

The Diary of Anatoly S. Chernyaev

1990

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Translated by Anna Melyakova

Edited by Svetlana Savranskaya

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January 1, 1990.

To continue last year's theme: around a month and a half ago, after yet another meeting with a foreign politician, M.S. [Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev] told me, then Shakhnazarov, then Yakovlev: "I have fulfilled my mission!"

It is true. But I do not think that he will want to leave. It is more likely that he will have to become "president," which will bring about another "pause"—people will be looking to see how he will take charge and manage things without the burden of Ligachev, the PB [Politburo], and the CC [Central Committee].

I re-read *The History of Pugachev* after coming back from the dacha (I was still under the spell of *The Squire's Daughter*, which I found on my bed-side table). How simple things were back then! Words meant what they meant, moral norms were indubitable, the Motherland was always right, etc. That is why the language that Pushkin made to correspond with the norms of the time was so clear and simple.

January 2, 1990.

Glancing at my last diary entry, I realized that there was not a word about M.S.' visit to Italy, nor the Pope, nor Malta.

There is absolutely no time to write and, most importantly, I don't know how to telegraphically summarize (like in Blok's diaries!) the essence of my views on current events (although this method leaves a great deal unexplained).

So: we were in Italy on November 24-30th, then Malta—on the ship "Maxim Gorky" from November 30th to December 2nd.

I am used to such trips and they do not particularly excite me personally. I try to avoid formal events (lunches, banquets), and this time I visited only one--at the Prime Minister's at Capitoline. I found myself in the company of such talkative women at the reception (they spoke French) that with the accompaniment of wine I allowed myself to use my French to have a hearty conversation. A propos!

I lived with M.S. at the "Abimelech," plus two secretaries. Not a comfortable setup. As usual, there is a lot of work and commotion, no time to think ponder the essence of things and to reflect.

Again and again we saw the people's fantastically sincere sympathy with Gorbachev, at times multiplied by the Italian temperament. This is not just popularity...

The talks and the signed documents don't seem significant: all of this has already been done before with other countries and so far little of it is being turned into action (for us and for them). The heart of the matter is the change of atmosphere in the general political situation.

I felt this most acutely in Milan. It was some kind of mass hysteria. The cars could barely move through the crowds along the streets. When M.S. stepped out on the La Scala square and started walking to the Municipality, something unbelievable was going on... the crowd was a solid mass, which barely parted to let him take a few steps. Everywhere, in the windows, on the rails, on any protruding surface people were on top of each other. There was a deafening cry of "Gorby! Gorby!" The police was trampled. The security services had a heart attack. Only innate culture prevented people from crushing each other to death.

Later, after M.S.' speech at the Municipality (as he later admitted, he botched the speech because he was in shock and couldn't find the right words) he came out and a group of women broke through to his car. You could tell by their clothes that they were from the high circles of society, the establishment. Utterly hysterical, with tears in their eyes, they threw themselves at the car windows, when the guards tore them away they tried to run back, etc.

What is this? In the past we did not know and could not understand to what terror we subjected Europe with our military might, our 1968, our Afghanistan; and the shock the Europeans felt after we installed the SS-20s. We did not want to know this: we were demonstrating socialism's power. And now Gorby removed this terror. The country now appears to be normal, even unfortunate.

This is it! This is why now Gorbachev is not just the "man of the year" but the "man of the decade." Again and again: with our revolutions we give more to others than to ourselves.

We arrived in **Malta** at night, and again we were met with a pandemonium by the Palace in honor of Gorby's visit.

About Malta—Gorbachev-Bush. A lot has been written on this "event of the century," about everything related to it. Arbatov, who hates expenditures on the naval forces, expressed himself in his sarcastically-Jewish manner: I told you that the naval forces are useless, plus the rightness of "Socialist Realism" (this is regarding the fact that we provided the ship "Maxim Gorky." Initially the plan was to conduct the meetings in turn on the American frigate and our cruiser, but a storm got in the way. We had to conduct the talks on our ship).

Now, getting to the point. Despite the sensational nature of the event, I did not for a second hold my breath in excitement. To me (maybe because I am tired, constantly worried not to forget or miss something) it seemed like a regular, normal affair... M.S. acted like he and Bush were old pals—frank and simple, and openly well-intentioned.

M.S. knows that the negotiations over how many missiles to we cut back on today or tomorrow are not the deciding matter. **The deciding factor is that the USSR and U.S. are no longer enemies. This is the most important thing.** Khrushchev also wanted this, but ideology got in his way. He wanted to win the "war" in favor of socialism and to bury capitalism, without starting a war or spilling a drop of blood.

M.S. does not believe in any ideology. He often says: are we supposed to duel just because we believe in different gods? This is not just a funny metaphor, it is his true conviction.

He knows that nobody will start a war against us. There is no real military threat. We need the army for the superpower prestige, and internally because there is nothing we can do with it right now. It has turned into an organic burden on society. There are more marshals and generals in Moscow alone than in the rest of the world combined! This is a political and social problem. It is fine that Arbatov and “Ogonek” are yelping at Yazov and Akhromeev and tearing at their coattails, they’re in a good spot! But what is it like for Gorbachev with this horde and armada!

In a word, Gorbachev played up the symbolism so beloved by people in the West to do away with the “Soviet threat.” Truly, it is unlikely that anybody believes in it anymore, except for the most unenlightened... For in reality it does not exist while there is Gorbachev and *perestroika*.

Both of them (M.S. and Bush) truly looked “good” together—and gave hope to all of humanity.

I did not fly to Moscow with everybody after Malta, but as agreed beforehand with M.S., I returned to Rome on the invitation of Rubbi-Occhetto and spent the night at our embassy. I spent five days in Italy, walking around the streets and museums, visiting Rubbi and Boffa. More about this later.

About the Pope. “For them” it is another great event, but for us it passed almost without notice. It did not even have an impact on the events in Lvov. However, it takes time to evaluate the consequences of such a meeting. History will be its judge. I was not present during the one-on-one meeting with the Pope (unlike the meeting with Bush), but read the transcript. They spoke like two good Christians, but modern and politicized.

There was a Politburo scheduled for today. On the 31st I was notified in an unusual manner: “Comrade Gorbachev is inviting you...” (as opposed to the usual “such-and-such a date, at such-and-such an hour”). There was an alarm from Yakovlev and Gusenkov that there would be a final “conversation” on who stands for what and with whom.

Shakhnazarov called an hour ago. He was there. Nothing happened. M.S. calmly reviewed the year (like his New Year’s address), there was a bit of discussion; he talked about (Ryzhkov’s) economic program that was approved at the Congress. He said that work should start on day one; stated that 1990 will be the deciding year. If we do not change the situation with supplies for the better, “we have to leave.” He scheduled the Supreme Soviet Presidium for January 4th, and the Supreme Soviet itself for February 15th. But he identified for discussion at the Supreme Soviet only... the tax code! (Again lagging on private property and land).

Then they discussed the topic for the Congress. Medvedev prepared a platform for discussion—85 pages! M.S. proposed to reduce it to 50, some to 40, and Shakhnazarov called out, “20!” “But,” he added, “I was not heard.” (This means my project is completely sidelined!)

Medvedev suggested to develop the theme of “workers private property” for the platform (it is Gorbachev’s device to cover new ideas with old words. This device is sometimes handy, but more often a hindrance).

They discussed what to do with Eastern Europe. M.S. proposed to analyze and project; paying particular attention to the fact that Communists have been removed from power, and in some places sentenced to oblivion. The question is what to do with East European Communist parties. He again complained that, “where we are late, there will be an inevitable outbreak,” even in such economically sound countries as the GDR and Czechoslovakia.

There was a discussion on when he should go to Lithuania. Someone (Shakhnazarov did not say who) suggested to stall it as long as possible. For this is our last chance. If matters follow the same course, it will be a blow to M.S.’ prestige and *perestroika*’s authority. Lukyanov added (and he is right): “The new Communist Party of Lithuania will vehemently defend its decisions. This is the only way to get results at the elections. If it budges, it will be obliterated!” In a word, it is better not to go without Shakhnazarov’s idea, without the proposal to make an agreement between “Lithuania and the USSR,” or it will be a total failure.

That was it. It seems Yakovlev was keeping quiet.

They also talked about Azerbaijan, where the People’s Front practically has the power and where the situation on the Iranian border is becoming more and more dangerous. A breakthrough of women and children is being prepared under the banner of the Great Azerbaijan!

No conclusions were reached.

In a word, M.S. is again acting his role of unifier, pacifier, and adviser.

Dangerous!

January 3, 1990.

I leaning more and more (with my experience, in which my entire life and politics is turned towards Gorbachev) to the idea that until he throws off the image of “a communist who is true to socialist values,” he will not be able to move *perestroika* any further. Society has gone too far from this concept, while the “Party” clings on to it in order to pull it back—to socialism without Stalin and repressions, to “that very one” that was “mostly built.”

Gusenkov told me that M.S. and the team have set out for Novo-Ogarevo to prepare the Plenum (on the pre-congress Platform), which is scheduled for January 29-30th.

It seems that the year 1990 will be the last in my political life... What am I saying—“seems.” It is certain: and the final point will be the Party Congress in October. (How many times have I tried to convince M.S. to convene the Congress as soon as possible—an urgent one to replace the CC!).

Most likely this is the extent of my physical life. I can't remember whether I predicted it already in '89? But now it is more realistic.

January 4, 1990.

This morning I was reading Marquis de Sade. It's an interesting read, even though it's not the first time that I'm turning to these two volumes, bought in Rome 10 years ago. In any case, the enlightenment aspect is obvious and besides it's a historical era! But the passions are still the same.

Voinovich's *Ivankiada* is printed in "Druzhba Nadorov" [Friendship of Nations] No. 12. I'm falling behind the events... At least I have time to think.

My prediction is that we will be saved when *perestroika* becomes routine, when the people will become nationalized, under the condition that the food situation in Russian will improve at least a little bit. But the Union will begin to "contract." The Baltics will become a "negotiated" part of the Union... while Russia will be expanded from within by the Tatars, Bashkir, Yakut, Komi, etc.

January 6, 1990.

It turns out I needn't have written my draft of the Platform. At work I mostly caught up on the information I missed during my illness. M.S. is working in the CC but called me only towards the evening. He says: "I read your 'memo' to the fellows at Volynskoe (all the teams are there right now to prepare materials for the Plenum and for Lithuania). Everybody liked it... Let them work on it, then we'll get together in a narrow circle and finish it up before the Plenum."

He was cheerful and animated. Following my suggestion he cancelled all his meetings before the New Year (Modrow, Gyzi, Assad, Kinnock, Abe, Auren, Delors, Walesa, and somebody else). Then all of a sudden yesterday morning Falin tells me that from a car phone he received instructions to prepare a meeting with Abe for January 15th. (I saw it immediately: Yakovlev's work, he was in Japan recently). I write M.S. a note: what are you doing? How will the others take it when you refuse them?

