferred to a people's court. In November 1961, the group distributed leaflets in which they accused the government of betraying the achievements of the October Revolution and wrote about the profound stratification in Soviet society in terms of both social status and property ownership. They also called on the people to unite in the fight "against the bureaucracy, its perfunctory treatment of people, and injustice."<sup>50</sup>

On September 27, 1962, V. P. Shpakov (b. 1942), an electrician, V. S. Ovsianikov (b. 1942), an artist who worked for a House of Culture,<sup>51</sup> and V. A. Alakhverdyev (b. 1945), a mechanic, all from the town of Rudny (Kustanai region, Kazakh Republic), were convicted of creating an underground group in the summer of 1962. The goal of the group was to organize strikes. The group also composed a leaflet.<sup>52</sup>

### 1963

On November 23, 1963, G. S. Krivonosov (b. 1934), an investigator of the Leningrad procuracy, was convicted of creating an underground organization in the beginning of 1961. He wrote the organization's charter and a document called "Our Program Statement," in which he argued that political and constitutional freedoms did not exist in the USSR, proposed to organize "workers' soviets" that would govern factories and other enterprises, in the style of Yugoslavian councils, and stated that the Soviet social order was "bureaucratic party-state capitalism." The members of the organization made a hectograph and published an illegal journal called *Kommunar* (The Communar), in which they criticized the Soviet electoral system and space program.<sup>53</sup>

On February 7, 1963, I. I. Kuk (b. 1941), I. I. Unger (b. 1941), V. G. Neifeld (b. 1942), and V. A. Kuk (b. 1944), all ethnic Germans born in the Zaporozhe region (Ukraine) and living in Tomsk, were convicted of creating the underground NTS Group in October 1962. Their idea to join together arose from listening to a tape recording<sup>54</sup> of a broadcast by the NTS on the Free Russia radio station.<sup>55</sup> Following

NTS's call to action, the group wrote leaflets, posted them, and dropped them into ballot boxes during the elections for the local soviet. The leaflets called on people to "rise and fight against the dictatorship of Khrushchev and his accomplices."<sup>56</sup>

On September 5, 1963, G. I. Krasniuk (b. 1920), a priest from the village of Ramenki (Moscow region), and B. I. Ivanchenko (b. 1941), a student at the Odessa seminary, were convicted of creating an underground organization called the Ray in 1963. They wrote leaflets and planned to distribute them in Odessa on May 1, 1963.<sup>57</sup>

#### 1964

In July 1964, F. V. Kechin (b. 1908), a KGB employee before the war and a deputy prosecutor in Lvov (Ukraine) from 1954 to 1957, N. S. Khlebnikov, a former instructor of Marxist Leninism, N. S. Mazurenko, and O. N. Feskov, all from Lvov, were prosecuted for creating an underground organization called LSCP(b)SU.<sup>58</sup> (The case was closed on August 27, 1964.) Kechin, who was expelled from the Party because of his involvement in a criminal case in 1962, started working as a building supervisor at a glass factory in 1963; he wrote articles entitled "On the Party's Organizational Principles and Name," "The Resolution of the LSCP(b)SU on the Relationship Between the LSCP(b)SU and the Communist Party of China," and "On the Testimony of Communists under Investigation."<sup>59</sup>

On May 29, 1964, I. G. Lomov (b. 1937), a Party member and a graduate student, as well as R.-D.-V.-L. Eidrigiavichius (b. 1939) and A. S. Zubarev (b. 1941), both Komsomol members and students at the Moscow Institute of International Relations, were convicted of attempting to create an underground organization in October 1961. They discussed plans to assassinate Nikita Khrushchev. In summer 1962, Lomov wrote articles entitled "What Is to Be Done?" and "Dictatorship and Democracy." In March 1963, he also composed a leaflet entitled "Ten Years on Stalin's Path without Stalin."<sup>60</sup>

On February 19, 1964, B. I. Bulbinsky (b. 1933), previously convicted in 1957 for distributing leaflets, S. O. Babich, M. N. Mitrofanov, and T. F. Tarasiuk, all from the Rovno region (Ukraine), were convicted of creating an underground organization while imprisoned in 1959. After their release in 1962-1963, they developed a "minimum program" and a "maximum program" for the All-Union Democratic Front [of the] Revolutionary Social-Democratic Party and



distributed more than a thousand leaflets in the Rovno, Zhitomir, Lugansk, and Donetsk regions (Ukraine).<sup>61</sup>

On September 19, 1964, N. F. Dragosh (b. 1932) and I. A. Cherdyntsev (b. 1938), both teachers from the Odessa region, as well as N. A. Tarnavsky (b. 1940), a carpenter from Kiev, V. V. Postalaki (b. 1934), a Komsomol member, and S. I. Chemyrtnan (b. 1942) and N. S. Kucherianu (b. 1941), students at an art school in Kishinyov, were convicted of creating the Democratic Union of Socialists. In February 1964, they set up an underground printing press, printed fifteen hundred copies of their "Appeal," and sent it to people in Odessa, Kiev, Gorky, Cheliabinsk, Sverdlovsk, Petropavlovsk, Kishinyov, and Leningrad.<sup>62</sup>

### 1965

On November 26, 1965, V. E. Ronkin (b. 1936), V. N. Gaenko (b. 1937), a Komsomol member, B. N. Zelikson (b. 1935); V. V. Iofe (b. 1939), a Komsomol member (b. 1945), S. D. Khakhaev (b. 1938), a Komsomol member, and V. M. Smolkin (b. 1940), all of them researchers at various institutes, as well as S. N. Moshkov (b. 1939), a Komsomol member and a university student in Leningrad, were convicted of creating the Communards' Union. They wrote a program statement entitled "From the Dictatorship of the Bureaucracy to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." In July and November 1964, they distributed leaflets calling for revolutionary struggle with the Soviet bureaucracy. They also produced six issues of a handwritten journal *Kommunar* and corresponded with like-minded individuals in other cities.<sup>63</sup>

### 1967

On September 1, 1967, E. V. Gureev (b. 1940), an engineer, M. V. Derunov (b. 1939), an engineer, S. V. Nemchinov (b. 1935), a researcher, A. A. Beglianov (b. 1942), an engineer, A. A. Stempkovsky (b. 1945), a nurse's aide, and Yu. E. Novikova (b. 1947), without a fixed occupation, all from Moscow, were convicted of creating an organization called the Underground Resistance Group "Free Russia" in the fall of 1965. They developed a program and a charter and established a connection with the NTS office abroad. On the night of December 16, 1965, they distributed approximately twenty-two hun-

dred leaflets in Moscow. The leaflets contained an appeal to develop democracy and informed people about the persecution of Yu. M. Daniel, A. D. Siniavsky, P. I. Yakir, and the physicists who worked in P. L. Kapitsa's<sup>64</sup> laboratory. On February 14, 1967, they distributed approximately a thousand leaflets in which they protested the introduction of Articles 190-1, 190-2, and 190-3 into the Criminal Code of the RSFSR.<sup>65</sup>

In February 1967, Go Dantsin (b. 1932), a citizen of the People's Republic of Korea, and G. P. Ivanov (b. 1937), both researchers at the Institute of the Economy of the World Socialist System under the auspices of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR in Moscow, were prosecuted for attempting to create the Revolutionary Socialist Party of the Soviet Union in 1965-1966. (The case was closed on July 21, 1967, when Dantsin was expelled from the USSR.) They worked out a program entitled "The Manifesto of Socialism." Dantsin distributed Chinese propaganda, which he received at the embassy of the People's Republic of Korea, among his friends.<sup>66</sup>

In April 1967, G. G. Petrosian (b. 1950), T. G. Fyodorov (b. 1951), and A. A. Isakov (b. 1950), high school students, as well as N. Sh. Makharadze (b. 1949), a worker who attended evening classes, all from Tbilisi, were prosecuted for creating the Illegal Organization of Fascists (the case was closed on May 15, 1967). The group composed an organization charter, a pledge, and the texts for membership cards, made stamps and the organization seal, and invented code names. On April 3, 1967, they scattered thirty leaflets containing the call to "separate Georgia from Russia." They also attempted to obtain gunpowder and explosives.<sup>67</sup>

### 1968

On April 1, 1968, B. I. Bykov (b. 1942) and V. I. Mednikov (b. 1940), both district police employees, as well as G. V. Deonisiadi (b. 1938), a carpenter, all from Alma-Ata (Kazakh Republic), were convicted of creating an underground organization called the Young Worker in 1963. Between April and June 1966, they distributed 354 leaflets in Alma-Ata. Between 1964 and 1965, Bykov wrote articles entitled "Wage Labor and Capital," "Socialist Society," and "Bourgeois Society."<sup>68</sup>

On September 3, 1969, G. A. Lesniak and V. G. Belorussky, both high school students who were born in 1950 and lived in Kaunas

(Lithuanian Republic), were convicted of creating a Christian Democratic Union in 1967. The organization also had seven other members. In the summer of 1968, the group distributed leaflets headed "Freedom to Czechoslovakia!" They were planning to blow up a synagogue, as well as a podium set up for a holiday parade.<sup>69</sup>

### 1970

On November 24, 1970, N. A. Shaburov (b. 1945), the manager of a repair shop in Liepaia (Lithuanian Republic), as well as Viktor G. Pestov (b. 1946) and Valery G. Pestov (b. 1948), both factory workers in Sverdlovsk, V. N. Uzlov (b. 1948), a railroad radio mechanic in Serov, and V. E. Bersenev (b. 1948), a Komsomol member and a machine fitter in Sverdlovsk, were convicted of creating an underground organization called Free Russia, which they later renamed the Revolutionary Labor Party. In 1970, Viktor Pestov developed a charter and an organizational program. In 1969 and 1970, the group distributed leaflets with an appeal for workers to fight for a new Communist revolution.<sup>70</sup>

In 1970, V. Yu. Kuranov (b. 1950), a worker in Simferopol (Ukraine), was prosecuted for attempting to create an underground organization in March 1969. Influenced by broadcasts of foreign radio stations, he wrote a manuscript entitled "Russia, Open Your Eyes! or, Speaking of Democracy" in which he argued that the existing social order should be replaced by "popular capitalism."<sup>71</sup>

In February 1970, N. P. Tulaev, Yu. P. Shaduiko, V. V. Voronin, N. N. Aseev, V. I. Kumpiak, A. I. Levin, and T. P. Baiburin (all born between 1952 and 1956), high school students from Tuapse, were prosecuted for creating a Club for the Struggle for Democracy. (On April 6, 1970, the case was closed and transferred to a commission on juvenile affairs.) They wrote an organizational program and a charter. The group wanted to fight against the vestiges of the cult of personality and strive for the creation of a multiparty system and democratic institutions. They published handwritten journals called *Demokrat* (The Democrat) and *Russky sovremennik* (The Russian Contemporary). In December 1969, before the ninetieth anniversary of Stalin's birth, they wrote graffiti "containing slander about Stalin" on the pavement and on walls of houses. On February 8, 1970, they distributed more than thirty leaflets throughout the city.<sup>72</sup>

1971

On November 18, 1971, A. I. Kiselev (b. 1951), a Komsomol member and a mechanic at a mine, V. P. Belomesov (b. 1948), a Komsomol member, a student at a polytechnic college, and a worker at the mine, V. V. Semiletov (b. 1946), a Komsomol member and a police cadet, all residents of the village of Makeevka (Ukraine), as well as G. M. Davidenko (b. 1947), a mechanic, N. V. Lavrentieva (b. 1950), a Komsomol member and a worker, and Ye. K. Babintsev (b. 1948), a Komsomol member and a drilling foreman, all from Nizhny Tagil, were convicted of forming the Revolutionary Party of Intellectuals of the Soviet Union<sup>73</sup> in Nizhny Tagil and Makeevka. V. N. Spinenko (b. 1947, incomplete college education, not working) also participated in the creation of the party. Between August and September 1970, they wrote an organizational program and a charter. In February 1971, they organized a conference at which Spinenko was declared the party's theorist and Davidenko, its president. All the members of the party had pseudonyms and paid monthly dues. Their "Manifesto" states, "The time has come to declare to the world that the Communist teachings are half wrong and are currently used as a means to mislead people, while the idea that Communism is almost here is essentially a new religion." They wanted to establish cells of their party in all the large cities of the USSR and in the army and the navy and then seize power.<sup>74</sup>

On April 28, 1971, V. P. Chamovskikh (b. 1940), a lathe operator from Kerch (Ukraine), was convicted of distributing leaflets entitled "The Program of the Working Class" along with N. I. Yakubenko (b. 1940, an electrician) in October 1970. In the leaflets, the two called on people to create an "independent political organization based on Communist principles."<sup>75</sup>

On March 10, 1971, A. K. Chekhovsky (b. 1947), a worker and the secretary of a Komsomol cell in the Voroshilovgrad building trust, I. A. Khokhlov (b. 1947), a worker, G. I. Tolstousov, A. A. Pototsky, V. V. Maslov, and A. P. Bezruchko were convicted of creating the Party for the Struggle to Realize Lenin's Ideas. The party's goal was the "destruction of a perverted socialism through peaceful means, or, as a last resort, through military means, but in both cases, through revolution."<sup>76</sup>

1972

In 1972, A. A. Ekimov (b. 1949), a Komsomol member, a technician for geological expeditions, and a Moscow resident, was prosecuted for creating a youth group called Grin's Brigades.<sup>77</sup> The members of the group were involved in tourism and geology and enjoyed romantic literature. They prepared two volumes of their own poetry and read Alexander Solzhenitsyn's books and Evgenia Ginzburg's memoirs.<sup>78</sup> In spring 1971, they blew up the entrance to a cave in the Moscow area with the dual aim of preventing hooligans from entering the cave and setting up an underground printing press.<sup>79</sup>

1974

On June 14, 1974, the Sverdlovsk region KGB Administration instituted a case concerning the distribution of leaflets signed by the Union for the Liberation of the Urals in Sverdlovsk. (The case was closed on June 12, 1981.) The leaflets contained a demand to hold a referendum on the question of the autonomy for the Urals region.<sup>80</sup>

1975

In 1975, N. I. Kalikin (b. 1920), a worker from Nizhny Tagil, was prosecuted for his attempts to create a Party to Bring Justice to the Soviet People. During a house search, leaflets, a party program, and a charter were confiscated.<sup>81</sup>

## Documents

### *The Socialist Union for the Struggle for Freedom (Kiev, 1956)*

In February 1956, Anatoly Mikhailovich Partashnikov (b. 1935), a Kiev Medical Institute student, Anatoly Shleimovich Feldman (b. 1935), a mechanic at the Welding Institute of the Academy of Science of the USSR, Moisha-Ruvyn Shabsovich Gartsman (b. 1935), a student of the Moscow City Construction Institute, and Viktor Pavlovich Shakhmatov (b. 1934), a drafter at the Institute for the Study of Special Alloys and Ceramics of the Academy of Science of the USSR, all Komsomol members, founded the Socialist Union for the Struggle for Freedom. They wrote leaflets, printed several copies, and, on February 28, 1956, dropped the copies into mailboxes in apartment buildings in Kiev. The next day, March 1, all the members of the organization were arrested.

The idea of creating the Socialist Union for the Struggle for Freedom came from Partashnikov and Feldman. Earlier, in 1951, when both were sixteen years old, they (together with their classmate I. Mednikov)<sup>82</sup> formed the League for Democratic Revival, distributed a few leaflets, and, in May 1953, wrote a leaflet in the name of the Committee on Democratic Unity.”

On June 8, 1956, the Kiev regional court sentenced both Partashnikov and Feldman to six years' confinement in corrective labor camps. Gartsman was sentenced to four years' confinement, and Shakhmatov to one year's confinement.

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### Partashnikov's Testimony

From the protest of the deputy chief prosecutor of the USSR to the Presidium of the Supreme Court of the Ukrainian Republic on the case of Partashnikov and others. October 20, 1956.<sup>83</sup>

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In court, Partashnikov testified as follows: “In 1950–1951, when I was a high school student, I began to doubt that the policies of the Party and the state were correct. I believed that certain issues were addressed incorrectly, not in a properly Leninist manner. . . . My father and my mother had been repressed in 1938, and my father told me about forbidden methods of investigation, which appalled me. In 1951, I wrote one anti-Soviet leaflet and dropped it into a mailbox on Cheliuskintsy Street. In the summer of 1951, Feldman, Mednikov, and I were playing a political game in which each of us chose a code name. We put out some leaflets criticizing the policies of the Party and the state. . . . After that incident, we decided to stop distributing leaflets and quit our game.

“In May 1953, when the Party and the state began to correct their policies to some extent, we decided that we had been right to have the views we did, and once again produced and distributed some anti-Soviet leaflets. It was Feldman and I who distributed the leaflets.

“In February 1956, we distributed leaflets for the last time. . . .

“One time I met Gartsman and he told me that he saw our party's politics as incorrect. After that conversation, on February 22, 1956, Feldman, Gartsman, and I got together at an apartment and decided to form a group and produce leaflets, and also to propagandize by word of mouth among the population.”

## Feldman's Testimony

From the transcript of A. Sh. Feldman's interrogation by the assistant to the prosecutor of the Ukrainian Republic and the investigator of the Investigative Administration of the KGB under the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian Republic. March 8, 1956.

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*Question:* Tell us when and how you took part in the creation of anti-Soviet groups.

*Answer:* I believe that at present, in our country, the soviets have no power; there is only the power, resting on the bureaucracy, of a small group of irresponsible people who are against the masses. For this reason, it is incorrect to speak about the creation of anti-Soviet groups. With regard to the creation of groups, I took part in forming the following groups: the League for Democratic Revival, the Committee on Democratic Unity, and the Socialist Union for the Struggle for Freedom.

The first group was created by Partashnikov, Mednikov, and me in June 1951; initially, it was called the Organizational Committee of the League for Democratic Revival. I was its president, and Partashnikov was the general secretary. On June 13, 1951, the first congress of the league was held on the grounds of the Kiev Pechersk Lavra.<sup>84</sup> The congress elected a three-person presidium, a credentials committee, and an editorial committee. All these committees consisted of three people because that was the number of people in the entire league. The conference was split, or, more accurately, there was a schism, resulting in three factions: the democratic faction (Partashnikov), the labor faction (Mednikov), and the left Marxist faction (me).

We approved the name, League for Democratic Revival, and elected a general council, consisting of Anatoly Dolidze (Partashnikov), Tarasiuk (Mednikov), and Aleksandr Armatov (me). The general council elected three committees: the political one (its chairman was Armatov), the organizational committee (Dolidze was its chairman), and the committee for action (its chairman was Tarasiuk). A few days later, we held a conference on organizational issues, disbanded the general council and the committees, and elected the central committee for action, which was composed of nine people; allow me to explain: each of us had three code names, and three times three is nine. In the summer of 1951, the league produced three leaflets directed against the government and distributed them in Kiev. Subsequently, this league fell apart because of Mednikov's unwillingness to take part in the production and distribution of the leaflets.

There was a strong element of youthful romanticism both in our organizational work with the league and in the production of the leaflets. We were “playing the game of revolution,” so to speak, in that period in our lives. But the basis of it all were my grievances against the government.

In May 1953, Partashnikov and I produced an antigovernment leaflet and signed it ‘The Committee on Democratic Unity.’ In reality, there was no committee at all.

On February 27, 1956, the Socialist Union for the Struggle for Freedom was created; it consisted of Partashnikov, Gartsman, Shakhmatov, and me. This union produced one antigovernment leaflet, which was reproduced by typewriter and distributed around the city of Kiev. The union intended to produce a few more leaflets on March 2, 1956, but we didn’t manage to do so because of our arrest.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 71134, l. 10.11. Certified typewritten copy.

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### Gartsman’s Testimony

From the transcript of M.-R. Sh. Gartsman’s interrogation by the assistant to the prosecutor of the Ukrainian Republic and the investigator of the Investigative Administration of the KGB under the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian Republic. March 9, 1956.

*Question:* To what specifically do you plead guilty?

*Answer:* [. . .] On February 28, 1956, while in Partashnikov’s apartment, the previously mentioned individuals [Feldman, Shakhmatov, and Partashnikov] and I outlined the organizational program. In the beginning, we all stated our opinions on the existing social order in our country. All of us admitted that the best kind of social order is the socialist state order. However, we said that in the existing social order, there are no democratic freedoms (freedom of speech, freedom of the press, or freedom of assembly); that anti-Semitism is encouraged, that the peasantry is heavily taxed, and that workers are not involved in the management of factories.

Consequently, we decided to distribute a leaflet stating our views on the issues mentioned above in order to rouse the population to fight for changes in our state’s policies on these matters.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 71134, l. 20. Certified typewritten copy.



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## Leaflet

The leaflet that was distributed in Kiev by M.-R. Sh. Gartsman and A. M. Par-tashnikov on February 28, 1956.

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Dear Comrade,

The pressure of events in the past few years has forced the Kremlin's rulers to renounce those Stalinist methods that the people hated the most. However, the essence of the regime has remained the same. The people are completely removed from the process of governing the country. We have none of the most basic democratic freedoms, and our human rights have been reduced to nothing. The state, which stands against the people, is the owner of all the plants and factories. Every year it exploits the working class still more, all the while sheltering behind false statements about socialism. Meanwhile, the working class is deprived of all opportunities to defend its interests. The collective farmers are openly robbed through obligatory crop deliveries. The measures taken by the government in recent times do not get at the heart of the problem.

The suppression of all free thought and all creative initiatives leads to stagnation in all areas of science, culture, and art.

Millions of innocent people were tortured to death in the Fascist chambers of the Stalinist *okhranka*.<sup>85</sup> No "rehabilitation" can resurrect them. . . . Concentration camps still exist. Ethnic conflict is still encouraged by the state.

The ruling gang is hanging on not so much because of its power as because of the passivity of the people. The people have been driven to obedience by years of terror and deceitful propaganda, which screams at them every day.

Yet our tolerance is coming to an end.

Dear comrade!

Join the fight for freedom, for true socialism, and for a better life for everyone!

Distribute leaflets.

Propagandize.

Organize groups that will fight for freedom.

Remember that only the people can set themselves free.

The fight is hard, but it will end with the people's victory!

The cause of freedom will not be defeated!

The Socialist Union for the Struggle for Freedom

*The Union of Leninist Communists and the Union of Revolutionary Leninists (Leningrad, 1956–1957)*

In the fall of 1956, Viktor Ivanovich Trofimov (b. 1934), a Komsomol member and Leningrad Pedagogical Institute student; Boris Pavlovich Pustyntsev (b. 1935), a laboratory assistant in a design laboratory; Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Golikov (b. 1935), a Komsomol member and Leningrad Teachers' Institute student; Valentin Alekseevich Malykhin (b. 1933), a stevedore at the Leningrad commercial port with a high school degree and a previous conviction in 1953; Ivan Stepanovich Potapov (b. 1934), a Komsomol member and Leningrad University student; and Vladislav Borisovich Petrov (b. 1934), a Komsomol member and Leningrad Teachers' Institute student, joined together to create the Union of Leninist Communists. Their goal was to fight for "true socialism." At their meetings, they discussed the USSR's domestic policies and international relations, including the events in Hungary and Poland. In November 1956, they distributed leaflets in the hallways of Leningrad University and the Leningrad Herzen Teachers' Institute. Addressed to "Citizen students," the leaflets stated that "Constitution Day is approaching! Stalinism is still with us!" At the end of 1956 or at the beginning of 1957, V. I. Trofimov wrote a charter and an organizational program for the Union of Leninist Communists.

In the summer of 1956, before going to study at the university in Leningrad, Vladimir Ivanovich Telnikov (b. 1937) and Boris Khaida-rovich Khaibulin (b. 1937), both Komsomol members and students in the Leningrad University physics department, took part in the development of an organizational program for the Union of Revolutionary Leninists. A student at the Moscow State University's law school, Evgeny Osipov, drafted the program.

At the beginning of 1957, the two groups got together to discuss their programs. The arrest of the participants interrupted the unification of the groups.

Members of the two groups were tried as representatives of a single organization. On September 19, 1957, the Leningrad city court sentenced Trofimov, Pustyntsev, Golikov, and Malykhin to ten years' imprisonment, Telnikov to six years' imprisonment, Khaibulin to five years' imprisonment, and Potapov and Petrov to three years' imprisonment. On December 23, 1964, Telnikov was rehabilitated by the Supreme Court of the RSFSR.

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Leaflet

The leaflet distributed by members of the Union of Leninist Communists at Leningrad University and the Leningrad Herzen Teachers' Institute in November 1956.

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Citizen students,

Cracks are beginning to appear in the Communist citadel. This is the message of the events in Hungary and Poland, where the people's freedom was crushed by Soviet tanks.

Everywhere you look, students are in the lead. They were the first to defend the democracy that has been smothered in Hungary.

The movement is growing among our country's students, too.

For example, have you heard about the demands for democratic freedoms made by students in many Leningrad colleges?

Aren't you tired of keeping silent?

Constitution Day is approaching!

The Constitution upholds the freedoms of speech, press, and organization.

But where is that freedom?

Where is the freedom that Lenin won for us?

Stalin's dictatorship buried it.

The people's involvement in politics has ceased; silence and whispers have supplanted the free word.

The people cannot speak freely about the government's politics without fear of retribution.

Our goal is to increase people's involvement in politics and to restore Leninist freedom.

Friends! Let us destroy the chains of political bureaucratization under the banner of Leninism!

Long live real freedom!

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 78804, l. 33.<sup>86</sup>

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Program and Demands

From the draft program and the programmatic demands of the Union of Revolutionary Leninists.

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In recent decades, significant changes have taken place in Soviet society. The growth of production capacity and the ensuing significant (if insuffi-

cient) rise in the standard of living are not the only changes that have taken place. The contemporary political situation is also marked by deviations from Leninist norms of state and Party life. Currently, these changes are acknowledged officially only within the boundaries of changes related to Stalin's cult of personality. However, when we examine the history of the cult of personality, we begin to see that, objectively speaking, there were favorable conditions for this cult to arise—namely, limitations on Party and Soviet democracy—and these conditions have not yet been eliminated.

Thus, the issue of the cult of personality is only a part of the larger issue of the change in norms of Party and Soviet life.

The focus of the Central Committee's policies is too narrow. Instead of struggling to eliminate the root causes of changing norms of state and Party life, they content themselves with a superficial denunciation of the cult of personality, which is a mere consequence of these changes.

Here is a summary of these changes:

1. A separation of political practice and Marxist-Leninist theory and, as a result, a partial break with this theory (i.e., on the question of the peaceful transition to socialism).
2. The growing together of the state and the Party administrations and the substitution of the Party administration for the state [administration]. Without a doubt, this caused the bureaucratization and stagnation of both administrations and their consequent alienation from and opposition to the laboring masses.

All of this led to a lowering of political awareness and the lowering of the creative activity of the broad masses of our country's population. A high level of popular political involvement and creative activity is needed to remedy this situation. To develop the former and awaken the latter, we need propaganda specialists; yet the Party cannot prepare these specialists, for it cannot change its internal situation without help.

It is for this goal that we are creating the Union of Revolutionary Leninists (URL).

The URL is an illegal political organization that seeks to fight the perversion of Marxism-Leninism within the Party and among the Soviet builders of socialism.

The mission of the URL is to propagandize the foundational ideas of Marxism-Leninism among our country's masses.

Because it understands the history of Soviet society and the current state of affairs differently from the Central Committee, the URL puts forward the following programmatic demands:

#### I. The soviets

1. To purge the state (Soviet) apparatus and significantly reduce its size.

2. To allow local soviets more freedom of action and executive power.
3. To ensure that the soviets and the Soviet public maintain systematic oversight over executive institutions.

## II. The Party

1. To conduct a class purge of the Party<sup>87</sup> and regulate Party recruitment in the future according to the same principles in order to create a genuine workers' party.
2. To scale down the bloated and thoroughly bureaucratic Party apparatus immediately.
3. To mandate a maximum salary for Party members corresponding to the average wage of a skilled worker.<sup>88</sup>
4. To firmly enforce the norms of Party democracy, first and foremost:
  - a. To recognize that the primary Party organization<sup>89</sup> is actually the Party's foundation; higher Party organs should not be allowed to exercise arbitrary authority over the primary organizations.
  - b. To eradicate immediately the corrupt practice of de facto appointment of Party leaders.
  - c. To establish freedom of opinion about the means of achieving the goals that are common to the entire Party.
5. To limit the Party's governing functions to [providing] a broad directing vision (i.e., a five-year plan) without substituting this for the state plan or oversight over the state administration.
6. To end the use of state funds for Party purposes. To transfer any properties that are under Party jurisdiction but are not related to the responsibilities of the Party (resorts, dachas, motor pools, and the like) to appropriate state organizations.

The following demands are closely related to these main issues of our program:

1. To enforce constitutional freedoms, abolish censorship, and, within the limits of the dictatorship of the proletariat, allow freedom of opinion in the press and on the radio.
2. To revise the Criminal Code of the USSR<sup>90</sup> to combat disorderly behavior and expressions of ethnic intolerance more effectively.
3. To introduce a state maximum<sup>91</sup> for members of society whose work is not directly related to industrial production, including members of the armed forces.
4. To provide a minimum living standard for all working people (via wage regulation).
5. To transfer subsidiary enterprises that are not directly related to the work of certain government agencies ("closed distribution")

stores,<sup>92</sup> repair shops, motor pools, and surplus housing stock) to the appropriate social organizations.

6. To review the existing passport system, for it currently serves as a means of regimenting people and limiting their constitutional freedoms.

These are the main demands of our union, per our program.

We are firmly convinced that these transformations can become a reality only by rousing the laboring masses (first and foremost, the working class) to greater political and creative engagement.

We are confident that only the full, consistent, and permanent realization of these changes guarantees the progress of the USSR toward the great goal that Lenin bequeathed to us: Communism.

GARF, f. R-8131, d. 78804, l. 9-12. Certified typewritten copy.

### *The Underground Party of Workers and Peasants (Rostov Region, 1957-1958)*

In the spring and summer of 1957, a group of mine blasters who worked in the Artem 2 Glubokaia mine, Konstantin Vasilievich Taranukha (b. 1925), Ivan Dmitrievich Boldyrev (b. 1927), Nikolai Konstantinovich Polirov (b. 1935), and Nikolai Zakharovich Testemetsanu (b. 1935), collaborated in the formation of an illegal organization called the Underground Party of Workers and Peasants (UPF).<sup>93</sup> Their slogan was "Peoples of all countries, unite in the struggle against Communism!" and they collected subscriptions and photographs and called for regular payment of dues. The concept of the UPF was developed by Nikolai Timofeevich Kostornov (b. 1916), the head of the mine's dynamite warehouse. He was also the author of a document entitled "Instruction no. 1" and an appeal to the people.

The aim of the organization was to fight "for justice, against bureaucrats, and for the true power of the people." The appearance of this group was directly related to the appointment of a new administration to the mine, which coincided with a raising of production norms for workers and the July 1957 plenum's resolution removing Molotov, Malenkov, and Kaganovich from national leadership posts.

When recruiting officials to the organization, Kostornov claimed to be a representative of the UPF, which was a product of his imagination. Supposedly, the party's headquarters were in Moscow, and it had branches all over the Soviet Union.

On August 28, 1958, the Rostov regional court sentenced Kos-

tornov to ten years' imprisonment, Taranukha and Boldyrev to eight years' imprisonment, Polirov to four years' imprisonment, and Testeme-tsanu to three years' imprisonment.

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Testimony

From the statement of the prosecutor of the Department for Special Cases of the Procuracy of the RSFSR on the case of N. T. Kostornov and others. October 3, 1958.

At court, Kostornov testified as follows: "I understand the charges and admit that I am guilty of illegally forming a party. [. . .]

"In the beginning, things were going well; there was order in the mine. When Ponomaryov<sup>94</sup> became head of the mine, he started to upset the order, we botched our work, they made our workday longer, and I became angry.

"They didn't interact with workers, there were few meetings, criticism was suppressed, and this caused me to become disgruntled. In 1957, when the Anti-Party Group was exposed, this caused me to become even more disgruntled. One time I met Taranukha; we were talking about Molotov and Malenkov, and we decided to form a party, but we didn't know how. . . . I bought a booklet called *Where to Begin?* by Lenin, talked to Taranukha, and organized the party; I recruited Boldyrev and Polirov, and they agreed to join."

Polirov testified as follows: "[. . .] In 1957, we were sitting idle at work, there was no work to be done, and the workers said that we wouldn't be paid for the downtime, and I wanted to leave; Kostornov came up to me . . . he was somehow able to come up, and he says to me: 'There is a party that fights for our rights,' and he suggested that I give him my pledge and photo for the membership card; I kept silent, and that's how it all started."

GARF, f. R-8131, d. 83110, l. 27-29. Typewritten copy.

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Instruction no. 1

From "Instruction no. 1."

Our chief administration of the worker-peasant underground party of our Russia explains the leadership and organization of our Russia's underground party. [. . .]

6. You must know the locations of all the armories in your area; you must know all the Communists and Komsomol members and have the same kind of information for activists.

You must create an underground printing press in your locality and help us, but in no event should you do so on your own; you must do so only in response to a resolution of our chief administration at the center of our Russia! You must maintain connections with the center of our Russia and send reports regularly through a reliable and trusted person or bring them yourself. You must explain to all the members of our party that if captured, they must die alone without betraying anyone else. In the event of a member's death, we must pay monetary compensation to his family until they die! But they must not know what the compensation is for or who is paying them.

7. You must induct only those who are not drunks or corrupt people as members; members must be reliable and persistent so that they can carry out our party's resolutions. You have to explain to the members of our party that our underground party does not conduct subversive activities, and its members are strictly forbidden from engaging in such activities, no matter who they are. For all this belongs to the people and must remain with the people.

8. All the leaders are hereby informed that they need to help the masses, interpret for them, and write complaints, so that the masses respect us for our courtesy and receptiveness. All the leaders and members of the underground party must live in peace with their families, since a family might betray our underground party, too. But it's better if the family doesn't know. It should never know!

GARF, f. R-8131, d. 83110, l. 36-38. Typewritten copy.

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### An Appeal to the People

From an appeal to the people written by N. T. Kostornov in January 1958.

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Peoples of all countries,  
Join the struggle against Communism!  
Our underground worker-peasant party of our Russia appeals to you!  
Comrades!

Workers and peasants, students and artisans, all the warriors of the Soviet army! Listen to our appeal, for the monster Khrushchev has divided the people of our Russia into four classes.

The first class is formed of Communists/ capitalists/ billionaires, who have all the power and the national wealth and enslave the people.



The second class is formed of Communists, too, but Communists only in name—notorious careerists who are led on a leash by the Communist capitalists, that is to say, those who carry out the orders of those Communist capitalists. [. . .]

The third class is also composed of Communists, but they are poor folk. The only reason why they are poor is that they pay their Party membership dues but don't get any profit from doing so; that's why they are called poor folk.

The fourth class is [formed of] the hired hands, that is, those workers who have become enslaved and have no rights or who can't participate in secret Communist meetings. All of them are people without a Komsomol or Party membership card and are called hired hands or slaves, whose only option is to take on higher output norms and lower the cost of production, while the capitalist Communists get pay raises.

Comrades!

Can't you see Khrushchev's bloody disaster and how our people are enslaved and oppressed?

That monster Khrushchev has imposed enormous output norms on workers. The Communist capitalist monsters are pillaging workers and peasants by charging them such enormous taxes. The Communist capitalists have taken away all of your freedom and liberty! They take away all your wealth and send it away who knows where! They promise you that you'll live well later, but we've had no life for the past forty years and won't have one in the future.

It's all because Khrushchev has a lot of paper-pushers, notorious guests, and careerists all around. They are ready to choke the working class with output norms while they live off the profits. Dear comrades, workers and peasants, students and artisans, join us in our underground party, don't be afraid of it, explain its purpose to people all over our Russia, in the east, in the west, and in the north and the south.

Comrades!

Don't believe that monster Khrushchev and all of those bloody beasts. You're already sick of their lies; remember: if you do not take power in your hands, we will perish from the horrors of nuclear war, for it is looming all over the world. The people hate the Khrushchevian dictatorship. Comrades, take power in your own hands, drive out the Khrushchevian disaster and him too, that bloody impostor. Take power in your own hands.

Comrade warriors of the Soviet army, our sons! Provide workers and peasants with weapons, establish contact with them, and support those who rebel! Do not strike at your own brothers, sons, sisters, and mothers; arrest your enemies in your own headquarters.

Down with Khrushchev, that bloody impostor! Down with inequality!

Down with the collective farm system! Down with serfdom! Long live the real free power of the people! Long live the real free popular government! Long live real democracy! Freedom and liberty to all people. [. . .]

Comrades! Arm yourselves, let us seize the true people's power so that a person's thoughts will be free, and no one can tell him what to do, so that he will be his own master. Down with the dictators, Communist-capitalists, and notorious careerist types!

Down with the egotistical way of life! When will we Russians stop toiling away for our subjugator and leave this enslavement? When will we stop living under an iron yoke?

Comrades! Unite all Russian people and all nations. Arm yourselves, strike at Khrushchev's dictatorship, and free all the people from the egotistical way of life!

You should all live by the same principles; all of you as one should spread our message throughout the length and breadth of our Russia. Save Russia from the abyss, save it!

Down with the impostor Khrushchev, that man of blood.

Down with inequality and Khrushchev's serfdom.

Down with all the foreigners in our colleges and academies, for our own people don't have anywhere to study.

We won't let them take our goods and our wealth away to foreign lands, for that all belongs to the people and must all remain here for the people!

Long live the real, free power of the people!

Long live the real popular government!

Long live the real free democracy of the people!

Long live freedom and liberty for all the people!

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 83110, l. 39-41. Typewritten copy.

### *The Union for Freedom of the Mind (Moscow, 1961-1962)*

In October-November 1961, Viktor Alekseevich Balashov (b. 1942), a photographer who worked for a printing house; Aleksei Grigorievich Murzhenko (b. 1942), a Moscow Financial Institute student; and Yuri Pavlovich Fyodorov (b. 1943), an electrical fitter for the Moscow subway, formed the Union for the Freedom of the Mind. The members of the union rejected the Marxist position and sought to democratize life in the USSR, gain constitutional freedoms, improve the welfare of the Soviet people, and promote social progress. In the beginning of February, Sergei Nikolaevich Kuzmin (b. 1942), a student at the First Moscow Medical Institute, joined the group.

Balashov, Murzhenko, and Fyodorov wrote more than 350 leaflets and cover letters announcing that their organization had come into operation. With Kuzmin's help, they distributed the leaflets and letters on the day of elections for the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, February 22, 1962, at Moscow State University, at the Polytechnic Museum, and at a youth group discussion on the topic "Let there be more people with passion!" The leaflets and the letters were also sent to colleges and universities, large factories,<sup>95</sup> the editors of newspapers and magazines, government organizations,<sup>96</sup> and public organizations in more than twenty large cities throughout the USSR, as well as to famous public and cultural figures. Some of the leaflets had been prepared for mailing to international organizations and foreign media.

The Union for Freedom of the Mind attempted to recruit members, primarily from among Moscow students<sup>97</sup> and acquaintances at the Suvorov Military Institute.

On July 20, 1962, the Court Collegium on Criminal Cases under the Moscow city court issued a verdict in the case of the Union for Freedom of the Mind. Under Articles 70 and 72 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR, they were sentenced to confinement in maximum security labor camps: Balashov was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment,<sup>98</sup> Murzhenko to six years' imprisonment, Fyodorov to five years' imprisonment,<sup>99</sup> and Kuzmin to four years' imprisonment.

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### Distributed Letter

From the cover letter to the leaflet distributed by members of the Union for Freedom of the Mind. February 22, 1962.

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We hereby inform you that an oppositional group called the Union for Freedom of the Mind has been formed among Marxists who were formerly devoted to the Party—among Communists and Komsomol members.

We feel a just and sincere aversion to the ideological and political principles of the Party and government, both as regards domestic policies and international relations and as regards the methods they use to run the country.

The crisis of Marxism in the Soviet Union is caused by the absence of talent in the nation's political leadership, the dogmatic ossification of Marxism in the Party, the suppression of popular energy and initiative

through the inculcation of a false morality of civic rights and duties, peoples' philistine and small-minded way of life, and their alienation from politics.

Young people are upset: Marxism disappoints them, for it does not live up to their romantic, revolutionary expectations or deliver the social progress that is constantly promised. We, on the other hand, seek to revolutionize Soviet society and the existing ideology in order to destroy the perversion of Marxism, when the state is alienated from society, for this kind of Marxism has no right to exist. . . .

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 92669, l. 51 (reverse).<sup>100</sup> Typewritten copy.

## · 122 ·

### Leaflet

From a leaflet distributed by members of the Union for the Freedom of the Mind.  
February 22, 1962.

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Compatriots, laboring masses, our student brethren! Comrades!

The social order of our nation, which they hypocritically call democratic, has long become a reactionary totalitarian regime. The dictatorship of the proletariat has been replaced by the political dictatorship of the Party state, which in turn has substituted uncritical dogma for a principled commitment to Marxism. The actual laws under which our society functions contradict the Constitution of the USSR; the government's policies trample the people's vital needs, neglect our interests, and curb our natural desires. The top leadership of the Party and state lords it over the laboring masses through its Party-administrative bureaucracy, shackling our freedom and liberty.

. . . The degeneration of the idea of democracy and truly revolutionary socialism within Marxism, the destruction of freedom of thought and freedom to criticize the state's actions, the cult of popular trust in the leadership, the development of inertia, fostered by the Communists, in social affairs, the decay of public consciousness—all of these have led to a crisis both in contemporary Marxist ideology and in the ideology of peaceful coexistence of nations.

In the economic sphere, the crisis was caused by the interpenetration of the Party and the state economic apparatus and the Party's introduction of economic monopolism: the single management in industry and in social distribution that has subordinated all state institutions according to the principle of political hierarchy.

. . . The rhetorical declaration that Communism will be built in our country means a sacrifice of Soviet people for future generations that is logically unsustainable and historically unjustified.

. . . We, the Union for Freedom of the Mind, are engaging in a revolutionary struggle for the revival of a truly democratic party of the working people, which must bring social progress to the fatherland.

We are fighting to make the state observe the policies of peace and co-existence in practice. . . . We demand real guarantees of constitutional freedoms and a genuine right to a free political existence, and we demand a revival of critical thought instead of the standardized thought that they indoctrinate us with. We demand the liberation of the individual personality from moral and ethical ideological dogmas. We demand material security and a high standard of living for working people, as well as a decision to stop increasing the budgets for defense and strategic industry. We demand that any and all taxes on the laboring masses be reduced, that labor wages be raised, and that demands on the laborers not be increased. We demand a real and complete right to administer the state, as well as the right to determine and discuss its politics.

We intend to fight for true democratization of the legislative and executive branches of the government, decentralization of the Party-state apparatus, elimination of the cult of the Party, and eradication of the extraordinarily reactionary methods of ideological coercion. We are fighting to overthrow the political hegemony of the Central Committee.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 92669, l. 50-51.<sup>101</sup> Original manuscript.

### *Belorussian Terrorists (Minsk, 1962-1963)*

In 1962, Sergei Nikolaevich Khanzhenkov (b. 1942) and Viktor Ivanovich Khrapovitsky (b. 1937), both fourth-year students at the Belorussian Polytechnic Institute, and Georgy Yakovlevich Seregin (b. 1918), an ambulance driver, joined together to form an illegal organization. They intended to use terrorist means to establish a bourgeois-democratic republic in the USSR. Khanzhenkov came up with this idea; in November 1962, he wrote several drafts of the organization's program and its charter.

As their first terrorist act, the group planned to blow up an antenna at Minsk Radio Station no. 3 that was used to jam foreign radio stations. They also planned to distribute leaflets explaining to the public the reasons for their terrorist act. Throughout 1962, Khanzhenkov and Khrapovitsky prepared for the detonation by collecting unexploded shells left over from the war. They also planned to bring an

aerial bomb to Minsk, with Seregin's help; the bomb was to be stolen from a military warehouse in Riga, in the Latvian Republic. During the searches of the members' apartments, drafts of the group's charter and organizational program were found, along with explosives and type for a printing press.

On October 7, 1963, the Supreme Court of Belorussia sentenced Khanzhenkov and Seregin to ten years' imprisonment and Khrapovitsky to eight years' confinement in a maximum security labor colony.

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The Program

From the organizational program written by S. N. Khanzhenkov in November 1962.

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It has been forty-five years since our nation began to follow the path of socialism in order to realize Communism. A technologically advanced socialist camp was created during this time, and this camp poses a threat to the whole world. Its great achievements in the area of technology are due to the dictatorial regime that has sweated its people mercilessly and destroyed those who disagreed with the "Party line." It is at the expense of that same people that our state provides support to "friendly" socialist and nonsocialist countries for propaganda purposes. However, not a single country that we have helped has voluntarily followed our path. Great resources are also used to support the giant Party-administrative apparatus. Our nation is a model of economic mismanagement and red tape. The result of all of this is a low standard of living for our people. And there are no signs of progress in this area.

We have absolutely no democratic freedoms. Because of this, abuse of power is rampant and goes unpunished. The political opponents of the existing order have long been destroyed, along with the people who could have become opponents given the right conditions. Our only right is to applaud the resolutions of the Party and the state. If the leadership thinks it necessary, it doesn't even have to tell us about its resolutions. The authorities jam foreign radio broadcasts in Russian and prohibit the import of magazines and newspapers from capitalist countries. As a result, our social order has another significant flaw: it is helpless against any opportunistic leader who manages to get power in his hands.

Perhaps people deprived of prosperity and liberty believe in the claims of Marxist ideology to resolve all contradictions and create an ideal soci-

ety? No. Every year the common man grows more and more indifferent to these ideas. Communism is refuted by the people themselves, who are roused from passivity only when there is an opportunity for personal gain. Another typical feature of our social order is that the lower social strata don't care what plans the higher strata have for them. The vast majority of people have no goals or aspirations for the society as a whole. The most crucial flaw of our social order is that it cannot provide people with ideas that would inspire them to move forward; it has turned people into philistines. It makes people cowardly, blindly obedient, and lacking in principles. Concepts such as honor and dignity and striving to achieve freedom or find truth have vanished. In sum, people have stopped existing as individuals.

Nothing that we have stated above is temporary or accidental; it follows from Communist dogma and will exist for as long as there are countries that use this dogma.

This is why we want to destroy the existing order. We want to see free people in a democratic society. Our goal is to create a bourgeois democratic republic. Russia has entered a maze that culminates in a dead end. We propose to come out of the maze and then move forward—not toward utopia but toward progress. We embrace progress only if (1) it helps to develop the best qualities of an individual; (2) it improves the social order; and (3) people's standard of living rises steadily.

A political coup is the way to reach our goal. Two tasks stand before us:

1. To rouse the consciousness of a lot of people, that is, to turn their passive resistance into active resistance
2. To defend ourselves against the regime and, in the future, to overcome its resistance

The first task requires the establishment of an organization. The second one requires that this organization be armed and, in the first stage, strictly clandestine, given that the government has a huge amount of experience in suppressing various kinds of opposition and a fine apparatus that is composed of loyal people. Strict secrecy is indispensable, too, because it is very hard to find a person we can fully trust. On the other hand, the success of our cause depends on attracting a wide following. For this reason, our most immediate task is to arouse public consciousness. Yet we will have to do this through acts of sabotage and terrorism and distribution of leaflets. Theoretical work will take second place. [. . .] We hope that as a result of our actions, many people will be drawn into the revolution, and then theory will begin to develop as well. We are guided by what we now clearly understand: that in addition to work inside the USSR, we need to establish connections abroad. There are émigré organizations there whose

goals are similar to ours. Moreover, the entire free world is interested in destroying the Communist threat. We will use the desire of certain ethnic groups to separate from the Soviet Union, and in general, [we will use] anything that can help us reach our goal. So, then, we are beginning to create the nucleus of our organization. [. . .] We will obtain weapons and explosives. Only the future will tell what will happen next and to what degree we are correct.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 95626, l. 231–232. Dyeline copy.

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### Testimony

From the resolution on S. N. Khanzhnikov's case by the assistant to the prosecutor of the Belorussian Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security. March 1, 1964.

During a court meeting on October 2, 1963, Khanzhnikov, Khrapovitsky, and Seregin testified as follows under interrogation.

*Khanzhnikov:* I was born in the village of Ust-Utiny in the Magadan region, where my father was living in exile.<sup>102</sup> Until I was thirteen, I lived and went to school in Magadan, where I finished sixth grade.<sup>103</sup> [. . .]

From my earliest childhood, I mixed with the children of people who had been convicted, as well as those people themselves. Among them were many innocent people who had suffered under the cult of personality. Their conversations and stories made a strong impression on me and left an indelible mark on my political views.

Somehow, I realized all too early that there is a great deal of injustice in our society. I was so strongly convinced of this that I believed nothing they told us in school about democracy, freedom, and justice in our country. [. . .]

Starting approximately in 1959, I began to listen to foreign radio stations. In the beginning, I was just curious; I didn't listen to these broadcasts regularly, only when my father was away on business trips.

Later, I developed a need to listen to foreign radio stations. They were expressing exactly the same views as the ones I had formed. I began listening to foreign radio stations on a regular basis and gradually came to the conclusion that I had to fight for my beliefs, actively stand up for them.

In 1962, for the first time, I thought of creating an organization that would fight the social order that exists in our country—and, most important, fight its political regime.



As a first step, I was thinking of blowing up the jammer of foreign radio broadcasts.

For me, the jammer was a symbol of what I was rebelling against. [. . .]

In my conversations with Khrapovitsky and Alekseitseva,<sup>104</sup> I said that we should blow up a jammer. They agreed with me, and we started to take some practical steps.<sup>105</sup> [. . .]

I think it was in the summer of 1962 that we decided to put together an organizational program and a charter. [. . .]

The ultimate goal of our program was to overthrow the Soviet regime. The method was to spread our message by word of mouth, by distribution of leaflets, and by blowing up the jammer, that is, through an act of sabotage and, more generally, through terror. I wrote about terror in a draft of our program, but I didn't think about it too seriously. Only when I was under investigation did I realize that terror is just an arbitrary term.

By blowing up the jammer, we wanted to show that there are people in the country who are dissatisfied with the regime and the social order. This act should provide the stimulus for disgruntled individuals to come together. [. . .]

I believed that we don't have freedom in the USSR, but in a bourgeois-democratic republic they do. For this reason, it seemed to me that we should go back to the bourgeois-democratic republic, so that with democratic freedoms society would take the right path. I had in mind the kind of social order they have in America.

[. . .] We meant to carry out our intentions to the end, and if we hadn't been interrupted, we would have done everything we planned.