In the evening, when he called me, I started on this subject again. "It's alright Tolya, he just needs 20 minutes of my time for the TV. You guessed "source" correctly though! (laughing)... As for Kinnock and the others, we'll be fine without them, as long as *perestroika* is alive!" (laughing again)

By the way, some American correspondent managed to get me on the phone last night and persistently kept asking me why M.S. cancelled all the meetings. "Is the internal situation that bad? Or is he ill?!" Today these speculations are already circulating around TASS. It appears the West could not care less that M.S. doesn't have a moment to catch his breath... he has less time and more on his plate than Bush, Thatcher and Mitterrand, who can afford to appear before the press practically every day.

January 21, 1990.

Today is the anniversary of Lenin's death. Unnoticeable.

On January 15th there was a meeting between M.S. and Abe... there were broad hints at the possibility of resolving some "difficult questions" (the islands). Japan is buzzing with guesses and discussions.

M.S. later told me: "They will have to be disappointed in Gorbachev." By the way, Yeltsin was recently in Japan and proposed a reasonable plan (his whole "lecture" there was right on the dot, regrettably... he was also calmer regarding Gorbachev, but pointed correctly at the dangers and weaknesses).

On January 16th there was a meeting with Perez de Cuellar. It was just... polite empty politeness. No matter how hard we try to squeeze some real universalism from the UN, all we've been able to get so far is only symbolic.

Together with Petrovsky, the MFA and Zagladin we prepared a speech for M.S. for the forum on ecology-survival. He presented it on January 19th and I heard he was pleased with himself: foreigners from 83 countries created a "euphoria" for him. This stands in contrast to the meeting with the workers, peasants and the engineer-technical personnel at the Kremlin Palace (18-19th), where he recycled the same tired wordage and he was asked trite and shameless questions by the "representatives" of the working class... they heaped him with outraged questions along the lines of "do you have any idea what's happening in the provinces," and with production?! Why does he need these "meetings" on TV?... They only demonstrate the Center's and his own inability to deal with the economic crisis. Yeltsin predicted that M.S. has enough credit left for less than a year.

Yesterday morning the PB held a secret meeting on Azerbaijan. Ivan Frolov later told me that M.S. is leaning towards convening the Congress in June! So it plays out according to Yeltsin: more and more, M.S. listens only to himself. Last summer, Frolov and I tried to convince him that the Congress should have been held in '89, before the Supreme Soviet, or at least before the Congress of the People's Deputies. He eventually came to this conclusion himself, but again the moment has passed... And his attempts to keep the party are causing him to lose it, while he is left entangled with Ligachev & Co., the Department of Party Organizational Work and other departments, not to mention the obkom [oblast committee] leaders, like the recently expelled Bogomiakov (in Tyumen).

I was not at the forum myself, as I had prompted him to give me and Shakhnazarov an assignment to completely rework the Platform, which he is bringing to the Plenum on January 29-30th and to pre-Congress discussion. The one prepared by Medvedev & Co. over the course of four months and then "attuned" under M.S.' own leadership in Novo-Ogarevo (Yakovlev, Medvedev, Frolov, Boldin and myself) was sickening: 54 pages of muddled soup, with barely discernible thoughts and positions.

So: M.S. asked me twice about the impression I got from his trip to Lithuania. I said: you might have made the process of leaving [the Union] a little more civilized, but you didn't stop it... and the most important thing in this regard is the Plenum—in Lithuania you made public

promises about the Platform, saying it would have everything. But they will not see in it what you promised—regarding the federation, socialism, the Party, and about Stalinism (you called the regime totalitarian for the first time)... i.e. you went much further [in Lithuania] than what is in the Novo-Ogarevo 54-page version. Something has to be done about this.

He says: yes, we came up with some kind of murky product. You know... why don't you and Shakhnazarov go to Volynskoe and make a new version before the PB (January 22). Can you do it? And make it concise and programmatic, not drawn out. I'll be grading you!

Shakh and I withdrew ourselves and worked according to the following method: I edited him, he edited me, then I him again and he me. I re-write, he finishes up. In 72 hours we put together a version that was only half as long. On Friday evening I sent it to M.S. There has been no reaction yet; he's been busy elsewhere... a war has started in Azerbaijan. It's a state of emergency, people are shooting at soldiers, the soldiers started shooting back, there are hundreds of casualties... the People's Front of Azerbaijan has turned to the world community—to save the people from genocide by the Russians, etc. M.S. is in endless meetings, yesterday made a solemn speech on TV. But Baku is raging under different flags, despite the curfew and tanks... By now the main motto is—leave the USSR.

M.S. does not have a political solution, except for the natural responsibility of protecting the people from pogroms, massacres, having Armenians burned in the streets, and the like.

The situation in Lithuania and the events in Azerbaijan have incited demonstrations in Krasnodar, Stavropol, Rostov on the Don, Tuapse, and the Cossack villages and communities in the North Caucasus, where Yazov (the idiot) ordered to call up the reservists. This caused a wave of protests: “No to a new Afghanistan!” “Why must Russian men die because of these Armenians and Azerbaijanis! Let them figure it out themselves, and in the meanwhile they are speculating in our markets!”... etc.

So, under the influence of all of this I remembered Astaf'ev-Rasputin's “concept” (plus, I am reading V. Solovyov's *Russkii vopros* [The Russian Question]) and started leaning towards the idea that the USSR's multinational problem can only be solved through the “Russian question”... Let Russia leave the USSR and let the others “do as they please.” Although, if Ukraine leaves too, for a while we will cease being a “great power.” So what, we'll survive! And we will eventually return this “title” through the revival of Russia. By the way, Yeltsin said that he is running for the RSFSR Supreme Soviet and wants to become its president! I think he will go down this path. As for Gorbachev, he is no longer trusted with this post in Russia. That's how it plays out: Yeltsin will reap the fruit of a great historical change for which everyone—Russia and the whole world—are indebted to Gorbachev.

Yesterday at the CC I was reading up on the events in the world. Eastern Europe is pushing away from us completely and there is nothing we can do... It is becoming more and more evident that the All-European home will get started without us, without the USSR, which for now (!) can exist in its neighborhood!

The Communist Movement is crumbling everywhere.

A new, totally new era is upon us...

We need to move decisively and boldly away from the stereotypes of Leninism, otherwise we will be left on the outskirts of world history. Meanwhile, “fears” from the past still hold Gorbachev by the coattails. It seems that with his instinct and heart he is eager to reach new freedoms, but his reason cannot grasp everything... or he is afraid to “draw conclusions”—political ones.

January 28, 1990.

On Monday there was PB, discussing the “CPSU Platform” composed by Skakh and me and edited by M.S. The level [of discussion] is hopelessly bad. Although Egor did “quiet down” and was not too aggressive, though he did say that he is strongly opposed to “a multiparty system.”

By the way, M.S. picked new secretaries for the PB: Usmanov, Stroev, Girenko, Manaenkov, etc. “Good guys.” But they shouldn’t be above the level of a mid-level oblast committee. Why should they be in the highest echelon? He himself keeps talking about intellectual potential!

Nevertheless on Monday M.S. called together Yakovlev, Medvedev, Frolov, Boldin, Shakhnazarov, and me. He “interpreted” the PB’s outcomes, so Shakhnazarov and I would edit our text accordingly.

We spent the whole day in his office. He did not give up his positions on the multi-party system and private property, but ordered that we make it “more rounded.” He agreed with me that the term “Marxism-Leninism” should not be allowed into the Platform.

The next day Shakhnazarov and I went back to Volynskoe—we had three days to work. Although he assigned the social-economic section to Boldin and Petrakov (a corresponding member, his new adviser), we still had to rework what they sent us.

The work was boisterous and exciting. We pretty much had to rewrite the main parts of the text; not without some Shakhnazarov-Chernyaev conflicts. But I was compromisingly stubborn and even declared to Zhorka—“then we will offer alternative texts: your version and my version.” M.S. laughed about this... Shakhnazarov has a very strong legalistic, jurisprudential “flux,” which separates him from Soviet realities and goes against Gorbachev’s tactics of introducing new (even purely Western) ideas without provoking the mastodons (this is not always good and proper, but on the whole it was this technique that brought success to democratization and *glasnost*).

Yesterday we presented the material to M.S. He went over it and the new draft was sent out to the PB.

Yakovlev appeared at Volynskoe unexpectedly. At first I thought maybe M.S. sent him to manage over us for a bit. Turned out it was “worse...” In strict secrecy he told me that M.S. called him to his office twice, and once even came over to Yakovlev’s office himself. He is

frustrated, anxious, and lonely. Asking what to do with Azerbaijan, Lithuania, the economy, “radicals,” “social-democrats”... and people are on the edge.

What did Yakovlev say he told M.S. (and the latter listened)?

“You have to act. The biggest obstacle to *perestroika* and your entire politics is the Politburo, then the Plenum. There is no need to convene it so often. If you continue to delay taking power, everything will fall apart. In the next couple of weeks, maybe instead of the Supreme Soviet that is scheduled for the middle of February, you should convene a Congress of People’s Deputies and establish presidential power. Let the Congress elect you president.” (By the way, M.S. agreed with this in principle even in Novo-Ogarevo and the idea was even included in the second draft of the Platform, which was at the PB on January 22nd. But there wasn’t enough resolution to do it immediately, without delaying it till May or the fall).

“Thus,” A.N. [Yakovlev] continued, “to concentrate the real, plenipotentiary State power in your hands, removing the Politburo and even the talkative Supreme Soviet from the levers of power.”

“In the next few days before the Plenum, which is now scheduled for February 5-6,” Yakovlev continued, “appear on TV and make a direct appeal to the people, accepting full responsibility for the truly emergency program according the formula: land to the peasants, factories to the workers, real independence for republics, not a Union state, but a union of states, multi-party system and the practical rejection of CPSU’s monopoly, large loans from the West, military reform—get rid of the generals and replace them with Colonels, recall troops from Eastern Europe, liquidate the Ministries, sharply reduce the apparatus—all forms of it, etc. Plus, special emphasis (in the TV speech) on a series of emergency economic measures (in principle—private enterprise; apparently, Slyunkov, who is in opposition to Ryzhkov-Maslyukov, has a preparatory paper on this)... Furthermore: start the process of replacing Ryzhkov. You cannot make any reforms with a Premier who thinks on the level of a factory director, with State Planning that was raised on the methods of the military-industrial complex.”

“And who instead?” M.S. asked Yakovlev.

“There are plenty of people, you just have to take them more boldly, that’s what a revolution is for!”

Yakovlev did not let me know what M.S. agreed with and what he didn’t. M.S. followed his usual course, telling Yakovlev to “go to Volynskoe, lock the doors there and don’t tell anyone a word. Take a couple trusted people with you who know how to write, and prepare a speech for TV, we’ll go from there.”

I responded to Yakovlev: in a word, we are talking about a coup d’Etat here...

“Yes,” A.N. agreed. “And we cannot delay.”