In the summer of 1962, I became acquainted with Seregin through our shared political beliefs. He agreed to give us full support. Specifically, I met Seregin at the wedding of a fellow student, Lemesh. I started singing a song about Kolyma,<sup>106</sup> and Seregin sang along.<sup>107</sup> I've known this song since I was a child. After this, Seregin and I started talking, and I saw that we shared the same political beliefs and that he had a militant temperament and was ready to fight against injustice. [. . .]

Right now I can't say anything regarding my views. I am not completely convinced that I was wrong in my actions. The path of armed opposition was a mistake; I should have studied theory and then drawn conclusions from it. Taking the investigation and the court hearing into consideration, I would say that if I were released, I would finish college, go work in the north, and make a serious effort to work out my beliefs. I drew conclusions based on superficial observations, and this was wrong. [. . .]

*Khrapovitsky:* [. . .] In March 1962, I was dropped as a candidate for Party membership because I failed to pay membership dues. I said that I didn't want to join the Party, but after I was dropped from candidacy, I was very upset. Immediately after this event, we took our exams, and I

couldn't get good grades and lost my scholarship. It was really hard for me; sometimes I went hungry. I lost friends. . . . At that difficult time, I became friends with Sergei Khanzhenkov. [ . . . ]

Sergei and I talked a lot about our duty to the motherland and about the people's happiness. One time, when we were strolling along the street, we came to the conclusion that it's not enough to recognize shortcomings; instead, we must fight for all that is good.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 95626, l. 13-19. Typewritten original.

*The Revolutionary-Democratic Labor Party/The Revolutionary Party of Communist Workers and Peasants (Balakleia, Kharkov Region, Ukraine, 1964)*

In September 1964, Vladimir Pavlovich Romanenko (b. 1929), a graduate of the electrical mechanics department at Kharkov Mining Institute and the journalism department at Leningrad State University (he took correspondence courses), and his brother, Adolf Pavlovich Romanenko (b. 1931), a Party member and manager of an industrial district newspaper, *Serp i molot* (The Hammer and Sickle), were both residents of Balakleia (Kharkov region) when they decided to create a radical leftist organization. They had been under the influence of Chinese propaganda.<sup>108</sup> The brothers came to the conclusion that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had stopped defending the interests of working people, that it had degenerated and had ceased to be a revolutionary party, turning first into a petit bourgeois party and then into a reactionary one.

In September 1964, Adolf Romanenko composed a document entitled "The First Congress of the Revolutionary-Democratic Labor Party," in which he articulated his vision of the party's program. His brother rejected the document and wrote a different program for what he called the Revolutionary Party of Communist Workers and Peasants.

In October 1964, the Romanenko brothers were arrested. Lebedev, a senior assistant to the prosecutor of the Kharkov region, was, "in view of the special complexity of this criminal case," sent to Moscow to consult with the Procuracy of the USSR on the decision to prosecute them. On January 20, 1965, the case of the Romanenko brothers was closed. The head of the oversight department, Terekhov, personally supervised the implementation of this decision.<sup>109</sup>

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The Program

From the draft of the program of the Revolutionary Party of Communist Workers and Peasants, composed by Vladimir Romanenko in September 1964.

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The gap between the salary of an average worker and that of a well-paid professional or a Party paper-pusher grows larger every day. . . . Even now, the servile bureaucracy and even the organizations of the so-called Party and state control steal the surplus product from its producers. . . . It's not the working class or the peasant class that needs to hear that the dictatorship of the working class has outlived its usefulness but those who get a toothache at the mere mention of the dictatorship of the working class. It is those who find it more convenient to pillage the surplus product under the pretext that we live in a semi-bourgeois state that belongs to the whole people.<sup>110</sup> When the ruling party does not fight against this but legally facilitates it, that party is a petit bourgeois party. [. . .]

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union has lost its ability to lead the masses along the path shown to us by the great Lenin. [. . .] Therefore, there's no time to waste. In the shortest possible time, the working class and the collective-farm peasantry must be armed with real revolutionary Marxist theory. . . . To achieve this, we must set up party (RP CWP) organizations at all plants and factories, in all collective and state farms, and in schools and military units to . . . explain the revisionist essence of the program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 98021, l. 6-7.<sup>111</sup>

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Testimony

From a memorandum on the case of the Romanenko brothers written by the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR. December 1, 1964.

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A. P. Romanenko testified as follows [. . .]: "Even now, I believe that all the conditions for petit bourgeois elements to thrive exist at the present time in our country. In my opinion, as long as the central and local leaders of the CPSU, the leaders of the Soviet government and the local soviets, and the heads of the administrative apparatus have all sorts of privileges, and as long as material benefits are distributed (in my opinion)

incorrectly, petit bourgeois ideology will flourish in our country. The Party and Soviet administrative apparatus will strive to legitimize privileges and inequality in the distribution of material benefits. From this I conclude that we cannot even begin to speak of equality and fraternity, and I believe that in the future the Party will not be the expression of the will of the people. . . . I believe that the interests of the leadership and the working people are diametrically opposed, and given all of that, I believe that there is no unity between the Party and the people.

"I admit that these thoughts of mine were laid out crudely in my notes, but they correspond to my views, and I cannot admit them to be slanderous." [. . .]

In a letter V. Romanenko sent to the head of the KGB Administration [of the Kharkov region] on November 20, 1964, he states that he engaged in his illegal activities (developing the draft of a charter for a new party and other actions) as a result of a misconception about the core issue. Namely, he erroneously believed that the Party is no longer capable of decisive revolutionary action, and that it was unable to establish the necessary order in either domestic affairs or international relations. He automatically equated individual Party leaders with the Party as a whole.

As time has shown, this is not true. Some of what he wanted to recommend in the program of the new party is currently being done by the CPSU, and certain individual leaders, against whom he directed his activity, are no longer on the job. [. . .]

Currently, he is not worried about being punished for his actions, but about the fact that he could not find the right way of fighting shortcomings in our society, could not be useful to the people and to the motherland.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 98021, l. 5-8. Typewritten original.

### *The Russian Patriotic Front (Orel, 1969-1972)*

In December 1969, an illegal organization called the Russian Patriotic Front was formed in Orel. Three forest rangers became members of the RPF: Evgeny Kuzmich Kuzin (b. 1938), Oleg Sergeevich Savinkin (b. 1938), and Aleksandr Ivanovich Egorov (b. 1937). The members of the organization developed individual versions of the charter and program of the organization.

Kuzin had connections with nonconformist figures in Moscow, people who had, like himself, engaged in, and even served time for engaging in, anti-Soviet activities of one sort or another,<sup>112</sup> and members of the RPF pitched in to prove the needed sum to send him to Moscow to collect a typewriter. In Moscow, Kuzin met with a labor-camp ac-

quaintance, V. I. Telnikov,<sup>113</sup> and told him about the creation of a new group, after receiving assurances that Telnikov would support and cooperate with the group. When Kuzin went back to Orel, he brought Alexander Solzhenitsyn's novel *Cancer Ward* back with him.

It was probably through Telnikov that the RPF established connections with authors and editors connected with *The Chronicle of Current Events*.<sup>114</sup> Pyotr Yakir, Viktor Krasin, and Viktor Khaustov.<sup>115</sup> Khaustov made several subsequent trips to Orel and served as a liaison between the RPF and representatives of Moscow dissidents. A government investigation into the distribution of *The Chronicle of Current Events*, the "official" publication of the dissident movement, discovered that a number of illegal groups, including the Russian Patriotic Front, had cooperated with Yakir and Krasin. However, in keeping with investigative and judicial procedures of the time, the materials on each group were handled separately by the oversight committees and were, accordingly, dealt with by different courts.

In March 1970, at one of the RPF meetings, Kuzin, Egorov, and Savinkin wrote an appeal together, entitled "To the Laboring Population of Russia," and signed it "The Democratic Party of Russia."<sup>116</sup> In the same month, the RPF adopted various conspiratorial measures to protect themselves, including code names. Egorov's code name was Chulkov, Savinkin's was Churnin, and Kuzin's was Chaplin.

In February and March 1972, Kuzin finished combining the various versions of the RPF's charter and program. He called the program, "What Are We Fighting For? Russia: Today, Tomorrow, the Future."

On August 8, 1973, the Orel regional court sentenced Kuzin to four years' imprisonment and two years of exile, Savinkin to five years' imprisonment and two years of exile, and Egorov to four years' imprisonment.

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### The Program

From the program document "What Are We Fighting For? Russia: Today, Tomorrow, the Future," written in February–March 1972.

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We assert that there is no socialism in the USSR. The current regime is the dictatorship of the Communist Party. The USSR is a country of compulsory conformity of thought and word organized by the state, a coun-

try led by a completely totalitarian state. Soviet socialism did not live up to the hopes of the working people! The fatal flaw of the Communist Party's dictatorship, as for any other dictatorship, is lies.

Today, what we need most is democracy. For this reason, we are speaking about the need for a political decision that would put an end to the current regime. We do not want merely to be free but to have the will to free ourselves. [. . .]

The chief aim of our activity is fundamental transformation of the political order on the basis of political freedom and democracy. We demand recognition in the state's fundamental law<sup>117</sup> of the human and civil rights set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

We emphatically believe in the self-determination of nations.

Under the new democracy, a parliament elected (like all administrative organs) by universal suffrage will be the central organ of state sovereignty.

The very concept of a parliament naturally presupposes the presence of a multiparty system. We assert that a multiparty system is necessary in Russia. We are proponents of a mixed economy, where cooperative and private branches of industry would coexist with nationalized branches of industry. Land should be given to those who work it.

The new democracy should begin by abolishing collective and state farms.

Our hope for victory is not based on some contingent external political situation but only on whether or not we will be able to inspire new faith, to strike a spark in Russian hearts with a new and lofty ideal, to prove to the youth of today that a different, bright, and free path lies before Russia—without prisons or concentration camps, without slave collective farms or serf factories—and that it is up to us to begin the journey.

We, the Russian Patriotic Front, the party of underground Russia, have begun this struggle and will lead it from here on to the best of our power and with all our might.

Guided by our desire to unite people in our struggle, and putting the nation's interests above all, we stretch out our hands; we are ready to support any organization and any individuals whose efforts are part of the real struggle with the dictatorship.

The RPF accepts as a member anyone who is willing to struggle for the realization of its lofty ideals.

With the full consciousness that its cause is just, the Russian Patriotic Front is marching onward to conquer freedom and democracy.

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## The Appeal

From the appeal "To the Laboring Population of Russia," signed by the Democratic Party of Russia

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If the class of Party bureaucrats disappeared right now, the nation would not miss it. We would only benefit—it would eliminate the need to feed parasites and hangers-on. However, the spirit of October [1917] lives on, and the fighters for freedom are preparing for a new October! The immediate goal of this organization is to fight to overthrow dictatorship and to restore democratic freedoms, to fight for a free motherland in which there will be no Communist dictatorship, concentration camps, oppression, or hardship. Comrades, please add to the numbers of our organization, form underground cells, and develop plans for the organization of resistance. It is necessary to organize strikes, write and distribute leaflets, and use other forms of underground struggle as well. Join us! Onward, to the overthrow of the dictatorship! Long live freedom.

GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 5761, l. 116–118.<sup>119</sup>

# Notes

## INTRODUCTION:

### POPULAR SEDITION IN THE POST-STALIN SOVIET UNION

1. Vladimir Kozlov and his collaborators, who prepared the Russian edition of which this book is basically a translation, chose to exclude two specific types of popular dissent that had a broad following and were thus most potentially dangerous to the regime: non-Russian nationalist organizations and religious dissent.

2. The related phenomenon of spontaneous mass “disturbances” sparked by increases in food prices or reported police brutality (the most famous of which occurred in Novocherkassk in 1962) is not dealt with in this book but has been covered in Vladimir A. Kozlov’s *Mass Uprisings in the USSR: Protest and Rebellion in the Post-Stalin Years*, trans. and ed. Elaine McClarnand MacKinnon (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2002), from the Russian book V. A. Kozlov, *Massovye besporiadki v SSSR pri Khrushcheve i Brezhneve, 1953–nachalo 1980kh gg.* (Moscow: Russkii khronograf, 1999).

3. The original Russian edition of this book included a short section on dissidents, which we have dropped (at the suggestion of the Russian editor Vladimir Kozlov) because of the difference between popular sedition and intellectual dissidence and because of the availability of a large body of information on dissidents in English: see, for example, Abraham Brumberg, comp., *In Quest of Justice: Protest and Dissent in the Soviet Union Today* (New York: Praeger, 1970); F. J. M. Feldbrugge, *Samizdat and Political Dissent in the Soviet Union* (Leyden: A. W. Sijthoff, 1975); Marshall Shatz, *Soviet Dissent in Historical Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980); Roy Medvedev, *On Soviet Dissent* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985); and Ludmilla Alexeyeva, *Soviet Dissent: Contemporary Movements for National, Religious and Human Rights*, trans. Carol Pearce and John Glad (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1986).

4. Sarah Davies, “‘Us Against Them’: Social Identities in Soviet Russia, 1934–1941,” *Russian Review* 56:1 (1997).

5. See Vladimir A. Kozlov, “Denunciation and Its Functions in Soviet Gover-



nance: A Study of Denunciations and Their Bureaucratic Handling from Soviet Police Archives, 1944–53”; and Sheila Fitzpatrick, “Signals from Below: Soviet Letters of Denunciation in the 1930s,” in Sheila Fitzpatrick and Robert Gellately, eds., *Accusatory Practices: Denunciation in Modern European History, 1789–1989* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

6. See particularly James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

7. See James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), pp. x–xiii.

8. Nikita Khrushchev from the mid-1950s to his removal in 1964; Leonid Brezhnev from 1964 to his death in 1982.

9. Of the main participants in the leadership struggle that followed Lenin’s death in 1924, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, and Rykov were condemned in show trials in 1936–1938 as “enemies of the people” and executed, and the exiled and vilified Trotsky was murdered in Mexico in 1940 on Stalin’s orders.

10. See Donna Bahry, “Politics, Generations, and Change in the USSR,” in James R. Millar, ed., *Politics, Work and Daily Life in the USSR* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 61–99.

11. Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Stalin’s Peasants: Resistance and Survival in the Russian Village after Collectivization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 238.

12. *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR za 60 let. Iubileinye sbornik* (Moscow, *Statistika*, 1977), pp. 24–25.

13. All the above data are from *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR za 60 let*, pp. 24–25.

14. *Itogi vsesoiuznoi perepisi naseleniia 1959 goda SSSR (Svodnyi tom)* Moscow: Gosstatizdat, 1962), pp. 98–99 (1939 data); *Vsesoiuznaia perepis’ naseleniia 1970 goda. Sbornik statei*, ed. G. M. Maksimov (Moscow: Statistika, 1976), p. 217 (1970 data). By 1979, the number had risen to forty million: Michael Ryan, *Contemporary Soviet Society* (Brookfield, VT: Edward Elgar, 1990), p. 174.

15. *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR za 60 let*, p. 510. But note that this level was reached in 1965, with no further significant rise over the next eleven years.

16. *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR za 60 let*, p. 510.

17. Millar, *Politics, Work and Daily Life*, pp. 42–45.

18. *Vsesoiuznaia perepis’ naseleniia 1970 goda*, pp. 1, 59. The annual average in 1927–1938 was 1.56 million, as compared to 1.49 million in 1959–1969.

19. Moshe Lewin, *The Gorbachev Phenomenon: A Historical Interpretation* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1988), p. 31; Ryan, *Contemporary Soviet Society*, pp. 1, 19.

20. *Vsesoiuznaia perepis’ naseleniia 1970 goda*, p. 182.

21. *Itogi vsesoiuznoi perepisi SSSR 1959 goda*, pp. 74–77.

22. *Itogi vsesoiuznoi perepisi SSSR 1959 goda*, pp. 74–75. Note, however, the slight drop in the educational levels of the cohort aged 25–29 in 1959 (down to 88 percent with primary education or higher), presumably an artifact of the war.

23. Data (for the population aged ten and over) from Ryan, *Contemporary Soviet Society*, p. 136 (1979 and 1989); and *Vsesoiuznaia perepis’ naseleniia 1970*

goda, p. 185. “Secondary education” includes incomplete secondary education (seven years of schooling).

24. *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1978. Statisticheskii ezhegodnik* (Moscow: Statistika, 1979), p. 377. “Specialists” means people with professional training at the secondary or tertiary level. The figures may not include persons employed in the military.

25. Seweryn Bialer, *Stalin’s Successors: Leadership, Stability and Change in the Soviet Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 141–142, 144, 159.

26. The 1953 amnesty brought release to more than a million prisoners from the Gulag (Yoram Gorkizki and Oleg Khlevniuk, *Cold Peace: Stalin and the Soviet Ruling Circle, 1945–1953* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004], pp. 131–133), and the 1945 amnesty brought release to more than 600,000 in addition (Golfo Alexopoulos, “Amnesty 1945: The Revolving Door of Stalin’s Gulag,” *Slavic Review* 64:2 [2005], p. 279). Hundreds of thousands more were released in the years after 1953.

27. Bialer, *Stalin’s Successors*, pp. 164, 166.

28. Raymond A. Bauer, Alex Inkeles, and Clyde Kluckhohn, *How the Soviet System Works* (New York: Vintage Books, 1960), pp. 251–252.

29. On letters, see Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Tear Off the Masks! Identity and Imposture in Twentieth-Century Russia* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), chaps. 9–12.

30. Iurii Aksiutin, *Khrushchevskaia “ottepel” i obshchestvennye nastroyeniia v SSSR v 1953–1964 gg.* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2004), pp. 408–410.

31. Liudmila Saraskina, *Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn* (Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia, 2008), pp. 244–245. For an account of the correspondence that led to Solzhenitsyn’s arrest and the charges and conviction, see Michael Scammell, *Solzhenitsyn: A Biography* (London: Hutchinson, 1984), pp. 121–123, 136–137, 152–153, 165–171.

32. Accurate figures are impossible to come by. In the mid-1950s, the security police estimated the number of beggars and tramps at between a half million and one million (V. F. Zima, *Golod v SSSR 1946–1947: Proiskhozhdenie i posledstviia* [Moscow, 1996], p. 217)—and congratulated themselves on a recent campaign to reduce the number. Census data, which clearly underestimate substantially, had a residue of “other sources of income/not disclosing source of income” amounting to 269,000 in 1959 and 317,000 in 1970: *Vsesoiuznaia perepis’ naseleniia 1970 goda*, p. 217.

33. See Vladimir Kozlov, “Introduction: The Meaning of Sedition,” this volume; and O. V. Edelman, commentary, chapter 2, this volume.

34. Miriam Dobson, *Khrushchev’s Cold Summer: Gulag Returnees, Crime, and the Fate of Reform after Stalin* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009), pp. 109–113.

35. Sheila Fitzpatrick, “Social Parasites: How Tramps, Idle Youth, and Busy Entrepreneurs Impeded the Soviet March to Communism,” *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique* 47:1–2 (2006).

36. See Donna Bahry, “Politics, Generations, and Change in the USSR,” in James R. Millar, ed., *Politics and Work*, p. 86: “Nonconformity is predominantly a male activity.”

37. Vladimir G. Treml, *Alcohol in the USSR: A Statistical Study* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1982), pp. 9, 68.
38. See Kozlov, "Introduction."
39. N. B. Lebina and A. N. Chistikov, *Obyvatel' i reformy. Kartiniy poused-nevnoi zhizni gorozhan* (St. Petersburg: 'Dmitrii Bulanin', 2003), p. 260.
40. *Vsesoiuznaia perepis' naselenii 1970 g.* By 1970, ethnic Russians had dropped to 53 percent and inhabitants of the Russian Republic to 54 percent.
41. These conclusions are based on a rough count of cases cited in chapters 3–6.
42. See the figures cited in Kozlov, "Introduction."
43. The examples for the Khrushchev period are from this book; those from the 1930s come from Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasants: Resistance and Survival in the Russian Village after Collectivization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 292; and Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 182–187.
44. Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasants*, p. 236.
45. For prewar examples, see Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasants*, pp. 289, 293–294.
46. Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasants*, pp. 68, 170–171, 294–295.
47. Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasants*, p. 45; see also Lynne Viola, "The Peasant Nightmare: Visions of Apocalypse in the Soviet Countryside," *Journal of Modern History* 62:4 (1990), pp. 747–770.
48. See Edelman, commentary, chapter 2.
49. For development of this idea, see Sheila Fitzpatrick, "Vengeance and Ressentiment in the Russian Revolution," *French Historical Studies* 24:4 (Fall 2001).
50. The examples are from Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*, pp. 105, 177. See also Sarah Davies, *Popular Opinion in Stalin's Russia: Terror, Propaganda, and Dissent, 1934–1941* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 138–144.
51. Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*, p. 172. Surprisingly, the boy was not punished, although his father, a Party member, received a reprimand.
52. Elena Zubkova, *Russia after the War: Hopes, Illusions, and Disappointments, 1945–1947*, trans. and ed. Hugh Ragsdale (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1998), pp. 113–116. The groups, prosecuted and convicted in 1948–1949, typically had three to seven members, a few of whom received a death sentence, with others getting ten to twenty-five years' imprisonment.
53. Abram Tertz (Andrei Sinyavsky), *Sud idet. Povest'* (n.p., 1960).
54. See Saraskina, *Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn*; and Scammell, *Solzhenitsyn*, 32.
55. See Milovan Djilas, *The New Class: An Analysis of the Communist System* (New York: Praeger, 1957).
56. Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasants*, p. 295. See also Davies, *Popular Opinion*, pp. 180–182.
57. Note the similarity of the popular characterization and the official critique offered in *Pravda* (October 15, 1964) after Khrushchev's removal, despite the more sedate lexicon in the *Pravda* article, which used abstract terms like *khvastovstvo*, *postuzvonstvo*, and *prokhektstvo*. Thanks to John Besemeres and his colleague Matt May for locating this.
58. For the full text, see document 34.

59. See chapter 3.

60. Functionally, Hungary in 1956 played a role in popular subversive conversation similar to role that the murder of Kirov played in 1934; on the latter, see Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*, p. 170, and Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasants*, pp. 290–293.

61. As a result of repeated purges of the Communist Party, there were actually more former Party members in some regions and enterprises than current members by 1937: see Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*, p. 193.

62. See Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*, pp. 187–189.

63. Donald J. Raleigh, *Russia's Sputnik Generation: Soviet Baby Boomers Talk about Their Lives* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), p. 19.

64. Robert D. English, *Russia and the Idea of the West: Gorbachev, Intellectuals, and the End of the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), p. 63.

65. Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), pp. 176–177.

66. Vladimir Shlapentokh, *A Normal Totalitarian Society: How the Soviet Union Functioned and How It Collapsed* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2001), p. 41.

67. Raleigh, *Russia's Sputnik Generation*, p. 19.

68. Leбина and Chistikov, *Obyvatel' i reformy*, p. 273.

#### INTRODUCTION: THE MEANING OF SEDITION

1. Alexander Ginzburg, pen name Galich (1918–1977), was an accomplished playwright and poet. In the 1950s, Galich began to perform his works with simple guitar accompaniment, becoming one of the best-known figures in Russian bard music, beloved especially for his songs about the Second World War. He emigrated from the Soviet Union in 1974 and eventually moved to Paris, where he died in 1977.

2. Aleksandr Galich, “Ia vybiraiu svobodu,” *Glagol* 3 (1991), pp. 177–178. Galich defined *résistance* (*rezistans*) as “a kind of resistance [*svoego roda soprotivlenie*].” In referring to “a silent resistance [*molchaliivyi resistans*],” he is suggesting something like the concept of “everyday resistance,” used in Western scholarship by James C. Scott and others. His *résistance* is comparable to the German *Resistenz*, not the German *Widerstand*.

3. *Samizdat* (literally, “self-published”) is the Russian term for written works produced and distributed without official sanction. They were usually typewritten manuscripts that were passed from person to person or copied and then passed along.

4. S. I. Ozhegov, *Slovar' russkogo iazyka*, ed. S.P. Obnorskii (Moscow: Gos.izd-vo inostrannykh i national'nykh slovarei, 1953), p. 216.

5. This era is the period from 1953 to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

6. The whole phrase is “vozmushchenie, miatezh, smuta, izmena, kovy, lukavye zamysly.” Vladimir Dal', *Tolkoviye slovar'*, vol. 2 (Moscow: Izd. M. O. Wol'fa, 1989), p. 184.

7. Paradoxically, even when, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, the Soviet state was most virulent in its denunciation of Zionism and most inclined to use the “Zionist” label to discredit any Jew or any Jewish practice, everyday “manifestations [*proiavleniia*] of anti-Semitism” (name-calling and the like) were still condemned and sometimes prosecuted.

8. “True Leninism” means a Leninism that had been betrayed by the current regime.

9. The term “dacha capitalism” was commonly used in the late 1950s to criticize anyone who violated the egalitarian values of early Bolshevism by seeking property, a summer home (*dacha*) or other luxuries.

10. Liudmila Alekseeva, *Istoriia inakomyслиi v Rossii: Noveishii period* (Benson, VT: Khronika Press, 1984)—translated and published in English as Ludmila Alexeyeva, *Soviet Dissent: Contemporary Movements for National, Religious, and Human Rights*, trans. Carol Pearce and John Glad (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1985)—was first published in the former Soviet Union as L[iudmila] M[ikhailovna] Alekseeva, *Istoriia inakomyслиi v Rossii: Noveishii period* (Vilnius: Vest', 1992).

11. See, for example, L. Bogoraz, V. Golitsin, and S. Kovalev, “Politicheskaiia bor'ba ili zashchita prav? Dvadsatiletnii opyt nezavisimogo obshchestvennogo dvizheniia v SSSR: 1968–1985,” in Andrei Amal'rik, T. A. Notkina, A. N. Zaviailova, and N. K. Sazanovich, eds., *Pogruzhenie v triasinu: Anatomiiia zastoia* (Moscow: Progress, 1991); “Khronika dissidentskogo dvizheniia (1968–1983),” in Andrei Amal'rik et al., eds., *Pogruzhenie v triasinu: Anatomiiia zastoia* (Moscow: Progress, 1991); L. Ia. Gozman and A. M. Etkind, “Liudi i vlast': Ot totalitarizma k demokratii,” in A[leksei] N[ikolaevich] Alekseev and A[natolii] G[rigor'evich] Vishnevskii, eds., *V chelovecheskom izmerenii* (Moscow: Progress, 1989), A[leksandr] Daniel', “Tak nachinalas' ‘Khronika,’” *Ogoniok* 19 (1993); L. Dymerskaia-Tsigel'man, “Ob ideologicheskoi motivatsii razlichnykh pokolenii aktivistov evreiskogo dvizheniia v SSSR v 70-kh godakh,” *Vestnik Evreiskogo universiteta v Moskve* 1 (1994); and I. Mil'shtein, “Inovertsy,” *Ogoniok* 9 (1993), p. 19.

12. Vladimir Shlapentokh, *Soviet Intellectuals and Political Power: The Post-Stalin Era* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990).

13. S. I. Golotik, ed., “Pervye pravozashchitnye organizatsii Rossiiskoi Federatsii i 20-e gody,” *Otechestvennaia istoriia* 4 (1995).

14. Vladimir Bukovsky (b. 1942) is a well-known writer and dissident. Beginning in 1958, he was a key figure in a student group that regularly met by a statue of Mayakovsky in central Moscow to read poetry. In 1963, Bukovsky was arrested for possessing anti-Soviet literature and sent to a psychiatric hospital for involuntary treatment. After his release in 1966, he was a central organizer of demonstrations in support of Alexander Ginzburg and other dissidents. He left the Soviet Union in 1976 and currently lives in Cambridge, England. In January 2008, the Russian Supreme Court ruled that he could not run for president since he had lived outside Russia for more than ten years.

15. Geoffrey Hosking, *The First Socialist Society: A History of the Soviet Union from Within* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 343.

16. On May 31, 1962 the Soviet government announced a sharp rise in the prices of meat and butter. On June 1, workers at the Novocherkassk Electric Lo-

comotive Works (NEVZ) went on strike. The uprising quickly spread, and on June 2 several hundred protesters marched to the Novocherkassk Party committee offices to voice their grievances. When officials fled the building and refused to hear their grievances, the crowd became violent and attempted to free several protesters from a nearby police station. In response, the Red Army broke up the demonstration. In the process, twenty-four people were killed, and sixty-nine were wounded. See Vladimir A. Kozlov, *Mass Uprisings in the USSR: Protest and Rebellion in the Post-Stalin Years*, trans. Elaine McClarnand MacKinnon (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2002).

17. See, for example, V. N. Berezovsky, “Dvizhenie dissidentov v SSSR v 60-kh—pervoi polovine 80-kh godov,” in I. D. Kovalchenko, ed., *Rossiiia v XX veke: Istoriki mira sporiat* (Moscow, 1994).

18. See, for example, E. Papovian and A. Papovian, “Uchastie Verkhovnogo Suda SSSR v vyrobotke repressivnoi politiki. 1957–1958 gg.,” in L. S. Eremina and E. B. Zhemkova, eds., *Korni travy: Sbornik statei molodykh istorikov* (Moscow: Zven’ia, 1996); E. Papovian, “Primenenie stat’i 58–10 UK RSFSR v 1957–1958 gg. (Po materialam Verkhovnogo suda SSSR i Prokuratury SSSR v GARF),” in Eremina and Zhemkova, *Korni travy*.

19. See L. P. Afanasieva, “Lichnye arkhivy uchastnikov dissidentskogo dvizheniia 1950–1980-kh godov v SSSR: Sobiranie, opisanie, ispol’zovanie,” *Vestnik arkhivista* 3 (1994).

20. After Yeltsin banned the Communist Party in August 1991 and confiscated its assets, the constitutionality of the decree was challenged. In preparation for a trial of the Communist Party (which never took place), the government gathered documentation of the Party’s crimes during the Soviet period.

21. See A. B. Bezborodov, M. M. Meier, and E. I. Pivovarov, eds., *Materialy po istorii dissidentskogo i pravozaishchitnogo dvizheniia v SSSR 50–80-kh godov* (Moscow: Istoriko-arkhivnyi institute RGGU, 1994).

22. Andrei Sakharov (1921–1989), nuclear physicist and human rights activist, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1975. His wife Elena Bonner (b. 1923) was one of the founders of the Moscow Helsinki Group, a nongovernmental human rights watch group. See E. Maksimova, ed., “Velikii grazhdanin pod kolpakom KGB i TSK KPSS,” *Izvestiia*, May 20, 1992; M. Katys, ed., with commentary by A. D. Sakharov, *Golos* May 4–17, 1992; “Elenu Bonner nazyvali ‘zveriugoi v iubke’ i khoteli natravit’ na A. Sakharova ego druzei, rodnym i blizkim. Ne vyshlo, ‘tovarishchi!’” shorthand report from the meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, August 29, 1985, *Rossiiskie vesti*, October 3, 1992; “Iz-pod spuda . . .,” *Ogoniok* 21–22 (1993); A. Novikov, ed., “Pod kolpakom provel svoju zhizn’ Andrei Dmitrovich Sakharov,” *Kuranty* December 9, 1994; “I mertvyi ty im strashen . . .,” *Literaturnaia gazeta*, December 14, 1994.

23. Alexander Solzhenitsyn (b. 1918), best known for his works on the Gulag, was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1970 and expelled from the Soviet Union in 1974. See Z. Vodopianova, A. Petrova, and G. Mülle, “Deistviia Solzhenitsyna kontroliruiutsia,” *Istochnik* 2 (1994); “V krug tre’em,” *Segodnia* 2 (1994); “V krug tre’em,” *Segodnia* 12, 1994; A. Petrova and N. Nadezhkina, eds., “Kak travili Solzhenitsyna,” *Trud*, July 2, 1994; O. Martynenko, “Kak eto

bylo," *Moskovskie novosti*, May 22–29, 1994; A. M. Petrov, ed., "Nobeliana' Aleksandra Solzhenitsyna," *Istoricheskii arkhiv* 1 (1992); Petrov, "O merakh v sviazi s provokatsionnym aktom prisuzhdeniia A. Solzhenitsynu Nobelevskoi premii . . .," *Izvestiia*, March 24, 1992; O. Edel'man, ed., "Pis'ma sovetskikh grazhdan po povodu vysylki A. I. Solzhenitsyna," *Zvezda* 6 (1994).

24. Pyotr Grigorenko (1907–1987), a former Red Army general, was a prominent human rights activist and member of the Moscow Helsinki Group, best known as a defender of ethnic and religious minorities, particularly the Crimean Tatars. See "Povsednevnyi TsK: Delikatnyi dokument," *Istochnik* 1 (1994); V. Bredikhin, ed., "Piotr Grigorenko: Iz khroniki travli," *Segodnia*, April 12, 1994.

25. Mstislav Rostropovich (1927–2007), the famous cellist, and his wife, Galina Vishnevskaiia (b. 1926), an opera singer, were supporters of the dissident movement before their emigration in 1974. See E. Maksimova, ed., "Kak 'vydvoriali' Rostropovicha," *Izvestiia*, April 11, 1992; Iu. V. Sigachev, G. A. Razin, and N. I. Rotov, eds., "Ne priznaem vashego prava na akt nasiliia nad vami: K istorii lisheniia sovetskogo grazhdanstva G. P. Vishnevskoi i M.L. Rostropovicha," *Istoricheskii arkhiv* 5 (1993).

26. For example, the dissident poet Natalia Gorbanevskaiia, the physicist Lev Landau, and avant-garde artists: see "Napravlena v spetsial'nuii psikhiatricheskuii bol'nitsu": Delo N. Gorbanevskoi," *Istochnik* 2 (1993); L. Radzikhovskii, "Iz zhizni odnogo dissidenta," *Moskovskaia pravda*, September 12, 1992; S. S. Ilizarov, ed., "Po dannym agentury i operativnoi tekhniki . . .": Spravka KGB ob akademike L. D. Landau," *Istoricheskii arkhiv* 3 (1993); Ilizarov, ed., "Cherez agenturu i tekhniku . . .": Spravka KGB na L. D. Landau," *Literaturnaia gazeta*, November 3, 1993; "Provesti rabotu po vyivleniiu khudozhnikov-avangardistov . . .," *Istochnik* 2 (1993).

27. Alexander Nekrich (1920–1993) was a historian whose *June 22, 1941*, published in 1966, was severely criticized. "Delo A. M. Nekricha": Iz istorii goneniia na sovetskuiu intelligentsiiu," *Kentavr* 4 (1994); "Kratkaia zapis' zasedaniia Otdela istorii VOV IMA pri TsK KPSS on February 16, 1966, o knige 1941. 22 iuniia, by A. M. Nekrich," *Neva* 1 (1994).

28. Joseph Brodsky (1940–1996), poet, translator, and essayist, was sentenced to five years of internal exile for "parasitism" in 1964, he was deported in 1972, and he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1987. E. Iakovich, "Delo Brodskogo na staroi ploshchadi," *Literaturnaia gazeta*, May 5, 1993.

29. Under the editorship of Alexander Tvardovskii in 1950–1954 and 1958–1970, *Novyi mir* (New World), one of the best-known Russian "thick journals," published such controversial works as Vladimir Pomerantsev's "On Sincerity in Literature" (1953), V. Dudintsev's *Not by Bread Alone* (1956), and Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (1962). See A. Petrov, I. Brainin, and Iu. Burtin, "Osada Novogo mira: Iz khroniki odnogo goda po dokumentam arkhiva TsK KPSS," *Literaturnaia gazeta*, June 21, 1995.

30. See I. Brainin and Iu. Burtin, eds., "Tvardovskii v dokladnykh KGB," *Izvestiia*, June 20, 1995; A. Novikov, ed., "Zhizn' talanta na territorii, okkupirovannoi posredstvennost'iu," *Kuranty*, September 14, 1995; E. Kuz'min, ed., "Khudozhnik i vlast'," *Literaturnaia gazeta*, February 26, 1992; "TsK KPSS ustanovil: Soloukhin zabluzhdaetsia, Dolmatovskii brosaet ten', a Kurkova mnogo sebe

pozvoliaet," *Zhurnalists* 10 (1992); T. Domracheva, S. Lipkin, and N. Nadezhdina, eds., "Zhizn' i sud'ba: Kak pytalis' unichtozhit' rukopis' romana, a zatem i samogo V. Grossmana," *Trud*, October 3, 1992. Of particular interest are the sensational publications of documents on the participation of the Central Committee and the KGB in image creation for certain cultural figures: see, for example, M. Prozumenshchikov, ed., "Pod krylom 'iskusstvovedov v shtatskom': Slava I. Glazunova —na sovesti KGB i TsK KPSS?" *Kuranty*, April 29, 1994.

31. On December 5, 1965, two hundred students from the Gorky Institute of World Literature gathered on Pushkin Square in Moscow to protest the trial of the writers Andrei Siniavsky and Yuly Daniel. Both authors, writing, respectively, under the pseudonyms Abram Tertz and Nikolay Arzhak, had been arrested for publishing works abroad that were critical of the Soviet Union. Pushkin Square became the site of several protests associated with the dissident movement. T. Bakhmina et al., eds., "Svobodnye liudi v nesvobodnoi strane," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, December 5, 1995.

32. B. I. Zhelitskii, "Sobytiia 1956 goda v Vengrii i otklik na nikh studentchestva Moskvy: Ob odnoi dokladnoi zapiske v TsK KPSS," *Vlast' i intelligentsiia: Iz opyta poslevoennogo razvitiia stran Vostochnoi Evropy* 2 (1993); V. Kozlov et al., eds., "Za kulisami velikikh torzhestv (7 noiabria 1956 g.)," *Izvestiia*, November 6, 1992; A. Novikov and L. Shinkarev, eds., "Kogo boialas' Staraia ploshchad': Novye dokumenty iz arkhiva TsK KPSS," *Izvestiia*, August 17, 1992; Z. Velichanskaia et al., eds., "Ne znaiushchii broda Richard Nikson," *Kuranty*, August 12, 1994.

33. "Eshche o 'shestidesiatnikakh,'" *Literaturnaia Rossiia*, December 16, 1994; A. Petrov and M. Prozumenshchikov, *Kuranty*, December 16, 1994; "Zapiska KGB pri SM SSSR o vyskazyvaniakh pisatelei o deiatel'nosti Soiuzna pisatelei; o rasprostraneniі sredi intelligentsii i molodezhi literatury po politicheskim, ekonomicheskim i filosofskim voprosam," *Kuranty*, December 24, 1993; "Net paradnoi shumikhi i krikliivykh fraz': O reagirovanii tvorcheskoi intelligentsii na rabotu XXIII s'ezda KPSS," *Istochnik* 1 (1995); S. V. Popov, B. K. Tebiev, and A. D. Chernev, eds., "'Otchuzhdennoe ot partii sostoianie': KGB SSSR o nastroeniakh uchashchikhsia i studentchestva. 1968–1976 gg.," *Istoricheskii arkhiv* 1 (1994); E. Taranov, "'Raskachivaem Leninskie gory!': Iz istorii 'vol'nodumstva' v Moskovskom universitete (1955–1956 gg.)," *Svobodnaia mysl'* 10 (1993); E. Taranov, "Diktat partii i svoboda tvorchestva," *Kul'tura*, June 25, 1994.

34. V. Lazarev, ed., "Posledniaia bolezni' Stalina: Iz otchetov MGB SSSR o nastroeniakh v armii vesnoi 1953 g.," *Neizvestnaia Rossiia. XX vek*, vol. 2 (Moscow: Istoricheskoe nasledie, 1992).

35. A. Kraiushkin and N. Teptsov, eds., "Kak snizhali tseny v kontse 40-kh—nachale 50-kh godov i chto ob etom govoril narod," *Neizvestnaia Rossiia. XX vek*, vol. 2; V. Lebedev, ed., "'Ob'ediniates' vokrug Khrista—bol'sheviki povysili tseny': Otnoshenie naseleniia SSSR k povysheniiu tsen na produkty pitaniia v 1962 g.," *Neizvestnaia Rossiia. XX vek*, vol. 3 (Moscow: Istoricheskoe nasledstvo, 1993); "'Svergnut' vlast' nespravedlivosti . . .': Svodka donesenii mestnykh organov NKVD ob antisovetskikh i khuliganskikh proiavleniakh v period podgotovki k vyboram v Verkhovnyi Sovet Soiuzna SSR za dekabr' 1945–ianvar' 1946 g.," *Neizvestnaia Rossiia. XX vek*, vol. 4 (Moscow: Istoricheskoe nasledie, 1993).



36. V. Semichastnyi [V. Bredikhin], ed., “S kem borolsia KGB,” *Kuranty*, July 24, 1993; “‘Samizdat’ preterpel kachestvennye izmeneniia,” *Istochnik* 2 (1994); Sh. Muladzhanov, ed., “Svoboda v ‘chernom voronke,’” *Moskovskaia pravda*, July 29, 1992; Z. Vodop’ianova et al., “‘Putem raz’edineniia razgovorov . . .,’” *Trud*, August 11, 1993.

37. E. Baranov, “Leningrad eshche raz mog stat’ kolybel’iu revoliutsii, no KGB okazalsia provornee tsarskoi okhranki,” *Golos*, February 24–March 1, 1992; Z. Vodop’ianova, T. Domracheva, and G. Mullek, eds., “‘Presech’ vrazhdebnye proiavleniia rusizma,” *Istochnik* 6 (1994); S. Mel’nik, “Lomka epokhi pozdnego reabilitantsa,” *Stolitsa* 9 (1992).

38. See, for example, M. R. Zezina, *Sovetskaia khudozhestvennaia intelligentsia i vlast’ v 1950-e–1960-e gody* (Moscow: MGU im. M. V. Lomonosova, Istoricheskii fakul’tet, 1999); D. L. Kalkutin, *Deiatel’nost’ molodezhnoi oppozitsii v SSSR (1945–1960 gg.)*, *kandidat diss.*, Kursk, 2000; A. I. Prishchepa, *Inakomyslie na Urale (seredina 1940-kh–seredina 1980-kh gg.)* (Surgut: Surgutskii gos. universitet, 1998).

39. The secret police had long conducted surveys of popular opinion (*nastroenie*; literally, “mood”) to gain information for the political leaders, but not until the 1960s did sociologists begin to conduct opinion surveys and publish the results. See Iu. V. Aksiutin, *Khrushchevskaia ‘otpepel’ i obshchestvennye nastroyeniia v SSSR v 1953–1964 gg.* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2004).

40. In December 1825, a group of Russian officers assembled in front of the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg to protest Nicholas I’s ascension to the throne. This group, later known as the Decembrists, was dispersed by force. Five were executed, and others were sent into exile in Siberia.

41. This description comes from Lenin’s article “In Memory of Herzen” (1912). Alexander Herzen (1812–1870) was a prominent Russian socialist thinker and émigré writer. As a child, Herzen witnessed the hanging of several Decembrists and was deeply affected by their suffering.

42. The Socialist Revolutionary Party was a populist political party, formed in 1901, that advanced ideas of agrarian socialism.

43. The name of the bureau is Otdel po nadzoru za sledstviem v organakh gosudarstvennoi besopasnosti Prokuratory SSSR.

44. The database that we created became the foundation for a book, V. A. Kozlov, S. V. Mironenko, and O. V. Edelman, eds., with E. Yu. Zavadskaia and O. V. Lavinskaia, 58–10. *Nadzornye proizvodstva Prokuratury SSSR. Mart 1953–1991: Annotirovannyi katalog* (Moscow, 1999).

45. “O massovykh besporiadkakh s 1957 g. . . ,” *Istochnik* 6 (1995), p. 151.

46. We calculated this number by multiplying the average number in an underground group or organization; see E. Yu. Zavadskaia and O. V. Edelman, commentary, chapter 8, this volume) by the total number of group-related cases.

47. Like other Soviet institutions, the Procuracy was a hierarchical organization with a central Soviet (All-Union) Procuracy at the top, followed by the republican procuracies (Russian, Ukrainian, Georgian, and so on), then the regional procuracies (for example, in the Russian Republic, these were the Moscow and Tambov regions and the Bashkir autonomous republic). The terms “autonomous republic” and “autonomous region” were used for regions within soviet socialist republic

whose citizens were primarily of a different nationality (ethnicity) than the citizens of the titular republic.

48. State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF), *fond* (f.) R-8131, *opis'* (op.) 32, *delo* (d.) 6333, *list* (l.) 54. Complete information on all crimes against the state was sent only from the smaller republics.

49. Upon receiving an appeal that concerned a case on which the Procuracy of the USSR had already received a special report, the Procuracy added the materials pertaining to the review of the case to the file.

50. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 9068, l. 2.

51. The practice of prophylactic measures was given legal sanction when, on December 25, 1972, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR issued the decree "On Utilizing Warnings as Preventive Measures by the Organs of State Security." The document was not published, but it gave the organs of state security—in violation of the Constitution—the right to summon for "preventive talks" those citizens who had engaged in potentially perilous activities. In some cases, in agreement with the organs of the Procuracy, these citizens could be issued official, written warnings to stop engaging in those activities, along with an explanation of the consequences if they did not stop.

52. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 87563a, l. 11.

53. N. A. Cherkashin, "Poslednii parad: Khronika antibrezhnevskogo mi-atezha" (Moscow, 1992), p. 68.

54. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 86071, l. 1–2.

55. With exceptional measures, the indictment was presented to the accused one day before trial, appeals of indictments that had not yet come into effect were not allowed, trials were held without the participation of either side, etc.

56. See GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 42978, l. 91–96, 111–113.

57. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 5080, l. 4.

58. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 5080, l. 3.

59. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 6333, l. 63.

60. Article 58-11 dealt with counterrevolutionary organizations.

61. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 6333, l. 64.

62. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 6333, l. 61.

63. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 5080, l. 13.

64. The verb is *sidet'*.

65. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 5080, l. 48.

66. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 5080, l. 47.

67. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 5080, l. 181.

68. The Party Program approved at the Twenty-second Congress in October 1961 stated that Communism—the next stage after socialism, whose construction in the Soviet Union had been the leitmotif of the Stalin period—would be built in the Soviet Union by 1980.

69. *Pravda*, November 19, 1957. The reporter was Henry Shapiro.

70. GARF, f. 8131, op. 32, d. 5080, l. 42.

71. We say "probably" because *Istochnik*, or, more precisely, its supplement, *Vestnik Arkhiva Prezidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii*, usually published documents without any comments or explanation. As a result, it is not always possible to identify the source, much less the document's history.

72. The Twentieth Party Congress, which took place in February 1956, was the forum where Nikita Khrushchev delivered his Secret Speech denouncing Stalinism and the cult of personality.

73. See E. Papovian and A. Papovian, “Uchastie Verkhovnogo Suda SSSR v vyrabotke repressivnoi politiki. 1957–1958 gg.,” in Eremina and Zhemkova, *Korni travy*; and Papovian, “Primenenie stat’i 58–10 UK RSFSR v 1957–1958 gg.”

74. E. Papovian, “Primenenie stat’i 58–10 UK RSFSR v 1957–1958 gg. (Po materialam Verkhovnogo suda SSSR i Prokuratury SSSR v GARF),” in Eremina and Zhemkova, *Korni travy*, p. 73.

75. In October 1956, student protests in Budapest led to a nationwide uprising in Hungary against the Stalinist government of Mátyás Rákosi. The new government announced its intentions to withdraw from the Warsaw Pact and asked for the withdrawal of Soviet troops. On November 4, the Soviet Army invaded Budapest and established a pro-Soviet government in January 1957. During several months of fighting, 2,500 Hungarians were killed and 200,000 fled to the West.

76. In May 1957, three members of Stalin’s ruling circle, Molotov, Kaganovich, and Malenkov, attempted to remove Khrushchev from power. Their only supporter among the leadership was one of the secretaries of the Central Committee, Dmitry Shepilov. He was henceforth known as “Shepilov, who joined them.” In June, an emergency Central Committee meeting upheld Khrushchev’s position as first secretary, and members of the Anti-Party Group were expelled or demoted.

77. In general, the popular pro-Stalinist opposition to Khrushchev’s regime was far more widespread and had a far greater significance than existing historiography suggests. (In fact, this type of opposition is hardly mentioned at current historiography). At the same time, Khrushchev’s time in power is marked by mass disturbances, which were characterized by more or less apparent pro-Stalinist leanings. First of all came the well-documented disturbance in Tbilisi in March 1956, which began under the slogan of defending Stalin and only later acquired a nationalist and separatist character. The last notable mass disturbances in Khrushchev’s time have barely been studied. They took place in 1963 during the traditional celebration of the coming anniversary of the October Revolution in the Azerbaijani town of Sumgait. The revolt began when the authorities demanded that those marching in the parade remove any portraits of their former idol. The participants of the parade had carried the portraits across the main square of the city, in front the podiums, without causing any disturbance. The confrontation with the state was accompanied by shouts of “Down with Khrushchev!” Representatives of the state were beaten, and a police station was attacked. While the revolt was being suppressed, an accidental shot fired into the crowd wounded a twelve-year-old boy. For further discussion of the incident, see Kozlov, *Mass Uprisings*.

78. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 5080, l. 1–43.

79. GARF, f. 8131, op. 32, d. 5080, l. 4.

80. GARF, f. 8131, op. 32, d. 5080, l. 16–17.

81. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 5080, l. 6, 17. Unfortunately, we lack data for the other years.

82. Compiled according to GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 5080, l. 17–18.

83. Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin (1826–1889) was a satirist whose works in-

cluded a biting allegory of the history of governance in Russia, *History of a Town* (*Istoriia odnogo goroda*, 1969–1970).

84. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 5080, l. 17.

85. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 5080, l. 20.

86. NTS, a prominent Russian émigré political organization, was formed in Belgrade in 1930. It is perhaps best known for its journals, *Posev* (1945–present) and *Grani* (1946–present), which, during the Cold War, printed works that could not be published in the Soviet Union.

87. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 5080, l. 25–27.

88. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 5080, l. 29.

89. Russian State Archive of Contemporary History (RGANI), f. 5, op. 30, d. 454, l. 111.

90. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 6722, l. 142.

91. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 6722, l. 135.

92. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 6722, l. 135.

93. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 462, l. 251.

94. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 462, l. 251.

95. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 462, l. 251.

96. The creative intelligentsia comprised writers, journalists, scholars, artists, and the like, as opposed to the “technical intelligentsia” (engineers)

97. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 462, l. 251.

98. See Kozlov, *Mass Uprisings*.

99. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 462, l. 250.

100. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 99617, l. 28.

101. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 99617, l. 91–93.