Yakovlev is also very opposed to rescheduling the Party Congress to June. M.S. agreed to this at the meeting of workers and engineer-technical personnel in the Kremlin on January 18-

19th. Yakovlev is against it because the apparatus together with the “working class” will send to the Congress the kind of people who will break the necks of both Gorbachev and *perestroika* too. The Congress will oppose itself to the parliament and we will have chaos... In general, Yakovlev is proposing that the Party is “pushed aside” right now—let it go down the path of the SED and the CPCz, PUWP, i.e. to fall apart or turn into one of the social-democratic parties (Yu. Afanas’ev already created an association of social-democratic parties in Tallinn), etc. A rebellion has indeed started in the party, but as they say, it is ambiguous: the Leningrad affair, Bogomyakov was expelled in Tyumen, in Volgograd it was Kalashnikov. The CC apparatus in Baku expelled Vezirov from the Party. But who is replacing them? Younger and worse people—anti-Gorbachev representatives of the very “working class,” the mythology of which Gorbachev can’t seem to shake.

Gorbachev is hesitating...

Thus, the coming week (the CC Plenum (5-6th), if it’s not cancelled) could be decisive. It could... but most likely will not be. But we really cannot delay any longer.

On Thursday (January 25th) M.S. called us from Volynskoe (Yakovlev, me and Shakhnazarov) to the CC—to discuss **the German problem**. Also present were Ryzhkov, Shevardnadze, Kryuchkov, Falin, Fedorov and Akhromeev. We were there for 4 hours. I proposed to focus on the FRG, since we no longer have any support in the GDR capable of influencing the process. What’s more—to focus particularly on Kohl, not on the SPD, which has turned the whole matter into an object of the election campaign.

As for Kohl (he still holds more to the “theory” of unification within the framework of the pan-European process), he is bound by allies and is more faithful in personal relations with M.S. Also, he understands that he will lose to Brandt-Figel [sic]. I am not opposed to inviting Modrow to Moscow (although this is of little importance, the question of his reception was decided long ago). We should deal with Gyzi, why attach ourselves to a party that will soon practically cease to exist! (Others did not agree). And then, convene “the six players”: the US, Great Britain, France, USSR, plus Kohl and Modrow, i.e. the winners and losers of the war. And come to an agreement... because the German unification process cannot be stopped, but we need to make sure that it takes place with us present and not against it.

Everyone agreed with the “six players.” But they argued that we should use other channels of influence (Shakh suggested focusing on the SPD, Yakovlev supported him). Shevardnadze mostly supported me. Ryzhkov is against “giving everything to Kohl.” Kryuchkov is, as always, for everything that will be accepted. Although he did confirm that the SED no longer exists and that all the GDR’s government structures have collapsed, it is no longer a real state.

Ryzhkov said that the incompatible economies present an obstacle for unification...

As for Fedorov, he argued that nobody wants unification, especially in the FRG! This is our chief expert on Germany!!

M.S. outlined five points for action to orient ourselves:

1. The FRG: Kohl and the SPD.
2. The “six players.”
3. Modrow and the SED (“it is impossible that of 2.5 million party members there is no one to constitute a real force!”)
4. London, Paris—“I might just fly over there, a day per capital!”
5. Akhromeev is to prepare the withdrawal of troops from the GDR. This is more an internal than external problem. There are 300 thousand troops; 100 thousand of them are officers with families. We have to put them somewhere!

February 25, 1990.

Today is the day of the “February revolution of 1990” as declared by Yu. Afanas’ev and his ilk. Its main manifestation is going to take place on Zubovskiy square; outside my window are trucks with Ministry of the Interior troops, between buildings and in courtyards are crowds of plain-clothes militia.

In the last few days they have stirred panic, which probably comes mostly from the law enforcement agencies and the apparatus themselves. All the Jewry is waiting for pogroms and fleeing the country... tens of thousands every month.

There is a wave of meetings around the country leading to the “dispersal” of regional and oblast committees and sweeping resignations of leaders of local significance.

The Moscow demonstrations are also carrying the slogans of “new deputies” and “do away with the Kremlin mafia.” They even wanted to form a human chain around the Kremlin. For a long time M.S. did not react, but then he understood the danger and off it went: statement by the Supreme Soviet, statement by the CC; statement by the government, mobilization of forces... At the last PB there was a special discussion about the 17 thousand internal security forces, protection of the RC (rocket complexes), etc. Mobile security services for elite buildings... The fact of the matter is that fliers were hung around Arbat with a photo of the building on Plotnikov lane, specifying the apartments of PB members Slyun’kov, Medvedev, Zaikov, Biryukova, Shevardnadze...

From the start, the “presidential process” met with resistance from the Supreme Soviet. They barely agreed to include the presidency question on the session’s agenda, but refused to schedule a date for the Congress. Shakhnazarov and I spent a long time preparing a concept of presidential power. Yesterday it was distributed to members of the Supreme Soviet, on Thursday it was discussed at the PB (this requires a special mention). Its discussion by the Supreme Soviet is scheduled for February 27th, at which point they will also schedule a date for the Congress (at the PB M.S. offered March 6-7th). Should the Supreme Soviet not support it, M.S. will be in a position of practically failing.

Three ideas are circulating around (in the Supreme Soviet too):

- A referendum and then election by the whole population. This would mean a long delay.
- Just renaming Gorbachev from Chairman of the Supreme Soviet to President. This is offered by people who are afraid that someone else might slip in instead of M.S.
- To elect the president alternatively through a secret ballot at the Congress.

M.S., who just a little while ago didn't even want to hear the word "president," is for the third option—as the fairest.

Judging by the comments in narrow circles and by the call I got from R.M. [Raisa Maksimovna Gorbacheva] I got the feeling that Gorbachev is ready to leave. He has made his great contribution and now the people to whom he gave freedom are deciding their own fate... however they want and are able to. Although, he is being held back by a feeling of responsibility and the hope that it might still be possible to regulate the process.

At the PB, all members except Ligachev took the floor and spoke "in favor" of presidency. But when the question of the CC Plenum (according to the Charter) came up, E.K. wanted to toss in a dead cat: with his face pale, he violently demanded that the Plenum be convened before the Congress of People's Deputies, so the CC, the Party (CC) nominated a president and presented him to the Congress. He made a speech: "The Party is the only thing we have left, the only thing we can rely on to save everything. If we neglect the party—it will be the end!"

Ryzhkov supported him.

M.S., as always, immediately succumbed to Ligachev; turning red and not understanding the latter's intentions. He started talking about the "role of the party" and with a calendar in hand tried to figure out when the Plenum could be held (elections are taking place in RSFSR and other republics).

Prokofiev (First Secretary of the Moscow City Committee), who was present at the PB, saved the situation (which is strange, judging by the recent anti-Gorbachev Moscow City Committee Plenum). He stood up and said: if the CC Plenum nominates a president—the whole thing will be ruined. The Supreme Soviet will say "so, you cancelled the sixth article of the Constitution but you want to keep everything as it was, retaining the monopoly and the party's power through the president"... and they will bury it...

This sobered people up, including M.S. The Plenum was scheduled for March 11th. But it's not clear whether the Supreme Soviet will agree to March 6-7th as the date for the Congress.

Yakovlev stops by every day, brings me his "reflections," which he has together with M.S. Judging by A.N.'s conclusions, Gorbachev has made up his mind to detach himself from the PB (once again, too late by a year, if not more) and transfer the center of power "to the presidency."

Then why does he gather the PB every week? To let them discuss papers from which a “death sentence” is staring in the faces of the majority of the members.

Yakovlev believes that “they” are already working against him with the army and the KGB. That’s where the panic is coming from, and the pogrom moods (to provoke people to demand an iron fist!) Yakovlev thinks that both Nina Andreeva and the Jew Evseev, who is strung out on anti-Semitism, and Vasiliev (from “Pamiat”) are all paid agents of the KGB (but not Kryuchkov’s; he is manipulated by a team led by the more-or-less decent Chebrikov). A.N. showed me the protocol of Lubyanka’s core party members—it is a program of a Nina Andreeva-type coup, packaged into traditional phrases (demands to M.S.) and “promises” to restore order.

What can M.S. lean on in such a situation? He pushed away the people with empty shelves and disorder; he pushes away *perestroika*-minded Party members by embracing Ligachev; he pushed away the intelligentsia by clear support for Bondarev, Belov, Rasputin; and he pushed away the nationals by not giving them complete freedom or by saving them from each other.

The opportunity has been missed... he should have broken the constitutional norms and convened an emergency Congress of the People’s Deputies immediately after the January Plenum. He should have emphasized the idea that they themselves can decide whether they have gathered in Moscow legally or illegally; and he would have been elected President. Let the left and the right squeal afterwards. But they would have been dealing with the President of the country!

I went to a meeting on Smolenskaya and Zubovskaya streets. There was organization, security, clearly paid “carriers” of banners with slogans. Yu. Afanas’ev declared, when the stream of people coming from the direction of the Park of Culture merged with the others, that 500 thousand people showed up. Visually and from my experience with May Day demonstrations in Red Square, I would say there were around 100 thousand... The main themes were against forcing panic and persecution, which is allegedly organized by the authorities to thwart the rallies; and against the presidency.

Not a single good word was said about M.S. Someone called on him to step back; a certain Kuznetsov called Gorbachev’s entire policy a crime, and the like.

The resolution Yu. Afanas’ev read out was rather “loyal.” The gist of it is to liquidate the “existing order” and replace the people in power.

This begs the analogy: Nicholas II and the Manifesto of 1905. He gave freedom but wanted people to use it at his discretion. It resulted in a rebellion.

Yes, what Afanase’ev & Co. represent is already a party. A party of overthrowing the existing system, a party of demagoguery that is inevitable in a situation like this—it is impossible to get to power without it.

M.S. (to return to my observations at work) is moving things along towards a real multi-party system. Otherwise there couldn't have appeared a note signed by Kruchina and Pavlov (deputy of the CC's Legal Department) regarding the inventory of Party property and preparation to return everything that belongs to the Party-State (ciphered information systems and communications, private phones, the enormous party buildings, security details, services that are excessive for a mere political party, etc). The deadline—two months.

Yakovlev keeps asking me when he should send in his resignation from the PB. I tell him: your resignation will be the final answer to the question posed at the meeting, "Who are you with, Mikhail Sergeevich?" Yakovlev discussed his resignation with M.S., too. At first he was meant to be the vice-president. But even the Supreme Soviet Presidium did not accept this position. This means that the maximum he could be is a member of the president's cabinet... "I am not going to stay in the Party (i.e. in the apparatus, even the highest echelons)," Yakovlev kept telling me.

What else to mention from current events? M.S.'s responses to "Pravda" on the German question. I put them together in one morning. He was looking for me all around town, found me from a car and handed over an assignment. Up until then he wanted to tell "Pravda" only about the troops (195 thousand), but then decided to tell them about the GDR-FRG as well. It was received properly everywhere.

As the same S. Kuznetsov said, "he is a fading star, whose light is still somewhat visible in the West."

The PB discussed the CPSU Charter for six hours and finally came to the conclusion that a lot of new wine has been poured into old skins, but the skins are still very perceptible. Frolov spoke against using the word "democratic"... if someone else had said something like this, M.S. would have ignored it. But in this case he immediately paid attention. Well, even Van'ka comes in useful with his impudence.

Akhromeev spoke at a meeting in the "Wings of Soviets" Palace of Sports in a row with Nina Andreeva, who was giving a report! What does this mean? The President's adviser in an embrace with Nina Andreeva!!! Maybe he is also afraid of being exposed?... Especially if they start on Afghanistan, on SS-20s and such.