102. Until recently, the only sources on Brodsky’s case and his exile from Leningrad were the memoirs of those present in the courtroom and Frida Vigdorova’s shorthand reports of two court sessions: E. G. Etkind, *Protsess Iosifa Brodskogo* (London: Overseas Publications Interchange, 1988); Ia. A. Gordin, “Delo Brodskogo,” *Neva* 2 (1989), pp. 134–166; N. A. Iakimchuk, *Kak sudili poeta: Delo I. Brodskogo*: (Leningrad [St. Petersburg]: Soiuz kinematografistov RSFSR, Sankt-Peterburgskaia organizatsiia, 1990). For shorthand reports on the trial, see *Ogoniok* 49 (1988), pp. 26–31; and Gordin, “Delo Brodskogo.” Recently, the source base has been expanded to include the oversight records of the Procuracy of the USSR (GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 99616, 99617). These materials have been published in an article by O. Edelman, “Protsess Iosifa Brodskogo,” *Novyi mir* 1 (2007), pp. 152–167.

103. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 8533, l. 112.

104. RGANI, f. 89, catalogue 51, dokumenty (dok.) 3, l. 7.

105. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 462, l. 58–60.

106. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 462, l. 58–60.

107. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 8176, l. 65.

108. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 8010, l. 230.

109. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 8670, l. 29.

110. “O massovykh besporiadkakh s 1957 g. . . ,” *Istochnik* 6 (1995), p. 151.

111. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 9102, l. 22.

112. RGANI, f. 89, catalogue 27, dok. 22, l. 1–4.

113. RGANI, f. 89, catalogue 11, dok. 138, l. 1.

114. In Russian, the Brezhnev period is commonly referred to as “the stagnation” (*zastoi*).

115. Rus’ is the Russian name of the Kievan state, founded in the ninth century and reaching its apogee in the eleventh, from which Russia claims descent.

#### CHAPTER 1. STALIN IS DEAD!

1. On March 5, 1953, Stalin died from a cerebral hemorrhage. For three days, his body lay in state in the Hall of Columns, and thousands of people lined up to pay their respects. When this mass of people pressed forward, as many as five hundred were trampled to death. The term *Khodynka* refers to a similar event that followed the coronation of Nicholas II in 1896. A panic was started by rumors that there were not enough coronation gifts for the crowd that had gathered on the Khodynka field in Moscow. More than a thousand people were crushed as the crowd pressed toward the podium.

2. Andrei Siniavsky (1925–1997), also known by his pen name, Abram Tertz, was a prominent Soviet writer and literary critic. He is well known for his novel *The Trial Begins* (1960) and two works of literary criticism, *On Socialist Realism* (1959) and *Strolls with Pushkin* (1975); In February 1966, Siniavsky was sentenced to seven years’ hard labor. He was released in 1971 and allowed to emigrate in 1973.

3. Abram Tertz (Andrei Siniavsky), *Goodnight! A Novel*, trans. Richard Lourie (New York: Viking, 1989).

4. “Generalissimo” was a title adopted by Stalin during World War II.

5. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 1173, l. 7.

6. The Time of Troubles refers to the period in Russian history between 1598 and 1613. When Tsar Fyodor Ivanovich died in 1598, he left no apparent heir to the throne. This marked the end of the Rurikid dynasty (862–1598). Following the brief reign of Boris Godunov, a Polish invasion, and a Russian revolt led by the merchant Kuzma Minin and Prince Pozharsky, a national assembly elected a new tsar, Mikhail, thus beginning the Romanov Dynasty (1613–1917).

7. See Iu. A. Poliakov, “Pokhorony Stalina. Vzgliaid istorika-ochevidtsa,” *Novaia i noveishaia istoriia* 4–5 (1994); and T. Goriaeva, “V raione Trubnoi ChP,” *Moskovskie novosti*, February 28, 1993. A number of documentary films and television programs using newreels and eyewitnesses’ stories were produced for the fiftieth anniversary of Stalin’s death in 2003. An exhibit of archival events was also held. See *1953 god. Mezhdru proshlym i budushchim: Katalog vystavki* (Moscow, 2003).

8. See GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 42051, l. 5. A. A. Tsivilev was not rehabilitated until February 1955.

9. This book does not include documents about anti-Stalin statements that were made while Stalin was alive, although the archives of the Procuracy of the USSR contain such documents, including documents about anti-Stalin statements made in 1937–1938, a particularly risky time for sedition. An example is the case of V. I. Petukhov, born in 1908, a Leningrad engineer with a higher-education degree. Petukhov was sentenced to ten year’s imprisonment on February 2, 1954,

for writing four anonymous letters to the state and the Party between 1938 and 1946. Among them was a poem called “A Memento for Stalin!” (1938) and an angry letter to the Party leader sent in January 1945: “In 1941, before the war, you shipped bread to Finland, you bastard, and then you made millions of Lenin-graders starve to death. Through the whole war, a famine raged in the country, and you send bread and sugar to the Finns, you scumbag, while our children are growing sick because of bread, fat, and sugar shortages. Do you mean to turn the people of Russia into starving slaves while you have your famine policy, thinking that you can restrain people’s indignation? You’re wasting your time: a time is near when you will take your place at the gallows despite the support of thousands of your spies, you dumb scumbag.” See GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 71036, l. 8.

10. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 39954.

11. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 38416.

12. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 40208; GARF, f. R-9474, op. 41, d. 1454.

13. Under Stalin, state loans were an important source of money for the state budget. Pledging to lend money for the loan was “voluntary-compulsory”: pledges were made directly at workplaces, and it was nearly impossible to refuse to pledge. The money taken for numerous loans in Stalin’s time was not returned to the people until the 1970s, when Brezhnev became the general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

14. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 42348.

15. Beginning in 1933, all citizens in the Soviet Union were required to hold an internal passport with a registered place of residence (*propiska*). Residence permits were difficult to obtain in most cities, and many people moved into cities and lived without proper registration, facing arrest if they were discovered.

16. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 41048.

17. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 43114.

18. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 38564. Patsevichus was referring to the Doctors’ Plot, discovery of which was announced in January 1953. Some of the doctors repressed were Jewish; the “plot” was the culmination of an implicitly anti-Semitic campaign against “cosmopolitanism”

19. GARF, f. 9474, op. 40, d. 1805.

20. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 40521.

21. Kulaks were peasants expropriated as exploiters (“dekulakized”) during collectivization.

22. The Kolyma region is in the Russian Far East. During the Soviet period, Kolyma contained several of the most infamous Gulag camps.

23. GARF, f. R-9474, op. 41, d. 677.

24. Joseph Stalin’s book *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR* was published in 1952.

25. Georgy Zhukov (1896–1974), perhaps the most famous Soviet general during World War II, led the Red Army during the Battle of Berlin. He was the supreme commander of Soviet forces in occupied Germany until 1947. He returned to Moscow after Stalin’s death, having spent seven years in Odessa. He served as defense minister and as a member of the Presidium until October 1957, when Khrushchev removed him from these posts because of increasing disagreements and his fear of a military coup.

26. Nicholas II (1868–1918) was the last tsar of Russia. In March 1917, after the February Revolution, Nicholas was forced to abdicate. He and his family remained under house arrest after the October Revolution. During the Civil War, they were moved to Tobolsk and then Ekaterinburg, where they were killed in July 1918.

27. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 41068.

28. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 42662.

29. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 43129.

30. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 43166.

31. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 40051.

32. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 43419.

33. GARF, f. R-9474, op. 40, d. 1288.

34. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 42267; GARF, f. R-9474, op. 41, d. 553.

35. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 40592; GARF, f. R-9474, op. 41, d. 1470.

36. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 43005. Levin probably meant Joseph Stalin's son Vasily.

37. GARF, f. R-9474, op. 40, d. 559.

38. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 43291.

39. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 40278.

40. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 40298.

41. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 42080.

42. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 41921.

43. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 1494.

44. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 68217.

45. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 42499.

46. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 39905.

47. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 40733; GARF, f. 9474, op. 40, d. 531.

48. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 40932.

49. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 38569; GARF, f. R-9474, op. 40, d. 948.

50. GARF, f. R-9474, op. 40, d. 802.

51. Later known as Dushanbe.

52. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 40818.

53. GARF, f. R-9474, op. 40, d. 484.

54. Later known as Donetsk.

55. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 38707.

56. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 68411.

57. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 38397.

58. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 43090.

59. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 40766.

60. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 41513; GARF, f. R-9474, op. 41, d. 2320.

61. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 93717.

62. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 40974.

63. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 92067.

64. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 38549.

65. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 40424.

66. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 40806.

67. Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin (1875–1946), an Old Bolshevik of peasant ori-

gin, was longtime chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, that is, the formal head of the government.

68. The Russian proverb equivalent to “The grass is always greener on the other side [of the fence]” is “Life is better where we are not.” The old lady’s response is, literally, “I want to be wherever you’re not”: she does not want to be anywhere near the Soviet government.

69. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 42566.

70. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 43401.

71. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 68474.

72. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 43414.

73. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 68212.

74. The Left Opposition within the Soviet Communist Party in the 1920s was led by Leon Trotsky, who was later joined by Grigory Zinoviev and Lev Kamenev. In 1927, with Stalin’s consolidation of power, Trotsky, Kamenev, and Zinoviev were removed from the Central Committee; they were later expelled from the Party.

75. The reference is to the so-called people’s democracies of postwar Eastern Europe.

76. Andrei Yanuarevich Vyshinsky (1883–1954) the Soviet ambassador to the United Nations, delivered a ninety-minute speech in March 1953 in response to accusations, made by U.S. delegate Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., that Jews and other religious groups were persecuted in the USSR.

77. The author of the document omitted the speakers’ names throughout. The document is reprinted from V.I. Lazarev, “Posledniaia bolezn’ Stalina (iz otchetov MGB on the political beliefs in the army in spring 1953.” *Neizvestnaia Rossiia. XX vek* 2, pp. 254–258.

78. The National Peasants’ Party (PNT) was a Romanian political party formed in 1926.

79. Nadezhda Allilueva, Stalin’s second wife, committed suicide in 1932.

80. On April 24, 1954, G. A. Kazakova’s case was closed following a decision by the Court Collegium on Criminal Cases under the Supreme Court of the USSR. The decision was based on the lack of evidence that a crime had been committed.

81. On March 2, 1955, the Court Collegium on Criminal Cases under the Supreme Court of the USSR revised the verdict issued by the Krasnoiarsk regional court, as well as the conclusion of the Court Collegium on Criminal Cases under the Supreme Court of the RSFSR. B. A. Basov’s sentence was reduced to five years’ imprisonment. In accordance with Articles 1 and 6 of the decree “On Amnesty,” issued on March 27, 1953, B. A. Basov was released from prison and freed from the custody of the justice system, and his criminal record was cleared.

82. The vulgar Russian expression “He’s dead, Maxim, so to hell with him” indicates contempt for someone who has just passed away.

83. The Court Collegium on Criminal Cases under the Supreme Court of the USSR concluded that Ogorinskaia’s sentence should be reduced to five years’ imprisonment. She was released according to Articles 1 and 6 of the decree “On Amnesty,” issued on March 27, 1953.

84. A. V. Kuznetsov was born in 1901. He completed elementary school and was a worker in the Dnepropetrovsk region.



85. On December 27, 1988, the chief prosecutor of the USSR protested the decision on the case of A. V. Kozlov, requesting that it be closed because of lack of evidence that a crime had been committed. On February 24, 1989, the Plenum of the Supreme Court of the USSR granted the request. Until then, all appeals and protests made by Kuznetsov's wife had been dismissed. See GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 38021, l. 187–190.

86. In 1953, V. S. Verbitskaia was released and her criminal record was cleared in accordance with Articles 1 and 6 of the decree "On Amnesty." Her case was not closed until November 13, 1962, when the plenum of the Supreme Court of the USSR decided to close it because evidence of a crime was lacking.

87. S. N. Stepanov (b. 1892) was a semiliterate manual worker in a military unit in the Primorsky region. On May 7, 1953, he was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment.

88. The poem comes from the oversight file on the appeal of A. V. Guskov, initiated in 1958. In 1956, while in the Stavropol prison, Guskov had copied this poem from the notebook of another prisoner. According to Guskov, "I never read poems about Stalin to anyone, because I considered them to be slander, since I was at the front and knew about his distinctions, but I did copy these poems. I cannot explain why I did this." See: GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 88516, l. 19.

## CHAPTER 2. THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

1. Yuly Kim (b. 1936) is a poet and a highly popular bard who was close to the dissident movement. Several of his songs were featured in Soviet films.

2. Yuly Kim, in *Kuranty*, June 19, 1993.

3. Nikolai Bukharin (1888–1938) was a prominent Bolshevik revolutionary seen as the Party's leading theorist in the 1920s, the period of the New Economic Policy (NEP). A leader of the Right Opposition at the end of the 1920s, he was executed as an "enemy of the people" during the Great Purges.

4. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 84518, l. 6.

5. The book was published by Aleksei Adzhubei, Nikita Khrushchev's son-in-law and the editor in chief of *Izvestiia*, a major Soviet newspaper, after Adzhubei's visit to the United States. See Aleksei Adzhubei, *Litsom k litsu s Amerikoi; rasskaz o poezdke N.S. Khrushcheva v SShA, 15–27 dekabria 1959 goda* (Moscow: Gospolitizdat, 1959).

6. Article 70 deals with anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda.

7. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 98849, l. 3–7.

8. Lavrenty Beria (1899–1953), as head of the Soviet secret police (1940–1953), organized the deportation of Poles, Ukrainians, Chechens, and other groups during World War II and directed the Soviet atom bomb project after the war. Beria was a key figure in the transition after Stalin's death, but his colleagues in the new leadership feared him, and he was arrested during a meeting of the Presidium in June 1953, convicted of treason, terrorism, and counterrevolutionary activities, and, on December 23, 1953, executed.

9. See E. Yu. Zubkova, *Obshchestvo i reformy, 1945–1964* (Moscow, 1993), published in English under the title *Russia after the War: Hopes, Illusions, and Disappointments, 1945–1957*, trans. Hugh Ragsdale (Armonk, NY, M. E. Sharpe,

1998); Zubkova, *Sovetskaia zhizn': 1945–1953* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2003); Iu.V. Aksiutin, *Khrushchevskaia ottepel' i obshchestvennye nastroyeniia v SSSR v 1953–1964 gg.* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2004).

10. The meeting of the Big Four—Prime Minister Anthony Eden of Great Britain, Prime Minister Edgar Faure of France, President Dwight Eisenhower of the United States, and Premier Nikolai Bulganin of the USSR—in Geneva in 1955, designed to lower international tensions, was the occasion for Khrushchev's first appearance on the world stage as spokesman for the Soviet Union.

11. During the collectivization of Soviet agriculture in 1929, Stalin called for the “liquidation of the kulaks as a class.” Kulaks were relatively prosperous peasants who owned livestock or hired laborers during the harvest. Nearly two million peasants were “dekulakized” and sent to the Gulag or to internal exile.

12. “Anonism” is an illiterate rendition of “onanism” (i.e., masturbation). The author is punning on the Soviet term for anonymous letters: *anonimki*.

13. Communism has been viewed as a classical mythological system by Mircea Eliade, a major historian of religion and a scholar of folklore and mythology. See Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harper and Row, 1963); Mircea Eliade, *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries: The Encounter between Contemporary Faiths and Archaic Realities*, trans. Philip Mairet (New York: Harper and Row, 1967); Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1959). For an example of a study that notes ancient elements in contemporary everyday thought, see V. N. Toporov's monograph on graffiti, V. N. Toporov, *Mif. Ritual, Simvol. Obraz. Issledovaniia v oblasti mifopoeticheskogo* (Moscow: Izdat. gruppа “Progress,” 1995). On the archaic traits of Soviet monumental art, see V. Papernyi, *Architecture in the Age of Stalin: Culture Two*, trans. John Hill and Roann Baris in collaboration with the author (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

14. Perseus is a Greek mythic hero and the slayer of Medusa. Dobrynia Nikitich is a mythic hero from traditional East Slavic poems. He is best known for his battle with the dragon Zmei Gorynych.

15. For a further discussion of Soviet mythological symbolism, see O. V. Edelman, “Legendy i mify Sovetskogo Soiuza,” *Logos* 5 (1999), pp. 52–65.

16. Even the KGB did not know the exact proportion of the Soviet population that listened to foreign radio stations. In July 1960, the head of the Central Committee's Department of Propaganda for the Soviet Republics, L. Il'ichev, reported to the Central Committee that “at the present time, there are up to 20,000,000 radios throughout the USSR that can receive the signal for foreign radio stations. It is difficult to say exactly how often Soviet citizens listen to foreign broadcasts, including Voice of America and the BBC, but we have data that indirectly suggest that there is a certain interest in foreign radio stations.” RGANI, f. 89, *perechen'* (per.) 46, d. 14, l. 2. Il'ichev goes on to say that in Tajikistan, people listen to foreign radio stations not only at their apartments but also in public places (i.e., tea houses). There was also a widespread practice of remaking radios. As Il'ichev reports, for 250–300 rubles, radio hobbyists, including war veterans who had learned how to operate radios in the army, “install a shortwave band, ten meters long or more, into radios owned by other members of the population. On this wavelength, one can only tune into foreign radio stations. Even in Moscow, at

GUM [the big department store] and other stores, people who are shopping for a radio are often approached by individuals without a fixed occupation who offer to embed a shortwave band into their new radio." A 1986 report to the Central Committee on the jamming of foreign radio stations, signed by Egor Ligachev and Viktor Chebrikov, states that "in our jamming efforts, we are using thirteen remote defense radio centers at eighty-one local defense stations, with a total power of approximately forty thousand kilowatts. Approximately 30 percent of the territory of the USSR is provided with remote defense against radio stations. The local defense stations function in eighty-one cities and are currently suppressing radio broadcasts within a radius of up to thirty kilometers from the station. Outside this zone, the quality of jamming decreases significantly. Those regions inhabited by 100–130 million people are covered by remote and local radio defense with varying degrees of effectiveness." RGANI, f. 89, per. 18, d. 105, l. 1. Here, let me note, "quality of jamming" is seen as related to the "defense" of the Soviet population.

17. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 73888, l. 84–85.

18. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 84264, l. 29.

19. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 87037, l. 6.

20. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 91432, l. 56.

21. On August 24, 1939, the Soviet and German foreign ministers, Molotov and Ribbentrop, signed a nonaggression treaty in Moscow. A secret protocol of this agreement established spheres of influence, and a week later German and Soviet forces entered and divided Poland. The Red Army moved into Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia in September 1939, and these countries were annexed to the Soviet Union in 1940. The Baltic countries came under German occupation during the war, but they were reoccupied by Soviet forces in 1944 and were thereafter republics of the Soviet Union.

22. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 94674, l. 18.

23. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 96009, l. 9.

24. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 87620, l. 5 ob.

25. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 98744, l. 76.

26. As radios became widely available in the USSR in the 1940s and 1950s, a growing number of people began to listen to foreign radio broadcasts. These stations were commonly called the Voices (*Golosy*) and included Voice of America, Radio Liberty/Radio Free Europe, BBC World Service, and Deutsche Welle.

27. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 43172, l. 262.

28. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 59763, l. 5.

29. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 94825, l. 62–63.

30. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 10890, l. 3.

31. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 92937, l. 11.

32. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 2087, l. 1.

33. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 43500, l. 86.

34. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 90710a, l. 4.

35. Outbursts of the belief that the end of the world was imminent also occurred periodically among the peasants in pre-revolutionary Russia. This belief was especially popular in such major Christian movements as the Molokans and

the Doukhobors. In authoritative studies of the nineteenth-century Russian peasantry, N. M. Druzhinin and A. I. Klibanov note that the outbursts of eschatological beliefs were closely related to peaks in the activity of the Russian peasant movement. Druzhinin and Klibanov also note that figures from the above-mentioned Christian sectarian movements played a significant role in peasant movements. See N. M. Druzhinin, *Gosudarstvennye krest'iane i reforma P. D. Kiseleva* (Moscow: Izd. Akademii nauk SSSR, 1946); and A. I. Klibanov, *Narodnaia sotsial'naiia utopiia v Rossii: XIX vek* (Moscow: "Nauka," 1978).

36. The Party Program approved at the Twenty-second Party Congress in October 1961 stated that Communism—the next stage after socialism, whose construction in the Soviet Union had been the leitmotif of the Stalin period—would be built in the Soviet Union by 1980.

37. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 41619, l. 13–14.

38. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 60036, l. 7.

39. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 78570, l. 18.

40. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 96211, l. 4.

41. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 94322, l. 1.

42. Stalin's article "Marxism and Problems of Linguistics," published in the June 20 and August 2, 1950, editions of *Pravda*, constituted a major intervention in scholarly discussion, not only in linguistics but also in other fields.

43. "The Great Stalinist Plan for the Transformation of Nature," mandating the planting of large forest belts to protect against wind erosion, was announced in the press in October 1948.

44. Margarita Aliger (1915–1992) was a prominent Soviet poet and journalist. Her poem "Zoia" (1942), which received the Stalin Prize, recounts the story of a Russian girl killed by the Nazis.

45. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 87189, l. 5.

46. Sputnik, the first artificial satellite to be put into orbit around the earth, was launched on October 4, 1957.

47. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 90746, l. 14.

48. The demand for the government to "care" for the people is a special motif in Russian culture. The age-old tradition of authoritarianism gave rise to the notion of citizens as immature beings. Those people who had an attitude of servility toward the state placed responsibility for their lives in the hands of the state. Soviet citizens who had been caught red-handed in petty theft often stated, for example, that "Khrushchev and Bulganin taught me how to steal": the person had needed food, clothes, and so on, hence had started to steal, and the need arose because the government did not care sufficiently for its people's well-being.

49. Nikolai Bulganin (1895–1975) served as minister of defense and chairman of the Council of Ministers under Khrushchev and traveled with him on state visits to Yugoslavia, India, and England.

50. At the Twenty-second Party Congress, Khrushchev proposed removing Stalin's body from the Mausoleum on Red Square on the grounds that Stalin's deviations from Leninism made it inappropriate for him to rest next to Lenin. Stalin's body was removed on October 31, 1961.

51. In March 1953, Lavrenty Beria initiated an amnesty for nearly one million prisoners in Gulag labor colonies and prisons. The release primarily affected those

with short sentences and did not apply to prisoners sentenced for serious or political crimes.

52. Aleksei Rykov (1881–1938) was a Bolshevik leader who served as Lenin's deputy in the Council of People's Commissars and assumed Lenin's post as chairman (i.e., head of the Soviet government) after his death. Along with Bukharin, he was one of the leaders of the Right Opposition in the late 1920s and was executed as an "enemy of the people" during the Great Purges.

53. Grigory Zinoviev (1883–1936) was a prominent Bolshevik revolutionary and member of the Central Committee. During the Civil War, he successfully defended Petrograd (now St. Petersburg). He served as the first chairman of the Communist International (Comintern) from 1919 to 1926.

54. Mikhail Tukhachevsky (1893–1937) was a Red Army officer and military strategist who achieved the rank of Marshal of the Soviet Union in 1935. He was arrested in June 1937 during the Great Purges and executed.

55. Vasily Bliukher (1889–1938), a commissar in the Red Army, fought during the Civil War. The main military commander in the Soviet Far East, he attained the rank of marshal. During the Great Purges, Bliukher served on the tribunal that tried and sentenced Marshal Tukhachevsky. Shortly thereafter, he was accused of spying for Japan, and he died in prison.

56. Yan Gamarnik (1894–1937), an accomplished army commissar, supported Stalin against the Right Opposition but refused to support the repression of Tukhachevsky. Fearing arrest, Gamarnik committed suicide in May 1937.

57. Genrikh Yagoda (1891–1938), who served as commissar of internal affairs from 1934 to 1936, organized the first show trials against Zinoviev and Kamenev. He was replaced by Ezhov in 1936, arrested in March 1937 as part of the "right-Trotskyite bloc," and executed with twenty others for treason and conspiracy.

58. A. S. Kuznetsov was born in 1914. He was an ethnic Ukrainian, a collective farmer and a resident of the Dubossary district of the Moldavian Republic and had a criminal record. On May 15, 1953, he was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment.

59. *Aqsaqal* is the name given to a community leader in numerous ethnic groups in Central Asia. The word means "white beard" in many Turkic languages and refers to the old and wise leaders of the community.

60. U. Ismagulov (b. 1895) was an ethnic Kazakh and a collective farmer from the Guriev region (Kazakh Republic). On June 1, 1953, he was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment.

61. A *bai* was a wealthy Central Asian cattle owner or farmer in pre-revolutionary Russia.

62. P. N. Flikov (b. 1922) was a veteran of the war and worked as a miner in the Kemerovo region. On May 17, 1957, he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

63. On December 19, 1956, the decree "On Petty Hooliganism" was passed, allowing judges to issue short sentences of three to five days for minor offenses to the public order. Prior to the decree, the minimum sentence for acts of hooliganism was one year's imprisonment.

64. Rumors about disturbances in these cities were false.

65. G. M. Novikov (b. 1919) worked as an attendant at the passenger station

at the Petropavlovsk port. On June 21, 1958, he was sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

66. In Soviet prison slang, a muzzle (*suralo*) was a face.

67. Beginning in 1948, the Soviet Union and other Eastern Bloc countries attempted to jam incoming radio signals from the West. In response, stations like the BBC and Voice of America frequently changed frequencies or increased their signal strength. After Khrushchev's visit to the United States in September 1959, jamming was selectively reduced, and many stations were allowed to operate during the 1960s. Under Brezhnev, large-scale jamming was resumed.

68. *America Illustrated* was a magazine published monthly by the Office of International Information of the U.S. Department of State beginning in 1944. From 1956, the magazine was published for distribution in the Soviet Union by the Press and Publications Service of the United States Information Agency (USIA).

69. On October 29, 1956, following the nationalization of the Suez Canal by Egyptian president Nasser, England, France, and Israel invaded Egypt and took control of the canal. The Soviet Union strongly opposed the invasion and warned French and British officials that further military action could lead to an atomic war. Following a U.S.-led cease-fire, U.N. peacekeepers were deployed in the Sinai, where they remained until the Egyptian government ordered them to leave in 1964.

70. Novikov meant Nikita Khrushchev's trips abroad.

71. As British war secretary, Winston Churchill was an adamant proponent of intervention against the Bolsheviks in the Civil War that broke out in 1918. He once described Lenin, whom the Germans transported from Zurich to Russia, as "a plague bacillus . . . more deadly than any bomb." In 1920, much to Churchill's annoyance, the British and French governments withdrew their forces from Russia.

72. Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were American citizens convicted of conspiring to commit espionage by passing nuclear secrets to the Soviet Union; they were executed in 1953. There were protests against their conviction in the United States and throughout the world, including in the Soviet Union.

73. M. P. Dronzhovsky, an ethnic Ukrainian from the Ternopol region, was born in 1908. He had a criminal record and was a worker at a lumberyard in the Chita region. On July 19, 1958, he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

74. In most elections during the Soviet period there was only one candidate on the ballot.

75. N. A. Suiazov (b. 1915) was a carpenter from the Perm region. He had previously been prosecuted under Article 58–1, point *a*, of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR. On September 13, 1962, Suiazov was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment.

76. The Demidov family, which owned numerous mines and steel mills in the Urals and Siberia, was central to the development of Russian iron and steel production in the eighteenth century.

77. The term "cult of personality," implying a general criticism of one-man dictatorial rule and a specific criticism of Stalin, was used by Khrushchev in his Secret Speech to the Twentieth Party congress in 1956. Condemnation of the cult was a key element of de-Stalinization.

78. Kliment Efremovich Voroshilov (1881–1969), Soviet political and military leader, was a close associate of Stalin's. Although he was not identified as a member of the Anti-Party Group, his career faded in the post-Stalin period.

79. On May 15, 1955, the Soviet Union signed a treaty that restored full sovereignty to Austria. The treaty prevented the division of Austria by affirming its neutrality and facilitated the withdrawal of Soviet troops.

80. The Virgin Lands campaign, begun by Khrushchev in 1954, sought to produce a dramatic increase in the amount of land for grain cultivation in the Kazakh Republic and Altai region of the RSFSR. More than three hundred thousand people, mostly from Ukraine and Russia, were recruited to plow and create farmland. Although the campaign had some initial success, measures were not taken to prevent erosion, replenish the soil, or create necessary infrastructure. As a result, much of the land became unusable, and the Soviet Union was again forced to import grain.

81. In December 1956, Fidel Castro returned to Cuba from exile in Mexico and waged an armed insurrection that ousted the government of General Batista in January 1959. Castro became prime minister and then president in February. Fearing U.S. intervention, Castro welcomed a Soviet offer of anti-aircraft weapons, coastal defense missiles, and tanks. In May 1960, Khrushchev agreed to the deployment of nuclear missiles in Cuba. This led to the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 15–28, 1962. The missiles were removed following a U.S. agreement not to invade Cuba and to remove its missiles in Turkey.

82. Yu. F. Eliseev (b. 1931) was a worker at a leather-processing factory. On November 14, 1963, he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

83. The document is reproduced from the special report by the deputy prosecutor of the Gorky region to the chief prosecutor of the USSR and the prosecutor of the RSFSR, October 12, 1963.

84. The document is reproduced from the special report by the deputy prosecutor of the Gorky region to the chief prosecutor of the USSR and the prosecutor of the RSFSR, October 12, 1963.

85. A. D. Bakhirkin (b. 1936) worked as an electrician in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky. On September 25, 1969, he was sentenced to four years' imprisonment.

86. V. D. Naletaev (b. 1922), who worked as a stoker in Sverdlovsk, had previously been convicted under Article 58-10 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR. On September 21, 1959, he was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment.

87. Now Ekaterinburg.

88. I.R. Petrokas (b. 1904), an ethnic Lithuanian, was a collective farmer.

89. A sotka is a traditional Russian unit of land measurement. One sotka equals 100 square meters (an are), or 1,076 square feet.

90. A. I. Gorlanov had three previous convictions. At the time, he was a prisoner in the Kurgan region. On October 30, 1957, he was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment.

91. *Us* means one of the residential sections of a prisoners' barrack.

92. *Cheka* is a colloquial term derived from the acronym ChK for Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counterrevolution and Sabotage, which was the name of the Soviet secret police from 1917 until 1922.

93. P. A. Shumov (b. 1909) was a worker at a factory in Moscow. On July 4,

1957, while drunk, he read the announcement of the Plenum of the Central Committee “On the Anti-Party Group” in the newspaper *Sovetskaia Rossiia*. He then wrote an anonymous letter to the editor, providing a fictional address for the factory. On December 18, 1957, he was sentenced to four years’ imprisonment.

94. Semen Mikhailovich Budennyi (1883–1973), Civil War cavalryman, Soviet military leader. Marshal Budennyi was not a member of the Anti-Party Group.

95. Anastas Ivanovich Mikoian, 1895–1978, an Armenian Old Bolshevik, held high political, governmental and diplomatic posts under Stalin and Khrushchev.

96. Following a trip to Iowa in 1959, Khrushchev pressed for an ambitious plan to increase corn production in the USSR. Corn was ill suited to many of the local climates, and the efforts to grow it were largely unsuccessful. Many jokes and nicknames associated Khrushchev with corn.

97. In the original Russian, these sentences are fragmentary and not fully comprehensible.

98. In the Soviet Union, telephone directories were not widely available. An address bureau was the best place to find someone’s telephone or address.

99. G. G. Logunov (b. 1927) was a worker at Mosdorstroi, a road construction agency, before he was convicted. He lived in the Tula region. On April 5, 1958, he was sentenced to four years’ imprisonment.

100. The socialist states of Eastern Europe were often referred to as “fraternal countries.”

101. One pood equals sixteen kilograms.

102. The document is reproduced according to a copy of a special report from the deputy prosecutor of the Tula region, February 12, 1958.

103. I. D. Tokolov (b. 1916) worked in a village school in the Kursk region. On December 8, 1958, he was sentenced to seven years’ imprisonment.

104. Tokolov is referring to Nikita Khrushchev and Nikolai Bulganin. The epithet “traveler” refers to Bulganin’s trips abroad.

105. A. G. Batula (b. 1931), a Ukrainian, worked as a miner, was fired, lost his documents, and could not either receive new ones or find a new job. He had a criminal record.

106. Currently known as Donetsk.

107. G. A. Yurinov (b. 1917) worked as a tax auditor in the Pskov region. On August 28, 1958, he was sentenced to three years’ imprisonment.

108. On May 24, 1957, Khrushchev, in a speech at a meeting in Leningrad, called for a dramatic increase in the production of meat, butter, and milk. The stated objective was to overtake the United States in these areas within three to four years.

109. E. V. Mosin, a security guard, lived in Moscow. On January 15, 1959, he was sentenced to four years’ imprisonment.

110. Yuzhny is a river port located in the south of the city.

111. “Cult” here is shorthand for “cult of personality,” the pejorative term applied to Stalin by Khrushchev in his Secret Speech. Mosin is using the same pejorative term (whose meaning he may or may not have understood) for Khrushchev, Stalin’s successor.

112. The letter was written and sent by N. F. Kulakov (b. 1921), a Party mem-



ber and a propagandist in a reading group on the history of the Party. He worked as a dispatcher at the Bratskaia hydroelectric power station (Irkutsk region). On January 19, 1963, he was sentenced to one year's imprisonment.

113. Here Kulakov switches from the polite Russian form of "you" to the familiar form.

114. The economic councils, which existed from 1957 to 1965, were regional administrative and economic organizations directly controlling the management of industry and construction. Their purpose was to reduce the central state apparatus by eliminating the ministries that managed specific branches of the economy.

115. Kulakov is speaking about the delay in paying off state loans, the 1961 monetary reform that devalued the ruble (making one new ruble equal to ten old ones), and the raise in the prices of consumer goods that were considered to be luxury objects.

116. After the 1957 Plenum, Viacheslav Molotov, Georgy Malenkov, and Lazar Kaganovich were dismissed from the Central Committee, but they retained their Party memberships. Later, they were expelled: Molotov in 1962 and Malenkov and Kaganovich in 1961.

117. The investigation found that the letters were typed on a typewriter in the state arbitrator's office, which came under the auspices of the Moscow city executive committee. However, the author of the leaflets was not found.

118. V. S. Rassypnov was born in 1930 in Suvorov village, Moksha district, Penza region, where he lived and worked as an unskilled worker at a state farm. On May 11, 1959, he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

119. The Procuracy of the USSR received the poem along with a letter of denunciation: "I present to you an anti-Soviet letter of eight pp., copied from the sheet of paper on which it had been typed (on a typewriter), which was found torn and heavily smeared with feces in the bathroom of Building # [address] in Rostov-on-Don. While disapproving of N. S. Khrushchev, to whom it is dedicated, the poem nevertheless contains harmful propaganda, calculated to poison the brains of the Soviet people. Its author is undoubtedly an educated anti-Soviet element. The author of the poem promises to continue it (see the last two lines). In addition, I want to point out that there are many talkers who are just like the author of this poem, who tell anti-Soviet jokes while standing in line and think that this is normal these days, justifying it with the argument that there is no legal punishment for this. I think it is absolutely necessary to organize an active struggle against this anti-Soviet evil, using the police, Party organizations, and the population. If the criminal code really has no articles that specify punishment for such offenses, then there ought to be [articles]; these authors should not go unpunished." GARF, f. R-8131, d. 99291, l. 1 and 1 ob. This letter was not the first one to the upper echelons of the government by a voluntary informer who provided his name and address. The head of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security, G. A. Terekhov, responded to the denunciation as follows: "In such instances, state security organizations do initiate criminal cases, and those guilty of distributing anti-Soviet leaflets and poems are prosecuted. In this case, the poem 'A Fairy Tale about Tsar Nikita' cannot be seen as anti-Soviet, because it is directed against Khrushchev" (who had already been ousted). GARF, f. R-8131, d. 99291, l. 7.

120. All of the named figures appear in operas by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. *Kashchei the Immortal* is a one-act opera written in 1902. Tsar Dodon is a figure in *The Golden Cockerel* (1907), which is an opera based on Pushkin's *Tale of the Golden Cockerel*. Tsarevich Gvidon is a character in the opera *Tale of the Tsar Sultan* (1900), also an adaptation of a fairy tale by Pushkin.

121. Bulgashka is a derogatory appellation for Nikolai Bulganin, who replaced Georgy Malenkov as chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR.

122. Shortly after Stalin's death in March 1953, Marshal Josip Broz Tito, president of socialist Yugoslavia, traveled twice (in June and September) to the Soviet Union to meet with Khrushchev and the new leadership.

123. To encourage Soviet citizens to lend money to the state, making loans made them eligible for a lottery with cash prizes.

124. Frol Kozlov (1908–1965) was a member of the Presidium and a close ally of Khrushchev. He lost his post shortly after Khrushchev's retirement in 1964 and died soon thereafter.

125. I. M. Egle (b. 1920) was an ethnic Lithuanian and a Baptist. He had a criminal record and lived in the Nikolaev region (Ukraine).

126. L. P. Karelina (b. 1922) worked as a concierge in Sverdlovsk.

127. John the Evangelist, one of Jesus' twelve apostles, was widely believed to be the author of the Book of Revelation.

128. L. A. Brachka (b. 1924) lived in a small village in the Baus district of the Latvian Republic, where he was a director of engineering at peat production sites. His acquaintance V. M. Valtere (b. 1903), a homemaker from Riga with some college education, was the author of the manuscript. Valtere had been composing and distributing religious writings since about 1954.

129. F. E. Bakhrov (b. 1911) had a higher-education degree. When this case was initiated, he had no fixed place of residence or employment. In 1949, Bakhrov was prosecuted for the abuse of power. In 1957, he created a group of Christians and preached to them. In 1959, he wrote the brochure "The Cross and the Star"; in 1960–1961, his followers copied the brochure on blueprint paper and distributed the copies. On October 12, 1961, Bakhrov was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment.

130. A red star symbolized the Soviet Union.

### CHAPTER 3. HERETICS AND PROFANERS

1. GARF, f. 81–31, op. 31, d. 86379, l. 5.

2. For some perceptive observations on the role of representations of Soviet Party leaders, see Vladimir Papernyi, *Architecture in the Age of Stalin: Culture Two* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

3. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 289 (reel 4615).

4. RGANI, f. 89, per. 37, d. 27, l. 1.

5. For mystical texts on the resurrection of the Party leader, see chapter 2.

6. Now called Lviv.

7. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 95968, l. 14.

8. No cases were registered in 1955, 1965–1966, or 1974–1975.

9. Now Moldova.

10. Bogdan Khmel'nitsky (1595–1657) was a Cossack leader (*hetman*) who led an uprising from 1648 to 1654 against the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and attempted to establish an independent Cossack state. In 1654, Khmel'nitsky signed the Treaty of Pereiaslav with Tsar Aleksei, granting Moscow's protection to the Cossack lands. This treaty is widely cited as the act that joined Ukraine with Russia.

11. The official coat of arms of Ukraine is a gold trident on an azure background. As a state emblem, the trident dates back to Kievan Rus', when it was the coat of arms of the Rurikid dynasty.

12. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 79741, l. 7.

13. F. E. Dzerzhinsky (1877–1926) was a prominent Bolshevik revolutionary and the first head of the secret police (Cheka). Born in Poland, Dzerzhinsky attended secondary school in Vilnius, Lithuania, and was active in local revolutionary groups before joining the Russian Bolshevik Party (RSDLP). Until 1991, a large statue of Dzerzhinsky stood in front of the KGB's headquarters in Moscow.

14. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 74193, l. 7.

15. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 2498, l. 1.

16. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 7731, l. 1.

17. May 1 is International Workers' Day. November 7 was Revolution Day. According to the pre-revolutionary Julian calendar, the October Revolution occurred on October 25, 1917. However, in January 1918, the Russian Republic adopted the Gregorian calendar, thus moving the date forward by thirteen days, to November 7.

18. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 482, l. 40. A memorandum of the KGB, addressed to the Central Committee, notes more incidents. In Sevastopol, fourteen portraits of Party leaders at a bread-making plant were cut up. In Serpukhov, a portrait of Khrushchev hanging on the façade of a military base was cut with a razor. In a park in downtown Kherson, two statues of Stalin were broken. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 141, reel 4578.

19. Tallin is now called Tallinn. Alma-Ata is now called Almaty.

20. GARF, f. R-9401, op. 2, d. 497, l. 393–394.

21. GARF, f. R-9401, op. 2, d. 500, l. 160–61.

22. GARF, f. R-9401, op. 2, d. 505, l. 357.

23. Now called Kostanay.

24. GARF, f. R-9401, op. 507, l. 1–2.

25. Yu. V. Andropov (1914–1984) was head of the KGB from 1967 to 1982 and general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) from 1982 until his death in 1984.

26. RGANI, f. 89, per. 37, d. 12, l. 1.

27. The Doctors' Plot was a trumped-up accusation of conspiring to murder Party leaders made against a group of Kremlin doctors, many of whom were Jewish. The announcement of the plot in January 1953 marked the apogee of the quasi-official anti-Semitism of Stalin's last years. The charges were dropped immediately after Stalin's death in March 1953.

28. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 38367, l. 13–14.

29. GARF, f. A-428s, op. 3s, d. 242, l. 11.

30. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 44148. These cases from the Procuracy files

are listed in chronological order, according to date of conviction. We have excluded a number of similar cases related to hoisting and taking down of flags.

31. The “Lenin room” was a space set aside in schools, factories, army barracks, and other public buildings for political activities and instruction. According to guidelines, these rooms always contained a bust or a portrait of Lenin.

32. Soviet and Russian wall newspapers are typically posted on a bulletin board in factories and schools. In addition to newspaper clippings, wall newspapers include local news and activities, as well as amateur artwork and compositions.

33. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 41484.

34. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 43044.

35. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 43069.

36. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 338.

37. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 43888.

38. Now called Donetsk.

39. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 42703.

40. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 59801.

41. In June 1917, at the First National Congress of Soviets, a speaker asked rhetorically if any single party could take control and govern the country. In reply, Lenin declared, “There is such a party. It is our party!”

42. Nikolai Shvernik (1888–1970) was a Soviet leader who headed the Central Council of Trade Unions from 1930 to 1944 and was chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR from 1946 to 1953.

43. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 44121.

44. At the end of the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–1905, Russia and Japan agreed to the division of Sakhalin Island, leaving the southern portion of the island under Japanese control. In August 1945, Soviet forces invaded and took control of the entire island.

45. Lenin died on January 21, 1924.

46. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 44846.

47. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 59116.

48. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 51521.

49. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 79280; GARF, f. 9474, op. 41, d. 3051.

50. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 78317; GARF, f. 9474, op. 41, d. 3016.

51. On June 28, 1956, massive protests took place in Poznan, Poland, against the Communist government. The army was used to disperse the crowd, and at least fifty people were killed.

52. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 83287.

53. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 80067.

54. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 80901.

55. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 85362.

56. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 84275.

57. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 88106.

58. Now called Bishkek.

59. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 89189. See also *Neizvestnaia Rossiia*, 4 (1993), pp. 465–66.

60. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 92827.

61. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 91768.

62. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 91708.

63. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 93066.

64. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 93189.

65. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 93726.

66. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 99226.

67. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 439.

68. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 2062.

69. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 2971.

70. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 3180.

71. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 4023.

72. Now called Samara.

73. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 8305.

74. P. M. Dibrov (b. 1907) was the head of the rail yard at the Kharkov train station. On March 26, 1953, he was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. On June 6, 1953, the Railway Commission of the Supreme Court of the USSR changed Dibrov's conviction to hooliganism, reducing his to five years. He was released under the amnesty of September 17, 1955.

75. Yakov Sverdlov (1885–1919), an Old Bolshevik, was a key planner of the Bolsheviks' seizure of power and the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). He died of influenza during the Civil War.

76. M. B. Grigorovich (b. 1930), Polish by ethnicity, worked as a carpenter in Orsk (Chkalov region). He was a Komsomol member. On July 18, 1953, Grigorovich was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. On January 29, 1955, the Presidium of the Supreme Court of the RSFSR reviewed his case and changed the conviction to hooliganism, His reducing his term to five years. He was released during the amnesty.

77. L. A. Smirnova (b. 1934), from Frunze, was on an invalid's pension.

#### CHAPTER 4. GET OUT THE VOTE!

Epigraph: GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 87339, l. 6.

1. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 86433, l. 9.

2. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 45243, l. 13–14.

3. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 40864, l. 13.

4. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 43853, l. 69.

5. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 43074, l. 11.

6. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 41870, l. 9.

7. See GARF, f. R-9474, op. 41, d. 2523 (1953 file).

8. Acts of disobedience also occurred at polling stations when Stalin was in power, but the risk of being found to be “anti-Soviet” was very high then. In 1952, an elderly worker who had only completed elementary school, a resident of Kamensk-Uralsky, found out that his coworker had written to a deputy with a request for help in getting an apartment. The elderly man advised his coworker not to write the deputy, who would surely not help, but instead to abstain from voting: then he would be given an apartment immediately. He cited as proof that last year, he had not wanted to vote—and had received an apartment immediately. He

added that in the Soviet Union, officials were appointed and not elected, and that they ought to have nominated a local worker who was an imbecile. For these statements, he was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment in May 1953. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 41093, l. 15.

9. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 38234, l. 14.

10. People's courts, formed after the October Revolution of 1917, served as the primary courts of the Soviet judicial system. The residents of a village or city elected people's judges for terms of five years.

11. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 65110, l. 24.

12. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 41158, l. 6–7.

13. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 42849, l. 5, 7.

14. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 43425, l. 9.

15. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 41777, l. 7.

16. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 43437, l. 5.

17. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 47379, l. 2.

18. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 40979, l. 5.

19. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 82750, l. 7–9.

20. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 78127, l. 1.

21. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 82471, l. 7.

22. Now called Perm.

23. The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) was formed in 1929 with the goal of establishing an independent Ukrainian state. During World War II, the OUN's armed guerillas, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), worked with the Nazis in occupied Ukraine, but later UPA fought against them and the Red Army. The UPA continued to resist Soviet forces until 1949.

24. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 86703, l. 11 ob.–12.

25. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 82662, l. 4–5.

26. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 80944, l. 11.

27. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 86811, l. 2.

28. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 89052, l. 7.

29. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 88470, l. 7.

30. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 92010, l. 1–2.

31. On March 2 and 15, 1969, Chinese troops landed on an uninhabited patch of land in the middle of the Ussuri River known as Damansky Island, or Zhen Bao Island. Soviet troops were sent to counter the incursion, and shots were fired. The face-off escalated into a full-scale border conflict involving tanks, artillery, and air support. Two hundred fifty Soviet troops and one hundred Chinese troops were killed. Neither side sought a full-scale war, and the incident was resolved through diplomatic efforts.

32. Andrei Vlasov (1900–1946) and Stepan Bandera (1909–1959) were commanders of national Russian and Ukrainian units organized by the Nazis during World War II. A former Red Army general, Vlasov commanded the Russian Liberation Army (ROA). Bandera led the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA). Both units were active in fighting Soviet partisans in the German-occupied territories. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 88470, l. 7.

33. GARF, f. R-9401, op. 2, d. 463, l. 223.

34. GARF, f. R-9401, op. 2, d. 463, l. 228.

35. GARF, f. R-9401, op. 2, d. 463, l. 228–229.
36. RGANI, f. 89, per. 18, d. 37, l. 1–2.
37. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 85054, l. 8.
38. GARF, f. R-9401, op. 2, d. 497, l. 224.
39. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 83656, l. 26.
40. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 90588, l. 1.
41. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 93306, l. 2.
42. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 92910, l. 1.
43. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 94759, l. 1.
44. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 4009.
45. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 3370, l. 1.
46. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 4992, l. 109–110.
47. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 6333, l. 1.
48. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 9759, l. 12.
49. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 383.
50. RGANI, f. 89, per. 12, d. 5.

51. Mikhail Gorbachev, when he was first secretary of the Communist Party and president of the USSR (1985–1991), used the term *perestroika* (literally, “re-building”) to describe proposed economic and governmental reforms to overcome inflation and low productivity. The policies included requiring state industries to finance themselves, permitting citizens to lease land and to form cooperative businesses, and opening the way for foreign investment.

52. This was Lenin’s slogan in mid-1917, before the Bolsheviks took power.

53. The National-Patriotic Front “Pamiat’ [Memory]” is a Russian nationalist organization that was formed by national socialists and monarchists in 1985.

54. RGANI, f. 89, per. 12, d. 5, l. 21–22.

55. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 86145, l. 9–10.

56. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 80462, l. 32 ob.–33.

57. The author of the leaflet was V. A. Ignatiev (b. 1924), who served as a weigher at the Pmossa train station. Another of his leaflets was found in a ballot box on February 22, 1953 (see document 44). On May 7, 1953, Ignatiev was sentenced to ten years’ imprisonment.

58. The document is reproduced from the oversight resolution by the prosecutor of the Department for Special Cases of the Procuracy of the USSR, composed on December 31, 1954.

59. On April 7, 1953, N. M. Shalov (b. 1933), a Komsomol member and a student, was sentenced to ten years’ imprisonment for writing this leaflet. Shalov appealed the sentence, denying his guilt. An expert evaluation was conducted as part of the review of his case; it did not confirm Shalov’s authorship. On September 19, 1953, he was released, and his case was closed.

60. The document is reproduced from a letter from the acting prosecutor of the Kursk region to the deputy head of the Department for Special Cases of the Procuracy of the USSR, composed on September 3, 1953.

61. On the authorship of the leaflet, see note 57. See also document 42.

62. The document is reproduced from the oversight resolution by the prosecutor of the Department for Special Cases of the Procuracy of the USSR, composed on December 31, 1954.

63. Similar leaflets were found in ballot boxes in the same location on February 25, 1951; December 24, 1951; and January 23, 1953. Their author was E. Ya. Kendra (b. 1914), a mechanic. On June 11, 1953, he was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment.

64. The reference is to Estonian families that had been deported to Siberia.

65. The document is reproduced from the oversight resolution by the assistant to the prosecutor of the Estonian Republic, composed on August 27, 1953.

66. The author of the leaflet was G. G. Kazachenko (b. 1926), a worker at the Yaroslavl car factory. On September 11, 1954, Kazachenko was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment.

67. Georgy Malenkov (1902–1988) was a prominent state official, a member of the Politburo, and Soviet premier from 1953 to 1955. In 1957, Malenkov was expelled from the Party and became the director of a power plant in Kazakhstan.

68. Stalin's wife, Nadezhda Allilueva, committed suicide in 1932, but the cause of her death was not announced, and popular rumor often represented Stalin as her murderer.

69. The document is reproduced from the oversight resolution by the prosecutor of the Department for Special Cases of the Procuracy of the USSR, composed on January 14, 1956.

70. The author of the message was A. N. Kotov (b. 1909), a miner. In 1946, he had placed an anonymous letter in a ballot box. On April 10, 1957, he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

71. The document is reproduced from the oversight resolution by the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR, composed on May 22, 1958.