Nenashev got a dressing down at the PB on Thursday... State funds (although, they are public!) are being spent on TV that disgraces and discredits the government and the party! Everyone was clamoring. Ryzhkov made a scene: he will not allow his wife to be publicly ridiculed on screen! And if this happens again, he doesn't know what he'll do!

...Nenashev tried to fight back (supported by Medvedev) that TV reflects what goes on in society, it's the mirror...

But they kept telling him: people don't even want to turn on the "black box" anymore, it shows life to be so terrible and hopeless.

And the like. But when it came to figuring out what to do, Frolov's idea about creating a Party channel was not accepted (this would mean that soon other parties would have to be given their own channels too). Nenashev's idea about public channels along with State ones was also rejected. But M.S. first of all forbade the program "7 Days," where analysts gather whatever negativity took place over the course of the week and impose their personal antipathy to *perestroika* on society. Secondly, he was relentless about having a "Russian channel" on channel 2, either entirely or partially. "The channel 'Rossiia,'" he declared, "will be the core, it will set the political and moral tone to everything else." This is a dangerous idea... It means that Yu. Bondarev + Belov + "Pamyat" will have their own outlet on TV... No other way about it.

I cannot quite understand M.S. in this. Unless this is the "straw." Or he expects to save Russia, particularly through elections. But the new RSFSR parliament will most likely start by separating Russia from the USSR—and let all these Armenians and Lithuanians "take a hike"—a burden off our back.

On Friday, Craddock, Thatcher's international adviser (he came with Ambassador Braithwaite), stopped by my office. He was trying to find out whether Gorbachev will last. And against this background—our views on German unification. They are afraid. Madam (Thatcher) the more so than anyone else in Europe... she is afraid that Great Britain will lose its position as a "great power." Her messenger's logic and argumentation are understandable and in essence similar to our own. But they have an alternative: Germany in NATO.

We talked a great deal and excitedly for an hour and a half, and it was natural! When I came to my senses, I didn't even immediately realize that I hadn't been speaking with a "comrade."

March 3, 1990.

Yesterday's PB was very disturbing. M.S. was not in the role of bearer of New Thinking, but in the role of a typical statesman from the past. At first they discussed the February 25th meetings. Ryzhkov started out: a great victory has been held over "them," and we should continue to pressure them in this manner. Kryuchkov referred to the agents: the people finally felt that "we have power," and more in this vein. Finally, Bakatin (Minister of Internal Affairs) threw them all off this track: what victory?! We intimidated the people. Out of fear many of them did not go to the meetings. That's why they did not have a million people, but they could have had it. And in reality, the rally in Moscow gathered more than Kryuchkov's estimate of 70-100 thousand, it was closer to 230-300 thousand. Intimidation created order, but this is not a viable policy. In a month, or on May 1st, they will gather their million. And they will go to the Kremlin, as promised. What then? Shoot them, bring out the batons and armored vehicles against them?! What committee are we going to create in the Supreme Soviet then? This is a mass phenomenon, it is fed by general dissatisfaction and we should not underestimate it. We need a policy with dialogue at the core. We need a "round table." If I am not understanding something correctly, then I should leave my post. But I disagree with what the PB members are saying here.

Bakatin's speech created a deafening impression. Nobody mentioned "victory" after that. But Bakatin himself took a hit and most of all from Gorbachev himself:

- A panicky attitude. This must be the Minister's environment, so he reports it.
- The leaders' slogans are not the public's slogans. There is dissatisfaction, and they are speculating on it.
- The working class has not come out and said its word yet.¹
- The "round table" is nonsense. We have no one to sit down at the table with, and no reason to do so. "They" do not represent anybody. If Bakatin would like, let him conduct a round table with "them."
- (Reads quotes from speeches by Gavrila Popov, Stankevich, Chernichenko, Boncharov, Ryzhov...) "All of these bastards," Gorbachev continues, "are political scoundrels. We can give them no trust and no round tables!"
- "They" all praised the police. Bakatin, you hear how much they like you!
- Now "they" are not just crying out "down with Ligachev" or "down with Gorbachev," they are yelling "down with the CPSU," and the latest "down with the KGB, which was always close to the party."
- They want to trample on everything and leave power lying in the dust, where they would just come and pick it up.

In a word, on the one hand they tried his patience, on the other, it seems he is trying the presidency on for size. Of course, the regional politicians have shown themselves to be complete amateurs and intriguers, but they are not all scoundrels. Gorbachev himself drew Ryzhkov and Stankevich into drafting the concept of presidency. And now they not only took a position that is a 180 degree reversal of what they promised him, but also emerged as the organizers of a public vilification campaign of Gorbachev both at the Supreme Soviet and on the street. They pointed fingers at him, saying this is the one who craves personal power.

At Dezkin's² funeral I got into a conversation with Nemka Korzhavin (one of our major poets, we are friends). "I listened to what was happening at the Supreme Soviet," he said, "What wise-guys, what babblers! They say it all so logically, neatly, and reasonably about what the president should be like and how he should be furnished with laws and procedures. Only they are forgetting that we live in Russia, not England or America."

I added: "and it's foul that they are blaming Gorbachev; dumb that they do not see an opportunity to make real democratic power under Gorbachev, who is by nature against dictatorship and cultism. Precisely under him it would have been possible to develop various procedures and lay the foundations of necessary institutions of power."

"Yes," someone might say to me, "Lenin was also a stranger to cultism and tyrannical intentions, and look what happened!" But I would object that back then there was an ideology of dictatorship, while today we have an ideology of democracy.

What do "they" want, if they are thinking of State interests, not personal ambition? To have everything fall apart while we prepare a national ballot for presidency? And what have they

¹ My personal addendum: the working class had just said its word, for example in Donetsk, among other things demanding the resignation of the entire oblast committee. (author's note)

² Soviet poet David Samoilov (translator).

achieved? They have made Gorbachev swing in the direction of Ligachev. The spirit of Ligachev permeated all of his comments and speeches at this PB. Gorbachev agreed with him whenever he spoke and the only point on which he disagreed on was entering a resolution “on the unity of the party” into the CC Plenum.

Everyone at the PB came to the common conclusion to hold course toward diving the party’s sphere of influences to exclude Afanas’evs and the like, to push away and isolate the interregional players in order to “call the People’s Deputies to order” with the help of the Supreme Soviet. Otherwise it is outrageous that they receive 500-700 rubles of state salary when all they do is destroy the state and undermine the leadership.

Gorbachev made all the PB members state their opinion, although Zaikov, Yakovlev and Vorotnikov did not ask to speak. Everybody said something acceptable to Gorbachev, including Yakovlev. Although the latter did qualify his statement, thereby angering Ryzhkov, by saying that while our economy is in its present state we will not be able to achieve anything and no amount of “work with the masses” will help.

There was also a discussion of Gdlyan. At this point Gorbachev was right to work up a temper. He railed at Sukharev (Minister of Justice) and the same Bakatin, and mentioned Kryuchkov as well: the state’s top leadership is reviled, shamed, slandered... and who is doing this? Criminals who imprisoned mothers with many children, extortionists who recreated 1937 in Uzbekistan!³ Meanwhile all our law-enforcement agencies can do is whine! The law is the law! Are you afraid to find out that Gorbachev is a thief?! Is that what you are afraid of? If he is a thief, let them prove it. If need be, Gorbachev will do what the law requires. But if it is slander—Gorbachev added—Gdlyan and Ivan belong on the prisoners’ dock for contempt of supreme state leadership. It would be impossible to imagine anything like this taking place in any civilized country.

The question of Lithuania’s separation and the Union Treaty was discussed in the forceful vein, from the position of “one and indivisible” (Vorotnikov, for example, said this in earnest). Gorbachev was speaking in unison with Maslyukov, Ligachev, Ryzhkov, and the same Vorotnikov...

In a word, there is a break from reality that threatens to leave only one argument—tanks.

There is also something unsubstantial in the preparation for presidency; once again we’re concerned with making a nice inauguration speech instead of worrying about creating institutions. What is he going to do the day after the inauguration? With whom? How? After all, everyone is going to be counting each day of the presidency and expecting real change. Or, as his opponents believe, is he going to transfer the Politburo into the Presidential Committee and everything will remain the same?!

Or maybe he is consciously aiming for failure in order to “step down”? Unlikely... he would not be working up such a force...

³ Gdlyan and his accomplice Ivanov were investigating abuses in Uzbekistan, leading the so-called “Rashidov case” with flagrant disregard for the law. (author’s note)

Today again he called the Supreme Soviet Presidium. It seems (from the comments at the PB) he does not plan to discuss the presidency at the Plenum and to “nominate himself from the CPSU,” for, as Shakhnazarov and I warned him, he would immediately lose several voices at the Congress.

Today is his birthday. He is fifty-nine!

I was watching “Press-Club” on TV. It consists of young people’s footage which is then discussed by journalists from various media.

Three impressions:

1. Horror at the clips themselves (especially the “maximum security kindergarten”).
2. The anger of representatives from “Molodaya gvardiya” [Young Guard] and “Nash sovremennik” [Our contemporary]: it seems if Gorbachev were to appear among them, they would trample him.
3. The repulsiveness of the clever Jewish boys from “Moskovskii komsomolets” [Moscow Komsomol], the TV and elsewhere, who refute and debunk everyone in insulting and arrogant tones. Truly, you begin to “understand” the anti-Semites.

There is confusion in my heart. Society is falling apart; so far the rudiments of a new society are nowhere in sight. Judging by my latest observations, Gorbachev is losing a sense of control over the processes. It seems also has “gotten lost” (one of his favorite expressions) in what is going on and is beginning to look for “simple solutions” (another favorite formula).

And even I, saturated with politics as I am, want to hide from life and carry a gun in my pocket as something to rely on for spiritual calm.

March 22, 1990.

Today at the PB might have been the “Charnyna Tizsa”⁴ for Lithuania. Things are moving towards Czechoslovakia-’90. I am horrified. Everyone was chiming in with the most vulgar and conceited great-power sentiments. Yakovlev and Medvedev kept their silence.

What should I do? Yesterday he appointed me as Adviser to the President. But if he makes a massacre in Lithuania I am not only going to leave... I will probably do something else besides.

Today is a week (March 15) since he’s been president. But the Politburo is still in power.

The PB today rejected the CPSU’s “democratic platform” and came to an agreement on how to furnish the deputies elected to the RSFSR and the Moscow City Council.

March 25, 1990.

⁴ A township on the border with Czechoslovakia, where in August of 1968 Brezhnev’s Politburo was deciding the possibility of intervention. (author’s note)

M.S. received American teachers. Oh, what a peace of mind it gave him. He opened up, charmed them, and was full of “ideas” just like in the past, when he was on the ascent.

Soviet teachers will be resentful: look at that, he has plenty of time for American teachers while we are sitting here in shit.

Later we talked (after Admiral Crowe)...

I: Mikhail Sergeyevich, yesterday’s Politburo scared me.

He: It always scares you...

I: Not always. Sometimes it surprises me, or upsets me, or makes me laugh, or makes me indignant.

He: Why?