72. The author of the messages was A. L. Kuznetsov (b. 1927), a factory worker. In 1951–1955, he also wrote anti-Soviet banners and posted them in public places. On April 9, 1957, he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

73. The document is reproduced from the special report of the deputy prosecutor of Leningrad to the deputy chief prosecutor of the USSR and the prosecutor of the RSFSR on A. L. Kuznetsov's arrest, composed on January 21, 1957.

74. The author of the note was I. F. Shustov (b. 1911), a foreman at a knitting mill. Shustov also wrote anti-Soviet messages on ballots in February 1955 and March 1957. On July 17, 1957, he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

75. The document is reproduced from the special report of the deputy prosecutor of Moscow to the deputy chief prosecutor of the USSR on I. F. Shustov's arrest, composed on May 15, 1957.

76. The author of the note was A. M. Krasnov (b. 1920), who worked as a prison warden. Along with the note, he also dropped a sheet of paper with anti-Soviet poetry into a ballot box. On May 9, 1955, he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

77. The author of the leaflet was S. D. Babenko (b. 1898), a miner. On July 13, 1957, he was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment.

78. The document is reproduced from a special report of the deputy prosecutor of the Kamensky region to the deputy chief prosecutor of the USSR and the prosecutor of the RSFSR on S. D. Babenko's arrest, composed on May 6, 1957.

79. The author of the note was G. I. Ronzhin (b. 1904), a design engineer at a



factory. On January 8, 1958, he was sentenced to six years' imprisonment for this note and for anti-Soviet conversations.

80. The identity of Mudrov—probably a local official—is not known.

81. The document is reproduced from the oversight resolution of the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR, composed on February 29, 1960.

82. The author of the leaflet was V. A. Rukavishnikov (b. 1923), who worked as a cooper. On November 2, 1957, he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

83. The author of the note was V. A. Anushkevich (b. 1934), who had no steady employment. On June 20, 1957, he was sentenced to four years' imprisonment.

84. The document is reproduced from the oversight resolution of the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of Belorussia, composed on April 2, 1958.

85. The author of the message was M. I. Berman (b. 1894), who worked as a pharmacist. He also wrote leaflets and left notes on ballots in 1947 and 1950 and on April 7, 1957. In 1957, he threw a leaflet on the street. The leaflet stated, "Get your ballot! Strike everything out and drop it in the ballot box!—The Union for the Struggle for Man's Liberation." GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 88331, l. 26. On December 23, 1957, he was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment.

86. The document is reproduced from the special report from the deputy head of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of Ukraine to the deputy head of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR on the case of M. I. Berman that was sent on December 21, 1961.

87. The author of the note was P. T. Timofeev (b. 1909), a college instructor. On June 20, 1957, he was sentenced to four years' imprisonment.

88. The content of Khrushchev's speech at the Twentieth Party Congress was disclosed in a secret letter to the Central Committee, which was read only at closed Party meetings (meetings that only Party members could attend). Not until four months later, in June 1956, did Soviet newspapers publish the Central Committee resolution: "On Resisting the Cult of Personality and Its Consequences."

89. The document is reproduced from a reference by the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR, composed on August 29, 1957.

90. The author of the message was V. L. Zhukov (b. 1927), who worked as a design engineer at a factory. On January 27, 1958, he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

91. The author of the message was N. A. Golubkov (b. 1933), who worked as a factory inspector. In testimony given during the investigation, he explained his action: "In Khrushchev's speeches, as it seemed to me then, we glorified our rocket too much, and I thought that the more we talk like this, the more furious our enemies get, and I thought that they would arm themselves even further, and that's why I thought that it would be harder for us to beat capitalism." GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 83717, l. 2 ob. On July 14, 1958, he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

92. The document is reproduced from a reference by the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR, composed on June 23, 1958.

93. The author of the message was N. M. Kuchumov (b. 1926), who worked as a carpenter at a building and installation plant. On August 28, 1958, he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment for this message on a ballot and for anti-Soviet statements made in conversations and correspondence with his brother, who was also convicted as part of the same case.

94. The document is reproduced from an oversight resolution by the prosecutor of the RSFSR that was composed on December 25, 1958.

95. The author of the leaflets was V. N. Kataikov (b. 1939), who was without either a fixed place of residence or a fixed place of employment. On June 7, 1958, he was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment.

96. Pyotr Pospelov (1898–1979) was a prominent Party official and academic who served as the editor of *Pravda* and director of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism. Pospelov was a strong supporter of Khrushchev and headed the commission that uncovered many of the documents used in the secret speech.

97. The document is reproduced from a special report from the transport prosecutor of the procuracy of the Severnaia railroad to the chief prosecutor of the transport procuracy of the USSR on V. N. Kataikov's arrest; it was composed on March 24, 1958.

98. The author of the message was G. A. Totsky (b. 1924), who worked as a mechanic. On October 17, 1958, he was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment for his message on the ballot and for anti-Soviet conversations and jokes.

99. The document is reproduced from an oversight resolution of the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR, composed on April 4, 1959.

100. The author of the leaflet was G. I. Ivanov (b. 1927), who worked as a collective farmer. On March 31, 1959, he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

101. The Russian word used for "authorized" comes from bureaucratic language and usually refers to the authorization of orders or decrees.

102. The document is reproduced from a reference by the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR that was composed on August 29, 1959.

103. The author of the leaflet was V. G. Plisko (b. 1920), a Party member, who worked as the captain of a motor ship. On February 18, 1959, he was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. Plisko was rehabilitated in 1990.

104. The document is reproduced from an oversight resolution by the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR that was composed on November 26, 1959.

105. The author of the leaflet was V. M. Shiriaev (b. 1918), who had a criminal record and was unemployed. On October 8, 1959, he was sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

106. The document is reproduced from an oversight resolution by the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the RSFSR that was composed on December 22, 1961.

107. The author of the message was P. A. Krasilnikov (b. 1935), who had a criminal record and was a worker at a factory that produced mailboxes. On May 22, 1959, he was sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

108. The document is reproduced from a reference by the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR that was composed on February 6, 1960.

109. The author of the message was K. V. Enin, who was born in 1915 to a family of kulaks. He was exiled to the Krasnoirsk region and worked as a miner. Enin also dropped a leaflet with the same text into a ballot box on March 18, 1962, when the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR were held. Earlier, in February 1959, he had dropped two letters into a box for notes during the question-and-answer session of a lecture at a steelworkers' recreation center. The letters said, "You should make the elections free, without any guards or forcing people to vote; now you force people to vote against their will, when the people don't want to vote for Communist Fascists. . . . I am sure that there isn't one person who would vote for the Soviet state. . . . You, comrade, and I are of one blood, but why did you sign up to be a Communist, an evil Fascist, just listen to the twenty-first Party congress, listen to what they're saying, it's nothing but lies and propaganda, how disgusting it is, it's not good for the Russian people. . . . Shame on you, you Communist Fascists, can't you see that you are traitors to the Russian people, you scum, whores, bastards, robbers, you've robbed the Russian people." On July 3, 1962, Enin was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

110. The document is reproduced from a special report from the prosecutor of the Krasnoirsk region to the prosecutor of the RSFSR and to the deputy head of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR on K. V. Enin's arrest; it was sent April 29, 1962.

111. The author of the leaflet was B. I. Loskutov (b. 1917), a Party member, who served as chairman of a collective farm. On September 19, 1962, he was sentenced to four years' imprisonment. On September 16, 1965, he was rehabilitated.

112. In the 1950s, Communist China began to break from the Soviet model of socioeconomic development to pursue its own policies and interpretations of Marxism-Leninism. As the Sino-Soviet split grew, Albania sided with China, leading to tensions and the end of its diplomatic relations with the USSR in 1961. Relations were restored after the Sino-Albanian split in 1970.

113. The document is reproduced from an oversight resolution of the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR that was composed on September 23, 1963.

114. The author of the leaflet was N. A. Tsarevsky (b. 1910), a Party member, who worked as a manager of a bakery. On November 30, 1963, he was sentenced to four years' imprisonment.

115. The document is reproduced from an oversight resolution of the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR that was composed on March 30, 1966.

116. The author of the message was A. L. Avakov (b. 1941), a mechanic, who had a criminal record. In addition to messages on ballots, at the end of 1968 and the beginning of 1969, Avakov also sent anonymous letters to Brezhnev, U.S. president Nixon, and the editors of Soviet newspapers. In his letters, he ex-

pressed his outrage over the invasion of Czechoslovakia and the violation of the Soviet Constitution. On August 12, 1969, he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

117. The document is reproduced from a special report from the prosecutor of the Khabarovsk region to the prosecutor of the RSFSR and the chief prosecutor of the USSR that was sent on May 27, 1969.

118. More than three copies of these leaflets were distributed. Their authors were not found.

#### CHAPTER 5. LONE PROTESTERS

1. See GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 73915.

2. Camps that were part of the Gulag system were called correctional labor camps.

3. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 85691.

4. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 74081.

5. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 74309.

6. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 81175.

7. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 80330.

8. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 83214.

9. Now called Nizhny Novgorod.

10. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 81373.

11. Georgy Dimitrov (1882–1949), a Bulgarian Communist leader, was premier of Bulgaria from 1946 until his death in 1949.

12. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 84089.

13. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 81537.

14. The word “pretender” (*samozvanets*) is a reference to the Time of Troubles (1598–1613), when several men sought the throne by claiming that they were Ivan the Terrible's dead son, Dmitry.

15. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 79490.

16. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 79801.

17. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 80650.

18. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 83864.

19. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 83181.

20. Stalinabad was the capital of the Tajik Republic. In 1961, it resumed its earlier name of Dushanbe as part of Khrushchev's de-Stalinization initiative.

21. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 85266.

22. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 87240.

23. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 88060.

24. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 81574.

25. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 83716.

26. Now called Odesa.

27. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 80499.

28. Now called Mykolaiv.

29. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 80326.

30. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 86811.

31. Under Catherine the Great, a large population of German immigrants set-

tled along the Volga River. During World War II, this population was deported to Kazakhstan and the Altai region.

32. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 85098.

33. The Arbat is a famous pedestrian street in central Moscow. The surrounding neighborhood has been home to many artists and writers, including the bard singer Bulat Okudzhava.

34. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 83970.

35. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 91925.

36. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 94575. Soviet collective farms had names, but not of prophets or religious figures. As an additional provocation, Khadzhinov used the old term for an agricultural community (*obshchina*) rather than the term for a collective farm (*kolkhoz*).

37. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 94018.

38. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 94321.

39. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 2504.

40. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 3670.

41. On August 21, 1968, the Red Army and forces from four Warsaw Pact countries invaded Czechoslovakia and deposed First Secretary Alexander Dubček with his program of “socialism with a human face, which deviated from the Soviet model. The reforms permitted freedom of the press and some private enterprise.

42. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 4410.

43. Article 58-10 is entitled “Anti-Soviet and counterrevolutionary propaganda and agitation.”

44. S. S. Zakrevsky (b. 1910), a worker at a state farm in the Dzhabul region, had previously been convicted of treason under Article 58-1a of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR. On February 11, 1957, Zakrevsky was sentenced to eight years’ imprisonment.

45. On June 1, 1962, prices for a number of foods, such as butter, milk, and meat, were raised, giving rise to major protests in Novocherkassk on June 1–3.

46. B. P. Karpov (b. 1935), a factory worker, lived in Vyborg. He was convicted twice for petty hooliganism. After the October Revolution, the polite title of “citizen” became derogatory. The title “comrade” was used for Party members and other loyal members of society.

#### CHAPTER 6. LEAFLETS AND ANONYMOUS LETTERS

1. RGANI, f. 89, per. 6, d. 28, l. 1–2.

2. RGANI, f. 89, per. 51, d. 3, l. 7.

3. RGANI, f. 89, per. 51, d. 3, l. 2.

4. The occupational classifications used do not follow strictly those used in the KGB reports. For a detailed discussion see V. A. Kozlov and S. V. Mironenko, *Kramola* (Moscow: Materik, 2005), pp. 231–232n. The category of “people without fixed occupation” includes the rare surviving individual farmers (all other persons working in agriculture are in the category of collective and state farm workers) as well as homeless people, beggars, prisoners who had served their time, housewives, and artisans working out of their homes. The category of “other” in-

cludes persons serving in the armed forces, high-ranking administrators, and ministers of religion.

5. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 83329.

6. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 93165.

7. P. N. Yarushevich (b. 1899) worked as an accountant in a labor camp in the Sverdlovsk region. On May 23, 1953, he was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment.

8. S. F. Levin (b. 1916), a university graduate, was a section head in the chief mechanic's department at the Cheliabinsk Tractor Factory. In April 1953, he wrote a leaflet and posted it in the bathroom used by the factory's administration. In March 1956, he sent an anonymous letter to the Central Committee (see document 77). On May 31, 1957, he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

9. Here the word "chauvinism" means aggressive Russian nationalism.

10. On March 31, 1953, nearly a month after Stalin's death, Beria and the Presidium dropped all charges in the Doctors' Plot and admitted that the evidence had been fabricated.

11. Arkady Averchenko (1881–1925) was a prominent satirist and editor of the humor journal *New Satiricon* (*Novyi satirikon*), which was declared to be anti-Soviet in 1918 and closed. On several occasions, Lenin sarcastically praised Averchenko's work, and some mistook this for genuine praise.

12. The letter was written by P. M. Chuvakov (b. 1910), who worked as a mechanic in Moscow. On July 18, 1957, he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

13. According to the government, there were no unemployed in the Soviet Union, for unemployment had been "liquidated" at the beginning of the 1930s.

14. Machines cannot, of course, be literally "dekulakized," that is, expropriated as exploiters, as was the fate of prosperous peasants during collectivization in the early 1930s.

15. After collectivization, tractors and other mechanized farm equipment were kept in machine-tractor stations (MTS).

16. On July 3, 1941, Stalin made his first address to the Soviet people after the Nazi invasion of June 22. The speech began with the words: "Comrades! Citizens! Brothers and sisters! Fighters in the army and the navy! I am speaking to you, my friends."

17. V. I. Savin (b. 1933), who had two previous convictions for petty theft and hooliganism no fixed place of residence or fixed occupation, was sentenced by the Kirov regional court to seven years imprisonment on July 28, 1955.

18. Beginning in 1932, members of the Communist Youth League (Komsomol) were mobilized to build a new city called Komsomolsk-on-Amur. Most of the construction was done by convict labor, but the mobilization of six thousand energetic youths was widely publicized. Nearly half of the first delegation of nine hundred youths did not survive the first winter.

19. Turkmen Republic. On October 6, 1948, there was a massive earthquake near Ashkhabad. Many buildings were destroyed, as were roads and rail lines, necessitating a massive airlift of relief supplies. More than six thousand people were injured.

20. M. I. Dudchenko (b. 1919) served in border troops, then worked as a mer-

chandise specialist in Rostov-on-Don from 1940 to 1954. He was a Party member beginning in 1943. On February 22, 1957, he was sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

21. On August 7, 1955, Premier Bulganin hosted a party for foreign ambassadors and their families at his country home outside Moscow. Members of the Soviet elite were present, including the Presidium members Khrushchev and Molotov; Marshal Zhukov; and performers from the Bolshoi theater.

22. This line come from a "Song before Death" (1906) by Vladimir Tan (Bogoraz). The poem is about a revolutionary forced to dig his own grave before being executed.

23. Vladimir Bonch-Bruевич (1873–1955) was a prominent government official and the chief administrator of the Council of People's Commissars. In 1918, Lenin reprimanded Bruевич for raising Lenin's salary from five hundred to eight hundred rubles per month.

24. Criticism and self-criticism (*kritika i samokritika*) were Soviet cultural rituals. Properly accepting the critiques of one's superiors and engaging in self-criticism were necessary demonstrations of one's loyalty to the Soviet system.

25. Nikolai Voznesensky (1903–1950) was a Soviet political figure and head of the State Planning Committee (Gosplan) during World War II. A close associate of Andrei Zhdanov, Voznesensky was charged with treason and executed during the purge of the Leningrad Party apparatus in 1950.

26. Thomas Malthus (1766–1834) is commonly known for his argument that unchecked reproduction inevitably leads to overpopulation and famine.

27. *Pravda* means "truth."

28. F. F. Abrosimov (b. 1900), a Party member since 1946, worked as the manager of a section of a factory in Serpukhov. On January 24, 1957, the Moscow regional court sentenced him to five years' imprisonment.

29. S. I. Osipov (b. 1910), a university graduate and a junior researcher at the Leningrad Geophysical Institute, was a Party member from 1931 to 1940, but was expelled for losing his Party membership card. On January 16, 1957, Osipov was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment.

30. Valentin Ovechkin (1906–1968) was the author of books about collective farms and village life. In 1954, during the second congress of the Writers' Union of the USSR, he challenged official claims that collective farms were prospering.

31. Viktor Abakumov (1894–1954) was an important figure in the Soviet secret police. From 1943–1946 he was the head of Soviet Counterintelligence (SMERSH). From 1946 to 1951, Abakumov served as head of the Ministry of State Security (MGB). He was shot in 1954 for his role in fabricating cases against Party leaders in Leningrad in 1949–1950 (the so-called Leningrad Affair).

32. Mikhail Sholokhov (1905–1984), who received a Nobel Prize for Literature in 1965, was a Soviet writer. His best-known work is *Quiet Flows the Don* (1934).

33. Presumably the composer Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953).

34. B. V. Krylov (b. 1933) worked, prior to his arrest, as a heating engineer for a complex of enterprises called Energoproekt. He had previously been convicted by the Soviet Military Tribunal and released under the amnesty.

35. E. Ya. Shatov (b. 1897) held a temporary position as an artist for the State Publishing House of Educational and Pedagogical Literature.

36. Shatov sent five leaflets by mail. Three leaflets were addressed to the chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, Kliment Voroshilov; the secretary of the Party committee of the Moscow Likhachev Automobile Factory; and to a private individual. The remaining two leaflets were unaddressed.

37. Article 58-10, part 1, concerns anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda.

38. In another document in Shatov's oversight record, these lines are cited in full: "The country is ruled by the bigwig Khrushchev/And that good-for-nothing Furtseva, too." GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 76978, l. 1. Ekaterina Furtseva (1910–1974), the first female member of the Presidium and the minister of culture from 1962–1974, was popularly rumored to be Khrushchev's mistress.

39. P. I. Golovanov (b. 1901), a Party member from 1940, was a university graduate and worked as a lecturer at the Leningrad Technological Institute. On April 11, 1957, he was sentenced to four years' imprisonment.

40. During World War II, the Walther PPK semiautomatic pistol was issued to Nazi officials. It was a popular trophy for Soviet soldiers after the war, for it was the weapon that Hitler had used to commit suicide.

41. In Russia, World War II is known as the Great Patriotic War (1941–1945). Many soldiers were not demobilized until a year after the official end of the war.

42. The letter was written by G. N. Pushkarev (b. 1914), a worker at a cement plant in the Stalino region (Ukraine). On June 22, 1957, he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment for writing eight anonymous letters to various administrative offices.

43. John Foster Dulles (1888–1959) served as U.S. secretary of state under President Eisenhower from 1953 to 1959.

44. In 1944, Khrushchev moved onto the estate of a pre-revolutionary pharmaceutical manufacturer. The grounds contained lavish gardens, ponds, statues, an experimental farm, and a zoo.

45. In 1958, the machine-tractor stations (MTS) were disbanded, and collective farms purchased equipment from the stations for 17 percent of the original cost of production.

46. After World War II, approximately 450,000 Soviet citizens, mostly Balts and Ukrainians, refused to return to the Soviet Union. In 1955, Premier Bulganin demanded the return of 100,000 Soviet citizens from West Germany to counter requests for the return of German prisoners of war in Soviet captivity.

47. In another anonymous letter, Pushkarev expresses his outrage about the introduction of the child tax. This tax was imposed on single and childless citizens of the USSR beginning in 1941; from 1944 on, it was also collected from families with fewer than three children.

48. A. A. Latyshev, born in the town of Dmitrov (Moscow region) in 1942, was a Komsomol member and an eighth-grade student.

49. The meaning of the abbreviation is not specified anywhere in the case file; the two last letters probably stood for "Organization of Revolutionaries."

50. In the 1920s, the Soviet government divided peasants into three classes; poor peasants, middle peasants, and kulaks, based on relative affluence, use of hired labor, and other factors.

51. The document reads *urozhenka*, but does not indicate her place of birth.



52. Article 53 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR addresses the possibility of conditional punishment.

53. I. I. Panov (b. 1903), a Party member since 1932, was the manager of the Taganskaia prison garage in Moscow. On May 23, 1958, he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

54. V. G. Petrianov (b. 1899) worked as the head of the supply department of a bed factory in the Gorky region. He was not a Party member. On July 5, 1957, he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

55. That is, the sausage was made out of horse meat.

56. Khrushchev and Bulganin traveled to India and Burma between November 18 and December 14, 1955.

57. Certain goods were scarce in the USSR. When they were being sold in stores, people said that they were being "given out"—that is, were available.

58. A. E. Drogaitsev (b. 1906), a Party member, served as the assistant manager of the Stalinogorskugol complex of enterprises. On January 19, 1959, he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

59. In 1923, while studying in a worker's training program, Khrushchev was briefly associated with Trofim Kharechko, a member of Trotsky's opposition. Khrushchev later renounced his "Trotskyite wavering."

60. P. S. Kuzmin (b. 1908), a Chuvash, worked as an instructor in a military unit in Perm. A Party member since 1938, he was awarded the Red Star medal as well as military medals for distinguished service and for victory over Germany. On February 3, 1958, he was sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

61. These railroad cars had been converted into accommodations. After World War II, Soviet authorities were slow to rebuild housing, and thousands of families lived in makeshift quarters until the late 1950s.

62. The Russian editors omitted the last names.

63. Now called Perm.

64. This is not a genuine Lenin quotation.

65. The case file does not give the full name of the organization, which may be *Osobyi komitet rabochikh i krestian* (Special Committee of Workers and Peasants).

66. I. I. Bagretsov (b. 1920), worked as a layout designer in a printing house in Leningrad. On April 9, 1958, he was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment.

67. RSP probably stands for *Rabochaia sotsialisticheskaia partiia* (Workers' Socialist Party).

68. N. I. Kharkov (b. 1929), a collective farmer, lived in the village of Kovchin in the Chernigov district of the Chernigov region (Ukraine). On February 5, 1964, he was sentenced to four years' imprisonment.

69. *Pan* is the Polish word for "sir." In Soviet speech, *pan* typically refers to pre-revolutionary or foreign gentry and landowners.

70. The summary of the second leaflet was added to the copy of the first one by an employee of the Procuracy.

71. The authors of the leaflets were never found. The deputy prosecutor probably meant to write "measures are being taken to determine the authors" instead of "to get rid of."

72. G. I. Ermakov (b. 1931), a university graduate, worked as a senior engineer

at the Central Navy Research Institute in Leningrad. On July 9, 1974, he was sentenced to four years' imprisonment.

73. The Fifth Congress of Soviet Writers took place between June 29 and July 2, 1971.

74. Alexander Radishchev (1749–1802) was a prominent author and social critic. His best-known work, *Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow* (1790) is a vivid condemnation of serfdom and corruption among the gentry.

75. Alexander Matrosov (1924–1943) was an infantry soldier during World War II who threw himself onto a German machine gun that was preventing his unit from advancing.

76. *The Spark* (*Iskra*) was the title of the newspaper that Lenin cofounded and helped publish when he lived in Germany.

77. Viktor Ivanov's painting *Lenin at a Kremlin Subbotnik* was famous in the USSR. It depicts Lenin carrying a log, along with several other participants of an organized volunteer event.

78. Ermakov is referring to Brezhnev.

79. Deutsche Welle (literally, "German wave") is an international radio news service that has been broadcasting from Germany since May 1953.

#### CHAPTER 7. AUTHORS AND THEIR SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF LIFE

1. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 42766, l. 16.

2. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 42766, l. 16–17.

3. Skitalets, the family name that Pavlovsky gives to his protagonist, means "wanderer" in Russian.

4. After the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II in 1917, a constituent assembly was formed to establish a new government. In January 1918, after the national elections in November 1917, in which the Socialist Revolutionary Party won the largest number of votes, the assembly gathered for several hours before being disbanded by the Bolsheviks. Many in the Soviet Union continued to view the assembly as the only body able to form a legitimate Russian government.

5. A degree promulgated by Catherine the Great in 1791 required Jews to live in a territory on the western borderlands of the Russian empire in an area called the Pale of Settlement. Soviet citizens were issued an internal passport that listed their place of registration. Their ability to move, particularly to large urban areas, was limited.

6. *Easy Money* (1869) is a play by Alexander Ostrovsky. *The Land* (*La Terre*, 1887) is a play by Émile Zola.

7. Alfred Fouillée (1838–1912) was a French philosopher and sociologist who devoted much of his career to exploring how ideas relate to actions.

8. Alexander Bogdanov (1873–1928) was a philosopher and revolutionary whose ideas were strongly criticized by Lenin in 1911, leading him to break with the Bolshevik Party. Anatoly Lunacharsky (1875–1933), a Bolshevik who was the first commissar of enlightenment after 1917, had been close to Bogdanov before the Revolution and shared his theoretical interest in proletarian culture.

9. In 1920, during the Civil War, Alexander Antonov led a peasant uprising

against the Bolsheviks in Tambov region. A former Socialist Revolutionary, Antonov organized an army of nearly fifty thousand men, which the Bolsheviks referred to as “Antonov’s gangs” or “kulak bandits.” Using brutal measures, the Red Army brought an end to the rebellion in 1922.

10. Pyotr Lavrov (1823–1900) was a prominent populist philosopher. In his “Social Revolution and the Tasks of Morality” (1884), Lavrov argued that equality and solidarity are required to develop social morality.

11. *Komsomolka* refers to a female member of the Komsomol. It would have been an insulting name to call a young man.

12. GARF f. R-8131 op. 31, d. 86559, l. 47.

13. GARF f. R-8131 op. 31, d. 86559, l. 20–38 ob.

14. Here “revisionism” refers to the belief that Stalinism was a deviation from true Marxism-Leninism. After Khrushchev’s reforms, China and Albania became the leading centers of anti-revisionist Marxism.

15. The phrase “one step forward, two steps back” first appeared in an article published by Lenin in 1904. See V. I. Lenin, “One Step Forward, Two Steps Back (The Crisis in Our Party),” in Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. 7 (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1964), pp. 203–425.

16. Imre Nagy (1896–1958), prime minister of Hungary (1953–1955 and October–November 1956), called for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary and declared Hungary’s neutrality. He was ousted when the Soviet Union invaded in November 1956, and sought protection in the Yugoslav Embassy in Budapest. Promised safe passage by János Kádár, the new prime minister, Nagy left the embassy, only to be arrested by the Soviets and executed.

17. The Virgin Lands were areas of Central Asia that Khrushchev hoped to turn into productive farmland. Sochi is a resort city on the Black Sea coast, famous as the location of Stalin’s vacation home and the vacation homes of other Party officials, who were, according to stereotype, mostly Jews. Ivans are Russians.

18. The English translation is quoted from Stendhal, *The Red and the Black*, trans. Roger Gard (London, 2002), p. 501.

19. In the Soviet Union each state institution was overseen by the Party. Kulmagambetov is naming state institutions and their corresponding Party organizations.

20. Article 70 concerns anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda.

21. Konrad Adenauer (1876–1967) was the first chancellor of West Germany. Enver Hoxha (1908–1985) was the ruler of Albania from 1945 to 1985. Chiang Kai-shek (1887–1975) headed the Nationalist government of the Republic of China from 1928 until 1949, when he fled with the defeated Nationalist forces to Taiwan, where he became president.

22. Aleksei Adzhubei (1924–1993) was the editor in chief of *Izvestiia* from 1959 to 1964.

23. This is probably a reference to the many public fallout shelters built around U.S. cities in 1961 using one hundred million dollars in government funds. A large bunker, the Government Relocation Center, was built in West Virginia, but it did not protect the entire territory of the United States.

24. In the fifteenth century, Prince Dmitry Shemiaka of Galich briefly deposed Prince Vasily II of Moscow, but he was later defeated, then killed by poison. Boris

Godunov was elected to the throne after the death of Tsar Fyodor in 1598. During the Time of Troubles, several men claimed to be Ivan IV's dead son, Dmitry. Ernst Johann von Biron, a German, was regent of the Russian Empire for three weeks in 1740, then tried and exiled to Siberia. Grigory Otrepiev was a monk who claimed to be the dead tsarevich Dmitry.

25. GARF, f. R-8131 op. 31, d. 98922, l. 30, 33. This amount was equal to about seventy-two dollars per month.

26. In court, Kalinov explained that he had called the leaders false because “in the newspapers they write one thing, and then do another.” GARF, f. R-8131 op. 31, d. 98922, l. 31.

27. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 92607, l. 2. An important part of de-Stalinization was the project to replace the Soviet Constitution of 1936. There was much public discussion of the project, but a new constitution was not passed until 1977.

28. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 92607, l. 4–5.

29. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 92607, l. 2.

30. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 92607, between l. 1 and l. 2.

31. Lenin used the term The “commanding heights” to describe those key economic sectors that granted proletarian control of the economy despite the limited private trade and agriculture allowed under the New Economic Policy (NEP).

32. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 92607, l. 40.

33. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 92607, l. 42.

34. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 92607, l. 43.

35. “Man is a wolf to his fellow man.”

#### CHAPTER 8. UNDERGROUND GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

1. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 8176, l. 65.

2. On complete information about anti-Soviet groups that were noted by the Procuracy, see V. A. Kozlov, S. V. Mironenko, O. V. Edelman et al., 58–10. *Nadzornye proizvodstva Prokuratury SSSR. Mart 1953–1991: Annotirovannyi katalog* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnyi fond “Demokratiia,” 1999).

3. Parallels can be drawn between this mode of recruitment and the way earlier revolutionary organizations were formed. The features named here can be found in the Decembrist and pre-Decembrist movements, as well as in informal gatherings of the 1830s and 1840s (such as the clubs of Alexander Herzen, Nikolai Ogaryov, and the Kritsky brothers) and radical student clubs of the 1860s and 1870s. For more on these movements, see V. M. Bokova, *Epokha tainykh obshchestv* (Moscow: Realii, 2003).

4. Center for the Preservation of Documentation of the Moscow Region (Tsentr khraneniia dokumentatsii Moskovskoi oblasti; TsKhDMO), f. 1, op. 46, d. 19, l. 25.

5. The Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP), formed in 1898, split into Bolshevik and Menshevik factions in 1903. The Bolshevik wing of the Party later became the All-Russian Communist Party in 1918 and then the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in 1925.

6. Alexander Fadeev, *The Young Guard: A Novel*, trans. Violet Dutt (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1978).

7. Party-mindedness (*partiinost'*) is a term, first used by Lenin, that describes the practice of submitting one's thoughts and actions to Party goals and ideology.

8. Revolt Pimenov (1931–1990) was a mathematician and political thinker. His first name reflects the trend of giving revolutionary and Party-themed names to children after 1917.

9. Vladimir Mayakovsky (1893–1930) was a revolutionary poet and one of the founders of Russian futurism.

10. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 73957, l. 42. Pimenov wrote the poem, quoted in part here, sometime between 1949 and 1953. It was confiscated during a search in March 1957.

11. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 96551.

12. Hearing rumors the Khrushchev had denounced Stalin in his “secret speech,” residents of Tbilisi protested that act of irreverence and national insult. Demonstrations grew in size and had to be forcibly dispersed by the Red Army. See Vladimir A. Kozlov, *Mass Uprisings in the USSR: Protest and Rebellion in the Post-Stalin Years*, trans. and ed. Elaine McClarnand MacKinnon (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2002), pp. 112–135.

13. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 6590, l. 17–20.

14. The members of this group were sentenced to death. See GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 7642.

15. *The Gadfly* (*Ovod*, 1955) is a film about the illegitimate child of a cardinal, set at the time of the Italian reunification. The score for the film was written by Dmitry Shostakovich.

16. On June 28, 1956, massive protests took place in Poland against the Communist government. The army was used to disperse the crowd, and at least fifty people were killed.

17. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 92669.

18. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 84952.

19. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 83110, l. 39.

20. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 79865, d. 79866, d. 79867, and d. 79867a.

21. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 82571; GARF, f. R-9474, op. 41, d. 3257.

22. *Where to Begin?* (1901), in V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. 5 (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1961), pp. 13–24.

23. *What Is to Be Done?* (1902), in Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. 5, pp. 347–530.

24. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 84174.

25. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 73956 and d. 73957.

26. The original Land and Freedom Party was formed in 1876. Its members hoped to spark a peasant revolution through propaganda and acts of terrorism against landowners and the government.

27. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 42657; GARF, f. R-9474, op. 40, d. 362. On August 14, 1954, Sipratov was rehabilitated.

28. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 71161.

29. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 71422.

30. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 79827.

31. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 81235.

32. On February 4, 1958, a judicial reexamination increased the sentence.

33. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 73956, d. 73957.
34. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 78087.
35. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 88454. On August 27, 1963, Sergeev was granted a pardon by the Presidium of the Supreme Court of Belorussia.
36. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 82550.
37. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 79865, d. 79866, d. 79867, and d. 79867a.
38. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 89296.
39. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 86658.
40. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 83866.
41. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 82912; GARF, f. R-9474, op. 41, d. 3047. On February 17, 1966, the group was rehabilitated by the Supreme Court of the USSR.
42. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 83596.
43. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 83659.
44. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 83498.
45. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 82375.
46. Tsekhmister, Mashkov, and Grigalashvili were students at the Moscow State University. In 1958, they left the university.
47. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 84952.
48. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 32, d. 6590.
49. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 92350. *Nabat* was the name of a Russian populist journal published in Geneva from 1875 to 1881.
50. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 93107.
51. Houses of Culture were spaces where various artistic, literary, and music events took place for the general benefit of the people.
52. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 93900.
53. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 95886; RGANI, f. 2, op. 1, d. 636, l. 113.
54. Like samizdat, sound recordings (*magnitizdat*) were a means of spreading information through unofficial channels.
55. This was a competitor of Radio Liberty sponsored by the Russian émigré organization NTS.
56. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 94153.
57. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 95417.
58. LSCP(b)SU probably stood for *Leninskaia sotsialisticheskaiia* [or: *Lenininsko-Stalinskaia*] *kommunisticheskaiia partiia bol'shevikov Sovetskogo Soiuza* (Leninist Socialist [or: Lenin's and Stalin's] Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of the Soviet Union).
59. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 97735.
60. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 96551.
61. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 81002.
62. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 97416.
63. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 99250; RGANI, f. 89, per. 6, dok. 28, l. 3.
64. Pyotr Leonidovich Kapitsa (1894–1984) was a noted physicist who worked with Ernest Rutherford in Cambridge in the 1920s and returned to the Soviet Union in 1934. It is not known which physicists from his laboratory signed the appeal.
65. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 99976. Article 190-1 concerns “dissemination of known falsehoods that defame the Soviet political and social system,” Ar-

ticle 190-2 concerns defilement of state emblems and flags, and Article 190-3 concerns group actions that disrupted social order.

66. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 1237.

67. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 1684.

68. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 2027.

69. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 3359.

70. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 4123.

71. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 4152.

72. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 3894.

73. The original text uses the English word “intellectuals” (*intellektualy*) rather than the Russian *intelligenty*.

74. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 4601.

75. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 4403.

76. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 4353.

77. Probably a reading group devoted to the works of Alexander Grin (1880–1932), whose adventure stories and tales of heroism were popular among young readers.

78. Evgeniia Ginzburg, *Journey into the Whirlwind*, trans. Paul Stevenson and Max Hayward (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1967); Ginzburg, *Within the Whirlwind*, trans. Ian Boland (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1981).

79. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 4967.

80. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 6332.

81. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 93033.

82. Mednikov appeared as a witness in the case.

83. On November 30, the Supreme Court of the Ukrainian Republic denied the prosecutor’s protest, leaving the verdict unchanged.

84. The Kiev Pechersk Lavra, also known as the Monastery of the Caves, was founded in 1015.

85. The Okhrana was the tsarist secret police.

86. The document is reproduced according to the resolution of the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR on the case of Trofimov, Telnikov, and others, April 17, 1958.

87. In the 1920s, there were purges within the Party based on class. Their purpose was to increase worker and peasant representation.

88. A similar “Party maximum” existed in the 1920s. Its purpose was to keep senior officials’ salaries from rising far above workers’ wages.

89. Efforts to revive Party democracy in the Khrushchev period focused on reviving the vitality of primary Party organizations, the lowest-level Party cells.

90. No Criminal Code of the USSR existed. Each republic of the Soviet Union had a criminal code of its own.

91. Evidently, the authors meant the establishment of an upper limit for the salaries of (nonindustrial) state workers, on an analogy with the old Party maximum (see note 88).

92. Closed stores (*zakrytye magaziny*) were open only to Party and government elites. They offered foreign products and high-quality goods.

93. In Russian, the abbreviation for the group RKPP sounds very similar to the abbreviation for the Russian Communist Party, RKP(b).

94. Ponomaryov was the head of the Artem 2 Glubokaia mine.

95. On February 24, 1962, the head of the Moscow Central Post Office reported to the KGB that while mail was being sorted, one of his employees found a printed anti-Soviet document in a torn envelope. The return address specified the Moscow State University, and the envelope was addressed to the Komsomol committee of the Yuzhuralmash plant in Orsk. The head of the post office also reported that the delivery of this letter and numerous other letters in similar envelopes had been halted. The content of the letters found at the post office turned out to be identical to that of the leaflets distributed in the Polytechnic Museum.

96. One of the leaflets was also sent to the Procuracy of the USSR. On February 26, 1962, it was forwarded to the KGB.

97. In 1962, the Komsomol committee of the Moscow State University reviewed the case of R. P. Bugai, a student in the department of economics who did not report on the leaflets that her acquaintances Muzhenko and Balashov had distributed. L. S. Eremina and E. B. Zhemkova, eds., *Korni travy: Sbornik statei molodykh istorikov* (Moscow: Zven'ia, 1996), p. 118.

98. Later, Balashov escaped from a labor camp in the Mordovian autonomous republic and was reconvicted under Article 188 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR.

99. After their release in December 1970, Fyodorov and Murzhenko were reconvicted, this time of organized anti-Soviet activity and an attempt to hijack an airborne vehicle and were sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 36, d. 5716, l. 16. Fyodorov and Murzhenko were among twelve people who tried to hijack an airplane at the Leningrad airport in the summer of 1970 in order to fly to Israel. This case was widely known in the USSR as the airplane hijackers' case.

100. The document is reproduced from the resolution of the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR on the case of Balashov and others, March 15, 1965.

101. The document is reproduced according to the resolution of the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR on the case of Balashov and others, March 15, 1965.

102. In 1935, Khanzhenkov's father was sentenced to six years' imprisonment under Article 58-10. His crime was to "incorrectly" carry out the task of the Komsomol committee at the Moscow Institute of Railroad Transportation, where he was a student. He had been asked to prepare slogans for the upcoming celebration of the eighteenth anniversary of the October Revolution in November 1935. One of the slogans, "May the spirit of internationalism soar," was seen as erroneous and harmful, and the word "spirit" gave Khanzhenkov's peers cause to call him an idealist. Even pointing out that the slogan was a quotation from Marx did not help him.

103. After the 1953 amnesty, the Khanzhenkov family moved to Minsk. In 1957, the father was rehabilitated.

104. Svetlana Alekseitseva was Khanzhenkov's neighbor and friend. She had been a member of the organization until 1962. She was a witness at the trial.



105. Khanzhenkov and Khrapovitsky gathered unexploded shells left in Minsk after the war and stored them in Alekseitseva's home.

106. This is probably a song about the Gulag.

107. In 1949, Seregin was convicted of stealing 5.5 cubic meters of wood. He was released in 1953 under the amnesty.

108. In September 1963, Vladimir Romanenko sent a letter to the Central Committee in which he criticized certain theses of the new Party program passed at the Twenty-second Party Congress, in 1961. He gave a copy of the letter, with two photographs and an autobiography, to Chzhan-Da-Di, a citizen of China and a student at the Leningrad Institute, to be sent to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. At his trial, Romanenko stated that he had been under the influence of Chinese propaganda literature.

109. On October 14, 1964, the day after Adolf Romanenko was arrested, Khrushchev was removed from his position by those at a special meeting of the Central Committee. The case of the Romanenko brothers may have been closed because of this event. In any case, the closing of the case can be seen as one of the first symptoms of the mitigation of the punitive policies aimed the political opposition.

110. Romanenko is criticizing one of the central points of a new Party program: the transition from the dictatorship of the proletariat to a people's (*obshchenarodnyi*) state.

111. The document is reproduced from the resolution of the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the USSR on the Romanenko case of, December 1, 1964.

112. Kuzin had a previous conviction under an article of the criminal code regarding anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda. After he served his term and before returning to Orel, he spent some time living in his birthplace, the Karelian autonomous republic. There, in 1966 and 1967, he met with acquaintances from the labor camp, M. Molotovsov and L. Garanin, graduates of the Leningrad University philosophy department who had been convicted in 1958 of creating an underground organization. GARF, f. R-8131, op. 31, d. 83990. Kuzin also met with Yu. Fyodorov and A. Murzhenko, members of the Union for the Freedom of the Mind (see the section on the union, introducing documents 121–122, in chapter 8).

113. Telnikov was convicted by the Leningrad city court in 1957 of creating the Union of Revolutionary Leninists at the Leningrad Pedagogical Institute (see the section on the union, introducing documents 116–117, in chapter 8). He was released in 1971, but he was not arraigned because he emigrated that year.

114. *The Chronicle of Current Events* (1963–1983) was a typewritten samizdat journal that documented violations of human rights and served as the most important forum for the human rights movement in the USSR at that time.

115. Initially, V. A. Khaustov (b. 1938), previously convicted in 1967 under Articles 190-3 and 191-1 of paragraph 2 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR, was a paperhanger who worked for a remodeling and repair agency called Zaria. On June 15, 1973, Khaustov's case was separated from the others'.

116. The group decided to distribute the appeal in the form of a leaflet, but never did so. A possible reason is that Khaustov brought copious amounts of samizdat literature from Moscow, including approximately ten issues of *The*

*Chronicle of Current Events*, a photographic copy of Nikolai Berdiaev's book *The Origin of Russian Communism*, a brochure entitled *In Memory of A. E. Kosterin*, leaflets written in defense of Pyotr Grigorenko and Alexander Ginzburg, and the journal *Novyi grad*—all of which may have covered the same material as the group's appeal and rendered it unnecessary.

117. That is, the Constitution of the USSR.

118. The document is reproduced from the resolution of the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the RSFSR on the case of Kuzin and others, June 9, 1975.

119. The document is reproduced from the resolution of the prosecutor of the Department for Oversight of Investigations by State Security of the Procuracy of the RSFSR on the case of Kuzin and others, June 9, 1975.

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## Glossary

**Anti-Party group** Group of three senior members of the Party leadership—Viacheslav Molotov, Lazar Kaganovich, and Georgy Malenkov (with the last-minute support of Dmitry Shepilov)—who in May 1957 attempted unsuccessfully to remove Nikita Khrushchev from his position as head of the Party and the state. Those involved were removed from the leadership and vilified in the press.

**autonomous republic, autonomous region** Republic or region within a soviet socialist republic with a predominant nationality (ethnicity) different from the predominant nationality of the larger republic.

**Bolsheviks** Members of the faction of the Russian Social-Democratic Party that seized power in Russia in 1917. *See also* CPSU; October (Bolshevik) Revolution of 1917.

**Bolshevik Revolution** *See* October (Bolshevik) Revolution of 1917.

**Central Committee** Central decision-making body of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, whose members were elected by national Party congresses.

**chauvinism** Pejorative Soviet term for nationalism, particularly Russian nationalism (which is referred to as “great power chauvinism”).

**Cheka** Soviet security police, 1917–922. The full name (from which the acronym derives) was, in English, Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counterrevolution and Sabotage.

**child tax** Tax imposed on single and childless citizens of the USSR in 1941, extended in 1944 to families with fewer than three children. Also called the bachelor’s tax.

**closed stores (*zakrytye magaziny*)** Stores offering foreign products and high-quality goods to elite members only. They were not open to the public.

**Communism** In Marxist-Leninist theory, the highest form of socialism.

The Party Program of 1961 stated that the Soviet Union would reach the stage of Communism by 1980.

**Constituent Assembly** An assembly popularly elected in November 1917, with the Socialist Revolutionary Party receiving the largest number of votes. The Bolsheviks disbanded the assembly shortly after it convened in January 1918.

**Council of Ministers** Highest government body at the national and the republican level.

**CPSU** Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

**creative intelligentsia** Term used for writers, journalists, scholars, artists, and the like, as opposed to the "technical intelligentsia" (engineers).

**Criminal Code of the RSFSR** Sections of the code having to do with anti-Soviet activity are listed here.

Article 58-10: anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda

Article 58-11: the organization of anti-Soviet groups

Article 70 (introduced in 1966 to replace Article 58-10): anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda

Article 190 (introduced in 1966):

190-1: dissemination of ideas discrediting the Soviet social and political order

190-2: defiling state emblems and flags

190-3: organization of or participation in group actions disrupting the social order.

**cult of personality** Term applied to Stalin's rule by Khrushchev at the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956, implying one man's monopoly and abuse of power. Condemnation of the cult of personality was a key element of de-Stalinization.

**dacha** Country cottage (an elite perquisite).

**dacha capitalism** Term used in the late 1950s in egalitarian criticism of the privileged elite.

**Decembrists** A group of noble officers who unsuccessfully challenged the Imperial regime in 1825. Five leaders were executed, and others were sent into exile in Siberia.

**de-Stalinization** The movement initiated by Khrushchev's criticism of Stalin's "cult of personality" and the excesses at the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956.

**dekulakization** The expropriation of land and the deportation of kulaks (prosperous peasants) associated with collectivization at the beginning of the 1930s.

**Doctors' Plot** Alleged treason and espionage by a group of Kremlin doctors, most of whom were Jewish, announced in January 1953 at the high point of the quasi-official anti-Semitism of Stalin's last years. The charges were dropped immediately after Stalin's death in March 1953.

**Great Patriotic War** Soviet term for the Second World War.

**Great Purges** The term usually used in English for the episode of state terror of 1936–1938 that has come to epitomize Stalinist repression.

**KGB** Soviet security police, 1954–1991.

**Khodynka** Refers to the deaths of more than a thousand people at Khodynka field in Moscow after the crowd gathered to celebrate the coronation of Nicholas II panicked.

**Komsomol** Union of Communist Youth, a Soviet youth organization for fourteen- to twenty-eight-year-olds.

**kulak** Term for prosperous peasant. Bolsheviks saw kulaks as exploiters of poor peasants and as opponents of Soviet power in the 1920s. *See also* dekulakization.

**labor-day (*trudoden'*)** Unit of payment for work on a collective farm based on time worked and the skill level of the job.

**Leningrad** The name of St. Petersburg from 1924 to 1991. St. Petersburg was the capital of Russia in tsarist times.

**Lvov** Ukrainian (sometime Polish) city; now Lviv.

**Mensheviks** Faction of the Russian Social-Democratic Party (later, a party in its own right) opposed to the Bolsheviks in early twentieth century. Banned a few years after the October Revolution.

**MGB** Ministry of State Security of the USSR, 1946–1954; precursor of the KGB.

**MTS** Machine-tractor stations, set up to provide technical support to and political control over the collective farms. Disbanded in 1958.

**MVD** Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR, in charge of regular (not security) police, 1946–1954. With the MGB, one of two successor institutions of the NKVD.

**narodniks** Populist (peasant-oriented, non-Marxist) revolutionaries in the nineteenth century, later organized as the Socialist Revolutionary Party.

**Nazi-Soviet pact** A nonaggression treaty, signed on August 24, 1939 by the Soviet and German foreign ministers, Molotov and Ribbentrop, to which was appended a secret protocol establishing spheres of influence for the two powers. The secret protocol was the basis for German and Soviet occupation of Poland and Soviet occupation of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia in September 1939.

**NKVD** People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR, in charge of security and regular police, 1934–1946.

**NTS (Narodno-trudovoi soiuz)** Russia émigré organization in postwar Europe whose activities included publishing and broadcasting as well as underground and intelligence gathering in the Soviet Union.

**October (Bolshevik) Revolution of 1917** The Bolshevik seizure of power, which inaugurated the Soviet regime; celebrated in November, not Oc-

- tober, starting in 1918, when the Soviet Union adopted the Gregorian calendar. Also called October for short. *See also* Revolution of 1917.
- Party maximum** A cap on Communist officials' salaries in the 1920s, intended to prevent them from rising above the wages of skilled workers.
- perestroika (literally, "rebuilding")** Term used to describe Mikhail Gorbachev's reform program in the late 1980s. It ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.
- Politburo** The highest Party body, elected by the Central Committee.
- prophylactic measures** Official warnings by the KGB to persons at risk of prosecution for anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda.
- Revolution of 1917, Russian Revolution** Two revolutions, or one revolution in two stages: one in February (March, new calendar) and one in October (November, new calendar). In the first, the tsarist regime was overthrown; in the second, the Bolsheviks took power. *See also* October (Bolshevik) Revolution of 1917.
- RSFSR** Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (the largest republic within the USSR).
- samizdat (literally, "self-publication")** Written works that were produced and distributed without official sanction or censorship; usually typewritten and passed from hand to hand.
- Socialist Revolutionary Party, Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs)** A populist political party with an agrarian socialist (non-Marxist) agenda, formed in 1901. The party splintered after the Bolshevik Revolution, with "Left" SRs briefly entering the new Soviet government.
- special settlement (*spetsposelenie*)** Settlements for exiles, who were deprived of political rights, in the Stalin period.
- state loans** "Voluntary" monetary contributions collected from individuals at the workplace; much resented by the contributors.
- Supreme Soviet** Highest legislative body at the national and the republican levels.
- Tallinn** Capital of Estonia, formerly Tallin (in Soviet times) and Reval (until 1918).
- Thaw** Term applied to cultural liberalization of the mid-1950s (from Ilya Ehrenburg's novel of that name).
- Twentieth Party Congress (February 1956)** Site of Khrushchev's Secret Speech denouncing Stalinism and the cult of personality.
- Virgin Lands campaign** A program initiated by Khrushchev in 1954 to bring previously uncultivated lands in the Altai region of the Kazakh Republic, in the RSFSR, under cultivation; also intended to mobilize young people, some hundreds of thousands of whom were recruited from Russia and Ukraine. Despite some early successes, this campaign is often viewed as one of Khrushchev's harebrained schemes.

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