I: I am beginning to not understand you. I am used to being able to tell what your goals are, and what is just tactics. With Lithuania I am confused. If you are thinking to keep Lithuania by threats but without the use of troops—this is unrealistic. All your successes with *perestroika* are always tied to you being able to face reality, as YOU like to say. If you “do not rule out,” as you said yesterday at the Poliburo, “Varennikov’s option” (a state of emergency, direct presidential rule, introduction of three regiments and the “isolation” of the top at Vilnius, the use of Lithuanian marionettes who would “ask” for our troops, like in 1968 Prague) then it would be a complete failure. It would be the downfall of your great cause. And for what? For a superpower complex? Because economically we will not lose anything, and they will carefully follow all the conditions if we make an agreement, they have no choice!

He: Come on, Tolya, everything will be fine, everything will be done right!

He was listening to me and responding in passing, while flipping through some papers on his desk...

Yesterday the composition of the Presidential Council was announced. He had kept it a secret... I found out something from Yakovlev: regarding Aitmatov and Rasputin (!), against whom A.N. had vigorously protested. I heard about the rest yesterday on TV.

Once again, in this I am beginning not to understand him. He did not ask Shakhnazarov (his legal expert) about this either. All he asked me is what to do with Zagladin. I think the composition, especially Yarin and Rasputin, will be disappointing to the Supreme Soviet and to the intelligentsia, i.e. *perestroika*’s “conscious” foundation. In a word, I am in a state of uncertainty: ceasing to understand M.S.

On the one hand, he seems to be moving away from “power of the party,” on the other—especially with Lithuania—he is acting in the spirit of Ligachev-Yazov-Vorotnikov-Kryuchkov... on purely ideological grounds. Without any reasonable arguments or explanations.

For all of them, the goal is clear and not subject to discussion: “Do not let go!” This is despite the Constitution and legal provision for leaving, etc.

Furthermore, when the Georgians take down one or two Lenin statues per day and at every street corner yell about leaving the Union, cancelling all Soviet and Communist symbols and signs, when they openly amass weapons and fighters—this is not a problem... No reaction from the top. But when it comes to Lithuania, the orders keep coming one after another! Even though in this case the danger of ruining the “great cause” is clear: the US, Europe, and the democratic world do not see Lithuania as a domestic problem, but they consider Georgia and Azerbaijan to be our business!!

Solzhenitsyn, “March of 1917.” Newspapers, newspapers. Today in “Komsomolka” [Komsomolskaya Pravda] from March 22nd—on the disintegration of the Komsomol. On TV one sees society falling apart... And the people at the CC Plenum are holding on to idols from the past. Ligachev demands that the Charter declare the goal to be communism. He made a scene at the PB that his proposal was once again ignored (all that was noted down was a “communist perspective”).

It is amazing that journals and even newspapers and TV are full of intelligent discussions on the essence and fate of Marxism, socialism, Leninism... While this drabness heading the CPSU, with a theoretical background on the level of 1950s Highest Party School teachings, could not care less. “Communism is our goal.” “Marxism-Leninism” is the ideological core of the party! Come hell or high water. And the Politburo is full of people like this, with the exception of maybe two-three individuals. But it dictates the spirit of our policies. It does...

Once again: why does M.S. need such a Presidential Council?!

Deyneka’s exhibition on Kropotkinskaya Street. A pencil portrait of a woman in an old-fashioned dress on a divan. I could not tear myself away for an hour and a half. In general, plenty of “associations and reminiscences,” but the halls are empty, even though today is the last day.

M.S. to me on the phone: regarding Goldansky’s article on anti-Semitism (for the “Washington Post”). He was upset. Cursed. Jews are cowards. Ordered me have a talk with him!

On Zagladin: make him an Adviser to the President and put him in charge of public organizations, ours and international.

For me: pick a staff (a group of consultants under the assistant).

Varennikov is provoking Gorbachev from Lithuania... oh, how impatient he is to liquidate *perestroika* as soon as possible!

April 12, 1990.

Gorbachev is continuing the game with Lithuania. He was proving to the foreigners (Edward Kennedy was here and then the boring Minister of Foreign Affairs of Great Britain Douglas Hurd) and trying to convince them that he is as much a man of law as they are. Yes,

legally he might be right, but historically and politically he is losing. And, God helps us, in the best case scenario he will only lose his personal prestige.

He gave candid answers to the thousands of questions flying at him during a meeting with the Komsomol before their Congress, including about the Gdlyan-Ivanov slander: "I, the President, am not going to go and try to prove that I am not a thief and I do not take bribes!" They applauded when he declared that Gdlyan and Ivanov will be dealt with in the open at the Supreme Soviet (who knows whose side they were applauding).

"Moscow" congratulates me with the "Adviser to the President" post, but there is no official document. Shakh is upset and I'm being ironic about it because everything is going to remain as it is: he needs us in the capacity of speechwriters, scribes, not advisers... he prefers different people for this, although sometimes he reckons with us when we impose our opinions on him because we have access to him. Just last week I wrote him a sharp protest against the possibility of a second PB discussion of the "CC letter" to the communists on the distancing from Yu. Afanas'ev and the like. He read it before at the PB opening discussion, without naming the author, and conducted the meeting "with consideration" of my anxiety and arguments. Although I was not the only one who protested.

As the result, the CC's letter to the party came out much softer than the first and second versions. But the essence remained ("100 flowers") and turbulent "indignations" are already breaking out in party organizations. The All-Union Leninist Young Communist League Congress is also going to be discussing it! I am sure that it will be in the "anti" spirit.

I suggested to Gorbachev to send Dobrynin as Ambassador to India instead of the failing Isakov. But he wants to send him into retirement. I cannot understand and do not like Shevardnadze's manner, he sent his entire fairly-strong team of deputies away as ambassadors: Bessmertnykh, Vorontsov, Adamishin, Aboimov... Now he is left with the "gentle Tolya" (Kovalev) and Nikiforov (party nomenclature man).

Brutents and I bypassed Shevardnadze really nicely on the subject of relations with South Korea. He is either afraid, or has made commitments to Kim Il-Sung. M.S. first of all "met with him" (a piano in the bushes), and secondly agreed to send a delegation to Seoul and in general to "concrete action." And now he met with Moon (at yesterday's meeting with publishers). Although he grimaced and grumbled over the phone.

Gorbachev is active and seems cheerful and confident. This is impressive, although mostly to foreigners. It is deceptive. It is the result of his physical and moral health, not of political confidence. Things keep getting worse. Though I do not believe in civil war, unless we want it "ourselves." So far only the generals want it, they are spewing hatred for everything related to Gorbachev. And the frenzied apparatus. There will be a fight at the CP RSFSR and then at the XXVIII Congress of the CPSU.

I, Yakovlev, Arbatov, and other like us are facing a dilemma: which party to be in... M.S., it seems, is ready to stay in Ligachev's party, although he was able to strongly distance and transfer him into the direct opposition. At the PB he no longer hides his distance from E.K. At

the last PB Yakovlev openly opposed Ligachev (and Ryzhkov), who demanded a Plenum (on the “CC letter,” clearly so M.S. would be offered to resign). Later Frolov reviled against the CC, which “has no authority and is discredited.”

Egor Kuzmich spoke “in conclusion,” i.e. after M.S. closing speech, to rebuff this slander of the CC, which has “survived (!) more than any other CC” (i.e. put up with Gorbachev and *perestroika*). The majority rejected convening a Plenum, some said openly—this would be the beginning of a split done by our own hand!

April 13, 1990.

Yesterday Gorbachev led the Presidential Council on the topic of radicalization of economic reforms. I did not go. Routine work is intense. What is happening to the country, how much longer until complete paralysis?

There was a meeting with American senators. M.S. was frank and at his best. He is stubborn on Lithuania...

The Secretariat was led by Medvedev. Brutents was there, he said it was all helpless jabber. For forty minutes they discussed the sequence for awarding the Lenin’s prize (instead of the Committee), while the country and party are in such a state. By the way, one guy from the Committee for Party Control “informed” them that according to the CC Letter, it will not be possible to expel Yu. Afanas’ev. Afanas’ev was summoned by the regional committee, but told them to go to the primary organization. But there (the institute where he is director) Afanas’ev was met with a standing ovation!

In a word, M.S. got what he was warned about. The “CC letter” is the best present to the “democratic platform.”

April 15, 1990.

Brutents told me how he was at the American embassy for Matlock’s reception for the senators (Mitchell & Co.). Burlatsky, Afanas’ev, Nishanov, Arbatov and others were there, kissing the Americans in all the possible places. How open they were, how frank, breaking all the seals! This is considered good form nowadays. As Brutents said, one really wants to run to “Pamiat” from all this filth.

G. Popov is being baited by “Sovetskaia Rossiia” [Soviet Russia] and others (“Moskovskaia Pravda” is more careful) in order to smear his way to chairmanship of the Moscow City Council [Mossovet]. This is the implementation not of a direct order, but of a conversation at the PB: to “kick in the head” the Interregional Group of Deputies and the “democratic platform.” And the “CC letter” is also pulling in that direction... (By the way, the fact that the “Letter” is often seen as the beginning of a crackdown on dissent slips through even in the cleaned-up information on the discussion of the “letter” from the Department of Party Organizational Work. Most importantly, they do not know “whom to exclude”).

Gavrila Popov is, of course, quite the goose, a professional scoundrel. But still... Plus, why not try these people in action?

Rumors are circulating around Moscow that if Gavrila gets to power in the Mossovet, they will seize the apparatchiks' apartments, since the CC administration has been giving them out, which is illegal. It's believed that the "communists" are already intimidated and do not know whom to turn to in case there is a shake-up.

Stanislav Kondrashov writes in "Izvestia"—"Prague Spring of 1990." A swinging blow to everything.

It is the common opinion in society and the mass media that we do not have socialism and never had it. I wrote this idea into Gorbachev's "Word about Lenin" (he is going to present a report for Lenin's birthday). I think he will neatly cross it out.

In the evening I turned on the TV. Three channels were showing close-ups of church service. Priests, parishioners, public. There are different kinds of priests. Some lead a simple "service," like any other; others (young ones) have fervor and a "challenge;" the third type is dull (let's break our fast as soon as possible). The public: hysterical women, curious onlookers, young girls with the expression of "oh, look!" or "why am I here?" They are responding to the cameras. Many young people. Notably, in Moscow churches there are mostly young men, while in Leningrad it is mostly women. In the provinces it is both, all kinds of people. Taken all together—I cannot understand it!

I cannot believe that they believe, unless of course they are not well in the head, their psyche is unbalanced. Of course, it is possible that God exists. The greatest thinkers have thought so, including the magnificent constellation of Silver Age philosophers. But not the kind of god worshipped by the church [*bozhen'ka*]. Rather, a real Creator. There is something up There (!) that no science can explain.

Ligachev protested the recommendation (paper from Lukyanov) of the academician Goldansky for the position of head of the International Lenin Prize Committee, because the latter appeared in the "Washington Post" with an article about anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union ("Sovetskaia Rossiia" put him down for it). The objection was sent around the PB. I don't know what it will come to. Lukyanov insists that he no longer takes orders from Ligachev.

Last Sunday I was in the Foreign Library at an exhibition of photos of the last aristocratic families: Trubetskoi, Obolentsky, Sivers, Abrikosov. It makes a stunning impression. What a gene pool of the nation, what deep and naturally developing culture, what a tradition of nobleness and honor, and what great talents in different fields. All squandered. Lost... Killed (shot left and right in Solovki even in 1920 and 1929!) or banished. Trubetskoi's three daughters, beauties, lived out their lives there. Dozens of others gave what they could to foreign lands, not to us, not to their people. This is was the elite of our people!

The CC's May First summons (we are still doing this) draft has been sent around the PB. Ligachev demanded to return the slogan "Workers of the World Unite!" When Brutents stopped

by my office I told him about this. We laughed for a long time... What's significant is not it is typical of E.K., but that it causes such a reaction in normal people.

Just now I read in "Junost" [Youth] No. 3 an essay by Prince Euvgeniy Trubetskoi "Maximalism." Absolute genius. In 1920 he predicted everything that is happening right now, and why it is! Once again you become convinced that genius is a mystery. Visionary. I should tell M.S. to read it. It also has an explanation of why people are turning away from *perestroika*.

I thought: for M.S. to make policy, he should read more of this kind of material, not the routine mass of documents and drafts in red folders. Let the advisers and members of the Council read that and correct him if any of his thoughts differ from the routine facts.

April 21, 1990.

Yesterday with his "Word about Lenin" M.S. definitively distanced himself from Ligachev & Co. and created an opposition in the PB to them... and to Ryzhkov, whom he is pushing away through the Presidential Council.

I am glad that he put emphasis on the passage about the "museum of Bolshevik rarities"⁵ and the analogy with Lenin when he started introducing NEP: at closed sessions everyone said "yes" but as soon as he turned his back they whispered "no!"

In the evening after a performance at Bolshoi Theater, M.S. called and said: no one from the people close to me at the Presidium could find how to respond.

Mossoviet, which passed into the hands of Gavila Popov, expressed clear dissatisfaction with the CC letter: all we will have left are office workers and the gray masses. Mossoviet has practically declared a market economy and is initiating the denigration of Lenin. A Mossoviet session was not ashamed to revoke "certificate No. 1" (i.e. Lenin's eternal Mossoviet membership) and to remove his bust from the conference room. In response to an initiative of five deputies to put a wreath at the Mausoleum, Popov called this action "the personal business of these five people, not representative of Mossoviet deputies."

There is a ruckus in the Supreme Soviet over Gdlyan, with demands to replace Sukharev (Minister of Justice). It has been declared that the organs, i.e. Kryuchkov, the Prosecutor's Office, and others, have no right to use the excuse that they are serving socialism. The Supreme Soviet will decide whom they are to serve; otherwise, they can take a hike.

On "Deutsche Welle" Strelyannyi (a political writer) said everything about the Presidential Council, the Party, and about the fact that it will not be *de jure* laws that will determine what is to be done.

⁵ Loginov and I borrowed this metaphor from the memoirs of Valentin Volskoi. We put some clever material into M.S.' report. Lenin's cited words refer to him talking about old Bolsheviks who made the revolution, but did not know how to build a "new world." It was a hint at the place that it was time for Ligachev & Co. to take. (author's note)

M.S. will accept all of this, I think. He has no animosity towards Mossovet, not even against Soloukhin, who publicly defames Lenin. M.S. recently was admiring his own "Word about Lenin." "In general," he said, "when I read a really talented piece I am not so much absorbed by the plot as by the language, words. I can think about a single phrase for hours."

I told him that in this case he would love Solzhenitsyn... He has depth and mystery of Russian meaning not only in every word, but in the spaces between the words. Gorbachev did not say anything. He has not read "October of 1916" or "March of 1917"...

M.S. is cooling towards foreign policy. Possibly because of Lithuania. I brought him his schedule of meetings for May-June. He said: cancel Delors, forget Mitterrand (although I got worked up about this, as we had already notified Mitterrand), cancel the Socialist International delegation. Kinnock as well. Then he adds: wouldn't it be nice if Margo [Margaret Thatcher] would cancel her visit to Kiev. And Bush cancel the meeting as well. That would be so great. I could get down to business.

April 22, 1990.

Work yesterday was routine. Germany, Thatcher, Bush... and their "threats" regarding Lithuania. Madam is once again offering her services. For now Western Europe is high on rhetoric, Prunskiene went to Oslo and to Denmark. They received her very well but did not make any promises regarding oil to break our blockade.

The people in Lithuania are starting to think whether they made the right choice. Perhaps it was better with Brazauskas?

Is it possible that M.S. will once again prove to be right? Could he be ready for such a risk in the "game"? He seems to be evolving too... Although, when the three of us were working on the Lenin report, there was a paragraph on Stalin and the federation, that some people took it seriously. He added "That's how we see it!" I.e. we are going to keep up the rhetoric and lawmaking to reform the federation, but in reality we will "maintain the empire."

I look at the collapse of the former structures and think: maybe he (M.S.) is indeed ready to "go so far that you (to me and Yakovlev) cannot imagine." He had said this before, too a while ago. Maybe he really does want to say goodbye to everything that ties us to the last 70 years, leaving only some symbolism to be different from the West? Maybe he so adamantly insisted on the letter from the CC to the party in order to finally break it, or at least to remove it from real power? Although this would be hard to believe by looking at him at the Politburo. Perhaps he constantly struggles between his two tendencies: sometimes the impulsive one wins, the one from his obkom habits. But then he starts to "figure it out," backtrack and use for short-term benefit the aspects that are clearly detrimental to his policies. In any case, a long time ago he understood that he and Egor Kuzmichev, Ryzhkov, Vorotnikov, Zaikov, and the like are on divergent paths. Assigning different labels to them, "in our circle" he did not conceal his resentment, at least of the first two. I understood that it was a matter of time before they would be gone. Now he has almost reached this goal. But not in the way that others called on him to do it: remove them from the PB, revitalize the PB, replace, etc. To him this seemed to be "old

thinking” methods. He has done more: he removed the PB itself from power. This is already visible. At the laying of wreaths at the Mausoleum, he stood in the first row with Lukyanov and Ryzhkov (i.e. not the party bosses). A little to the side was Yakovlev (member of the Presidential Council). The “party heads” Ligachev & Co. stood in the second row.

The events associated with the formation of a RSFSR Communist Party are creating a situation in which Gorbachev must hurry. As soon as possible, he should bring the CPSU as a whole outside the power framework, thereby making his rule completely “secular.” Although the problem of Russia remains. Strelyannyi makes a good point in his article: the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR, which will be elected at the Russian Congress in May, will not be as docile as the Supreme Soviet of the USSR... especially if Yeltsin becomes president... I think we should not resist the transformation of the Soviet Union into a Union of States, a confederation. Then he would govern over Russia. But as it stands now... if he were no longer to control Russia, how would he govern the rest of the country? A major miscalculation is looming over us. If only the Lithuanian obstacle were taken care of soon—by giving a special status to all the Baltic states in the Union. Of course, the others will want such a status. Nazarbaev is already stomping his feet, not to mention Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan. So what? You cannot prevent the inevitable.

Gorbachev told me yesterday, and not for the first time: I will never agree to try people for “abuse of power” during the period of stagnation. It would mean putting 100 thousand on trial. We would be going back to 1937.

April 30, 1990.

M.S. came back from Sverdlovsk filled with a sense of “victory”—he won over the working class. Although they say he was met rather coolly, even with some jeers and “those kinds” of posters.

Before the Congress he told me that he is satisfied with the “Word about Lenin.” He must have read the responses to it. We have moved forward (in the sense of filling the New Thinking). In Sverdlovsk he “moved forward” even more in his successful impromptu speeches.

I keep thinking, did he consciously bring matters to an ideological-psychological breakdown in society and confusion in people’s minds, or did it just work out that way while he was adapting and “straddling the process,” as always? Although, there could be no renewal without this. Even the defamation and discrediting of Lenin by the “extremists” (radicalists [radikalistami], as he started to call them) serves to liberate our minds and solidify the “feeling of complete freedom.” This permissiveness prepares the ground for a new social consciousness that will be truly pluralistic and independent from the top.

Zagladin and Grachev brought from Western Europe reports of concerns over the possibility of resurgence (according to the law of the pendulum) of a new fascism. Because in Eastern Europe not even the “center,” but the right-wing came to power. Reactionary sentiments are growing, and what is most dangerous, they are growing on the popular, mostly nationalistic level as the rejection of anything remotely resembling “communism,” which implies anything “leftist.”

This means that no matter how the social-democrats railed against the USSR and Eastern Europe, they saw in it something of a “home front” of the entire leftist movement, a counterbalance to reactionaries. This home front has disappeared. Meanwhile, our national disintegration and Russian chauvinism are threatening to bring back if not Stalinism, then something akin to Nicholas II’s Russia—the bulwark of everything reactionary. Or, a “great power,” but worse—a former great power, i.e. with the Versailles syndrome, since German unification and the loss of allies “takes away” its victory in the Great War—its only recognized contribution to the progress of humanity and its own dignity.

In a conversation with Assad (Syrian President) M.S. once again digressed to talk about the “socialist idea” within the framework of *perestroika*. Does he not see that in society this idea hinges only on conservative inertia (“What did we struggle for!” “At least we had equality, even in poverty”)? This is characterized by the nearly moronic People’s Deputy Sukhov—a taxi driver from Kharkov.

Does M.S. not see that the “socialist idea” has nothing original to offer that would be news for modern capitalism? Not in economics, not in democracy, not in other values. We did not fill this idea with original content and at this point nobody can do it.

Lithuania is his (M.S.’) sorest spot. It is in an economic blockade, but the “revolt” he thought would come against Landsbergis and Prunskiene is nowhere to be seen. He does not have a Lithuania policy, just pure ideology of power: not to allow the breakup of the empire. Recently in Sverdlovsk he said it again: he is not going to back down.

He is very tired and aging by the minute. After the meeting with Assad we were on Alexey Tolstoy Street and he complained to me and Brutents that he has reached the breaking point, his head is bursting. And indeed: yesterday on the spur of the moment he said some things to de Maiziere (GDR’s Premier) that we will have to retract. Then he dictated his speech for the RSFSR Congress, which could be really crucial if Russia decides to leave the USSR.

Vorotnikov already resigned (from the post of Chairman of the RSFSR Council of Ministers). It is thought that Vlasov will take his place at the PB. Probably, though, this will not happen. Most likely it will be Yeltsin “with all the ensuing consequences.” Meanwhile, in Sverdlovsk M.S. announced him to be politically finished.

I decided to copy some passages from Selyunin: an article called “Sometimes I feel like Cassandra,” in “Sobesednik” [Interlocutor] No. 17 from April, 1990:

“We need competent leadership and a market system. The current government is incapable of telling the people, ‘The communists took the country in the wrong direction’... And it must leave, making space for a coalition government, which will have one advantage: it would not be connected to the dying ideology, or to the choice which was supposedly made once and for all in 1917, or to baggage, or to crimes of the past.

...The new laws (the current ones have exhausted their credit of trust) will be aimed at introducing a market system and changing the social order.”

Also, “Gorbachev could not act otherwise; he could not avoid falling behind... Three years ago he could not have revoked Article 6 of the Constitution, introduced a law for withdrawing from the USSR, announced various types of private property, introduced a multi-party system, etc. Had he done this, the next day he would have turned into ‘yet another retiree of national standing’.”

“...If it is not a coalition government that offers this program there may be chaos, civil war, and possibly dictatorship.”

The article was written on April 2nd, i.e. before the Presidential Council’s resolutions on the economy, when M.S. no longer spoke of a “planned-market” but simply of a “market economy”... Though, he declared in Sverdlovsk that he is again going to “consult with the people.” But the people will never “advise” to deregulate prices. They will hold on to the old (let the “tsar” provide), and if he does not provide, they will overthrow him—through “the street.”

We shall see whether Cassandra will be prophetic.

May 5, 1990.

May 1st on Red Square. An historic day... For the first time there was a rally, then a procession, but instead of “Hooray, hail May Day!” there were demands and warnings. After the first, official wave of demonstrators passed, a second wave of “Moscow voters’ clubs” burst onto the Square, with banners of “Down with Gorbachev,” “Down with the CPSU—the Exploiter and Robber of the People,” “Down with Socialism,” “Down with the Fascist Red Empire,” “Lenin’s Party Out of the Way,” etc. Gorbachev and the others started to descend from the Mausoleum to jeering and laughter, accompanied by yells of “Shame,” “Vulgarians.” The Red Square was covered with deafening whistles. Such hatred. Thirty thousand. Even if, as Bakatin says, only 7 thousand among them were activists, the remaining 23 thousand stood next to them, which means with them.

Gorbachev called me in the evening, fuming: scoundrels, ugly mugs. This is the Gavrila Popov’s Moscow City Soviet for you! It is his idea!

On May 3rd the event was discussed at the PB. Prokofiev (First Secretary of Moscow City Committee) was assigned to condemn the action in “Pravda.” When speaking with foreign journalists, Yakovlev blamed everything on the right, on reactionaries and the monarchists. M.S. said at the PB: we should not exaggerate it, but we should not underestimate it, either.

Against this backdrop the PB discussed preparations for the XXVIII Party Congress. In unison they said that there are not enough workers (among the candidates).

...What is behind this? Yakovlev is right: it means that the Congress members are forming an apparatus that will kick you and me out together with M.S.

The Russian Congress is coming up. M.S. has finally given up and admitted that the formation of a Russian Communist Party is inevitable. But all of a sudden, Frolov in his usual rude manner correctly pointed out at the PB that if we do not take this matter (formation of RCP)

into our own hands, we will have a chauvinistic, racist party that will demolish the CPSU, the USSR, and will ruin all of this *perestroika*. The Leningrad founding conference showed us in April where this RCP is heading.

Yakovlev stopped by today, beaming. He was with Gorbachev at VDNKh [All-Union Exhibition of Achievements of the National Economy], which is hosting a celebration for the “Pravda” newspaper. A crowd formed around Yakovlev bigger than the one around Gorbachev. “And so many compliments, Tolya, and what compliments! I have never heard such things about myself during my entire political career! And mostly from people from the provinces.”

“Smiling” at his vanity, I thought: could it be that the real, simple Russia is for Yakovlev, not Yeltsin? Then why doesn’t he run for President of Russia?

At the PB Shevardnadze got the directives for “two + four.” Gorbachev broke into a steely speech: “Do not let Germany into NATO and that’s that! I will risk breaking the Vienna negotiations, if it comes to that. The document with proposals about this was signed by Shevardnadze, as well as Yakovlev, Yazov and Kryuchkov. At the PB session everyone, including them, did not say a word. And nobody asks my opinion there.”

In the morning I composed a memo for Gorbachev—in protest. The gist of it is that PB members are not in the loop and are not informed, so they can discuss whatever they like. But in order to make decisions one has to know the subject and not succumb to Ligachev’s cry of “NATO is getting close to our borders!” This is nonsense, Mikhail Sergeyevich, on the level of 1945, it is the false patriotism of the masses. No matter what, Germany will be in NATO and you will again miss the train (as with the Russian Communist Party)... Instead of presenting your conditions and then “putting a good face” (on business that will inevitably be bad).

So far he has not answered me, most likely he got angry: it always happens when he is wrong, when emotions from his obkom origin overpower him.

We started preparing the program for his visit to the US. Bush offers two points: Washington and Camp David. That is all, despite the fact that in his time he himself and Reagan invited Gorbachev to “see America.” Bush must be afraid of the Americans’ enthusiasm, which would tie him on Lithuania, Germany, START... How would he press on Gorby if the people admire and trust him?!

I persuaded Arbatov, who is going to appear on American television, to make an innocent comment on this issue.

Afanas’ev and Drach gave an interview to “La Repubblica” (an Italian newspaper) about the empire and Gorbachev. They are probably right about the empire. We should let everyone leave so those who choose to can come back on their own. Otherwise there will be a collapse and blood.

May 7, 1990.

Shevardnadze came back from “two + four.” Judging by the ciphered telegrams and by his report to Gorbachev it is clear that we lost by rejecting a document that was swamped at the PB (regarding the conditions for our agreement to Germany in NATO). Shevardnadze had to make do with general phrases, instead of forcing our partners to discuss our concrete conditions. Both Kohl and Baker did not hesitate to use this. Kohl called the meeting “historic,” adding: “There are no longer any obstacles.”

On Sunday I got a call from Bisher (USSR People’s Deputy from Latvia). It turns out Gorbachev already told Rubiks (Latvia’s CP CC secretary) that we will do the same thing to Latvia as to Lithuania if they do not revoke the “May 3rd Declaration.” This has already been published in “Pravda.” Shakhnazarov got a call about this from Wulfson (also a People’s Deputy). Both are crying the same thing: intervene, please ask the President to read the address we sent him closely. We intervened. Gorbachev told Shakh: “I will make everyone come through!”

Yes... something is happening to Gorbachev. Today he organized a meeting with Heroes of the Soviet Union and those decorated with the Order of Glory. Some general from Latvia spoke for 20 minutes, saying God knows what! As if he is not in 1990, but in 1950. Others were similar, and everything to the accompaniment of thunderous applause. Western press surmises that Gorbachev is doing these celebrations, the 45 year anniversary of Victory Day and the rest of it in order to butter up the army, which has yet to say its word in politics. They are probably right. But his “emotions” are playing a role in this also. (So why don’t I have them? Rather, mine are very different, these emotions, even though I had, just as these generals and decorated men, fought with the Germans, not in Afghanistan).

Yazov also gave a speech in the manner of a general, in essence cynical. He came down on the vilifying scholars: they tallied up 46 million, while only (!) 8 had died in battle. He forgot even the 3 million prisoners taken in 1941 alone. Whose fault was it, Comrade Yazov? And their fate turned out to be worse than that of the dead. In a word, M.S. is spreading a layer of grayness to cover up *perestroika*’s gaps. This action of his is precisely the “other extreme” that he so vehemently condemns.

Shevardnadze brought important concessions on START from Baker. Could it be that we will be stubborn again?

May 11, 1990.

A report on the 45th anniversary of “Victory.” The part where he mentioned the victims was very good... He even remembered the *sharashki*. The conclusions are good; they are moving New Thinking forward. This stands in sharp contrast to Yazov’s speech at the Mausoleum (for the parade) and his order. The Defense Minister’s speech would have been fitting ten years ago.

The parade was impressive, designed for domestic consumption, to show “all of those types” after the second wave at the May Day parade that while the leadership has this kind of power, opponents can feel free to yelp and shriek. This already fits into Gorbachev’s new logic.

Yesterday for the first time I was at the Presidential Council in its narrow composition. It is very noticeable that, having broken down the old (Party) power, he hopes (somewhere in his heart) that it will pass to him personally... After all, he is for progress (as he was again fervently telling us yesterday). He is not following a reactionary policy—he would say—he wants good for the people and knows how to accomplish it. There you go... when he reacts to something on an emotional level and ceases to think calmly, it turns out that this is his idea of a democratic process.

M.S. once again got worked up about Lithuania. He came down on mass media, which has “gotten out of hand” (this reeks of Gdlyan) and shows no respect to the country’s President. He was describing a meeting between Raisa Maksimovna and Pamela Harriman, who was struck by the Soviet people’s ingratitude to Gorbachev, and their failure to understand the importance of his work. He concluded his tirade by saying that it is time for everyone to choose right now, including the people sitting here.

That’s that... Yakovlev again took it personally. He came in the evening to complain. “I don’t know what to do, maybe I should leave.” Why? After all, when Gorbachev was talking about the mass media he added: notice, if Medvedev asks an editor for something, the latter will ignore him. But if Yakovlev asks, the editor will do it. He was right on the dot, but with a subtext: Medvedev reflects the “correct” point of view while Yakovlev has a more dubious, opportunistic position, adjusting to the radicals.

A.N. thinks that Kryuchkov is sending Gorbachev “targeted” information. Perhaps, perhaps. It is true that Kryuchkov has gone back to the old approach of giving information to the top that will be interpreted “correctly.” For example, about the Zionists’ intentions. Not once has he provided information on the actions of “Pamyat” or the Black Hundredist nature of “Literaturnaia Rossiia” [Literary Russia].

In a note to Gorbachev I railed against Yazov, Baklanov, Belousov, and Katushev for their demands to keep supplying socialist countries and socialist-oriented governments with weapons as if nothing has changed. I expected that this time Gorbachev would react. Instead, he scribbled on my note: “Bring to Baklanov’s attention.”

Klyamkin wrote an article for “Moskovskie novosti” [Moscow News]. It is called “Farewell to May 1st.” His conclusion: “the end of unity between the leadership and the people.”

May 13, 1990.

I got a lot done yesterday:

- Draft for M.S.’ interview for *Time*;
- Letter to Andreotti, which Adamishin will deliver;
- A speech for a lunch with Mubarak and materials for a talk with him;

I tried to figure out for Tolya Kovalev whether Shevardnadze had actually separated German unification and the European process. Everyone from Kohl to Gandhi are raising a fuss

about it (this is the result of our defeat at “two + four” in Bonn, now we have to weasel our way out with handouts for propaganda). Gorbachev rejected mine and Shevardnadze’s draft response to Baker (regarding aircraft for START). He agreed with Akhromeev, before whom Yazov and Zaikov could not stand their ground.

Yesterday, Gorbachev's discussion with his electorate for the XXXVIII Congress in the Frunze district was broadcast on TV. He was in superb form and fought with quite a Lenin-like passion, and he was frank as he is in PB. He touched upon the Russian people and the RCP, and on the fact that he will never back down and those who think they know everything and have an agenda that will lead to success are political crooks; that the second wave on May 1st on Red Square is ruffraff with their “Down with Gorbachev” posters and portraits of Nicholas II, Stalin and Yeltsin. In a word, he was not speaking in a presidential manner, but in his old fierce style. Although there were notes of anger, unlike before.

There were a lot of questions. One of them: the Bolsheviks had a plan and knew where to take the country, while the current leadership doesn't know where and doesn't know how. He retorted immediately: They knew? They had a plan? So they led the country where it is... No! We are going to proceed from life, rather than breaking life to fit the model.

The alternative contender (in elections for the Congress) is a worker from the “democratic platform.” He started off by saying, “We have been carried away by Lenin’s rule that revolution is worth something if it can defend itself. It is time to turn it around: a revolution is worth something, when there is something to defend!”

I wonder what the outcomes of the elections will be. The mediocrity and incommensurability of the opponent are so obvious they hit you in the eye. If voters prefer him to Gorbachev, well, then *perestroika* truly is finished.

Gorbachev called me in the evening; they are still putting together the American team with R.M. He informed me that they are including Frolov. As if apologizing, he said “We need someone from ‘Pravda’.” Understood.

He asked me about my impression of his speech in the Frunze district. He wanted to know whether he missed something in the speech. Then he asked with alarm: “What do you think, will I get elected?” Very symptomatic of Gorbachev nowadays.

I finished reading the next installment of Solzhenitsyn’s “March of 1917,” published in “Neva.” It is practically a textbook on how revolutions happen. All very similar. I think, we are approaching the Russian 1917!

I got a call from Wulfson—an old Jewish Latvian. He is very nervous. He said that Rubiks announced a general strike for May 15th to demand the “Declaration of May 3rd” to be repealed. The police force is all Russian; they are going to support the strikers. The army held meetings, they will support the police. If the strikers go to the street, the Latvians will come out too.

I am very afraid... If slaughter breaks out it will be the end, truly the end because it is clear whose side Gorbachev will take. It will be game over for the trip to the US and to everything in general, after all we are on the eve of a Russian Congress and the Russian Party Conference. The strikes in Kuzbass, Donbass and Vorkuta are just around the corner. Yu. Afanas'ev, Yeltsin and Travkin have already publicly sworn to create an anti-communist party.

All of this is very similar to Solzhenitsyn's account of 1917.

For some reason, I feel no fear...

May 20, 1990.

Yesterday, on Saturday, M.S. called me to Novo-Ogarevo to work on the concept for the XXVIII CPSU Congress. Present were Yakovlev, Primakov, Frolov, Shakhnazarov, Boldin, Petrakov, and myself. We discussed it all day. Along the way we heard his thoughts about "his lot": "What is life? We only get one. One is not sorry to spend it on something worthwhile, there is more to life than food or women. I don't regret anything. I've moved such a country. They cry: chaos, empty shelves! He destroyed the Party, there is no order! But how could it be otherwise? There is no other way to make history. As a rule, such major changes are accompanied by a great deal of bloodshed. We have managed to avoid it so far. This alone is a monumental achievement. The whole world is thinking in the spirit of New Thinking now. What about that? Is it a small measure? And everything is oriented toward the person, on the civilizing course. As for the deficits and empty shelves, we will make it through. We will have sausage on the shelves again. They rail against me, they curse me! Seventy percent of the CC and CC apparatus are against me, they hate me. It is no compliment to them: if you scratch you will find pure self-interest. I do not regret anything and I am not afraid. And I will neither repent nor make excuses at the Congress."

We talked about these issues the whole day. He even agreed with my statement (which I have mentioned to him more than once) that *perestroika* means a change of the social system. He agreed, but added: within the framework of socialist choice. That's fine, for now...

In the end he assigned Primakov, Shakh, and me to summarize and in two days to present to him a prospectus of the speech for the Congress.

I wrote all day today. Composed 14 pages. What next? I have to prepare the materials for Washington, on this my work hasn't gotten off the ground. This means that I cannot sit down with Shakh right now, and I also cannot entrust him with my work—he will bend it in his own way. I will probably end up having to give it to him + Yakovlev, let them work on it while we are "travelling around the Americas."

Yesterday in Novo-Ogarevo I made another impassioned speech regarding the fact that we have to raise the question of women in a new way at the Congress.

June 17, 1990.

On May 29-30th we were in Canada. At the airport in Ottawa, someone asked Gorbachev about his views on Yeltsin's election as Chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet. He gave a needlessly drawn-out response. One more point in Yeltsin's favor.

From May 30th-June 4th we were in Washington. Meetings, visits, tours around the city, and exhausting nighttime work on summing up Gorbachev's frenzied activity. He was at his best: there, in the West, he is in an environment where people understand him and value the magnitude of his achievements, while at home he faces sheer smuttiness.

Minneapolis-St. Paul, "Counter-Date" [sic], etc. Crowds everywhere like in Finland's Oulu or Italy's Milan. Stanford University—cheers of enthusiasm from the students. He spoke in a vast hall to continuous applause. George Shultz, who is the university's rector, speaking after M.S. called him a great man—leader and thinker. Needless to say, our newspapers did not report this.

Meanwhile in Moscow... At the peasants' Congress Ligachev is already openly calling the President a traitor who ruined the country and the socialist commonwealth. He added that he, Ligachev, will fight until the end.

At the Moscow party conference Prokofiev outflanked Gorbachev on the left. Silaev, Russia's Prime Minister, spoke in favor of private property (this technocrat has undergone a complete metamorphosis). By the way, Yeltsin was afraid of taking Bocharov as a Premier, so he took Silaev, even though the latter used to be one of Gorbachev's men. Amazing!

For two days I struggled over Gorbachev's report for the Supreme Soviet. The MFA did not supply a single line of material.

I cannot understand what people want. Some have gone mad in pursuit of glory and praise. The most important thing for them is to be noticed. This is the case at the Russian Congress, at the Supreme Soviet, and in the mass media.

At the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, the President was treated to a concert of hoots, led by Yeltsin himself.

The following conversation took place on the airplane on the way back from the United States. Gorbachev tells me: "Tolya, you think I don't see who is in it for the cause and who just sticks around to get a reflection of the limelight and show themselves in public? I see it, do not doubt it." I tried to justify the people he was referring to, but he said: "Come on... You are quite the liberal..."

In general, when I get distracted from the daily overwork, I get a feeling of complete collapse and wreckage... Maybe it is what real revolution feels like, going from system to system. This is what I am trying to include in the report for the XXVIII Congress. It must be how people live through times like these.

June 24, 1990.

Yesterday Polozkov was elected First Secretary of the Russian Communist Party. Protesting telegrams and phone calls are coming in from all sides, including the editorial board of “Kommunist,” various writers and theater personalities. Individuals and whole groups want to leave the party. I should think about it too. Gorbachev was at the Congress the entire time, listening to the rudeness and taking direct blows from this mob, including General Makashev. Gorbachev did not take up the general’s challenge, thereby in essence betraying everyone who tried to defend him. He bore not only insults, but out-and-out barbarism. Then he made a concluding speech, but he turned it into a Q&A session (they demanded this of him!). The questions were provocative, spiteful, with catches. Not a single “respectful” one, all dumb. His answers were confusing, verbose, muddled, sometimes he was unable to express what he meant—because he did not want to be clear, and as always he was afraid of being specific. He repeated his cliché: he is against leaving the post of General Secretary; he is against turning the CPSU into a parliamentary party; he is for the working class as the social base of the party, etc., etc. In essence, these are populist affirmations that compromise his *perestroika* concept of things.

He has become too different: one persona abroad and a different one here. This contrast is especially visible after his recent trip to America. His common sense and his theory of “moving the country to prosperity” come through over there. Here, his instincts of fear and the tactical-apparatus mode of action emerge, as well as his reliance on compromises that is causing great damage to policies and his entire cause. If he goes to the CC CPSU Plenum (to get approval for the draft of his speech for the XXVIII Congress) then they will tear him apart, after this dark RCP Congress. They might even remove him from the position of General Secretary. No doubt they will do it, if he presents the report created at Volynskoe-2. And it seems he is not planning to go all in, judging by his behavior at the RCP Congress. Which means he will submit. I think he might back down from the market, too... and bring about universal disgrace and an ignominious end. Perhaps not immediately, but along a steeply inclined downhill. “A great man,” he ended up in a position where he could not remain at the height of his greatness when the hour had struck. And it struck precisely over these last few days.

Right now it is either a “Treaty of Brest-Litovsk” or what was done at the X Congress of Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks)—the time has come to make an ultimatum to the party, as Lenin had done. Otherwise *perestroika* will no longer be Gorbachev’s, just as socialism after Lenin was not Lenin’s.

Shakhnazarov and I wrote him a note, begging him to leave the party post. We tried to prove that to leave the party right now would mean to rise above all parties and really become a president. And, by the way, if he left he could separate himself from the attacks and insults by the nonentities who are using the rights provided by the party Charter to discredit him at the level of their own “culture.” The note was ignored. Gorbachev either thinks that he will be able to get away with it (although every time this strategy works worse and worse for him and for the country), or he has something planned. But then why would he publicly undress himself at the RCP Congress? To be later accused of fraud and treachery?

After Polozkov’s election, Shatalin started looking for Gorbachev from his phone in the hospital to demand an immediate convocation of the Congress of People’s Deputies. Otherwise he, Shatalin, will leave the Presidential Council. Gorbachev is silent. We do not know his

opinion of the Congress speech draft, with only a week left. Though, maybe he thinks as always that a day before the Congress he will dictate a version that would be just right. Except now I no longer believe that it will come out “just right.” He can no longer make successful impromptu speeches at home, in front of his own people. They are boring and confusing, in contrast to the brilliant, talented impromptu speeches he makes during trips abroad. There, he senses the friendly and understanding environment and therefore allows himself not to conceal what he really thinks. There he is sincere, while at home he is dodgy... There is an ideological train following him here, and he fears that without this train he will not be understood.

July 1, 1990.

Gorbachev is sitting at the dacha and making the final corrections to his report for the Party Congress. Sometimes he comes to Volynskoe-2 and we sit until 2-4a.m. Sometimes he relocates to Novo-Ogarevo. The last such session there was last Thursday. We chewed over every phrase, and kept returning to the parts that were already edited. “We” consists of: Yakovlev, Medvedev, Frolov, Boldin, Shakhnazarov, Petrakov, Bikkenin, and me, the poor sinner. The economic section was the most bothersome. Gorbachev kept trying to show progress by manipulating the numbers. We managed to convince him to reduce mention of successes to a minimum.

In the evening on that day he called a Politburo meeting at Novo-Ogarevo. We were not allowed to attend. They sat till 12a.m., going over candidates for the position of Chairman of the CPSU (or General Secretary) and the First Deputy (a new position). Almost everyone announced that they are leaving the PB. Ryzhkov and Frolov were suggested as leaders for the CPSU. Both refused—the first so as not to appear to be running away from the government. Well, that’s noble! The second was flirting, as if to say—for now I would rather work on ideology at the PB. Van’ka is unsteady...

Bakatin was also named. Ligachev demanded that Gorbachev leave the Presidential post and devote himself entirely to the party. Clever move!

Gorbachev took the following position: either I am the sole contender for the first position in the Party—as General Secretary, Chairman, whatever—or I refuse a party post altogether. In other words, he sees a point in uniting the party and governmental posts only in his own person. Otherwise, in his words, it would be nonsense (from the perspective of *perestroika*).

At the CC Plenum on Friday they demanded that Gorbachev pick one of the posts. He replied the same way as at the PB.

Mal’kov, from Chita, demanded that Polozkov’s portraits be displayed as well (clearly on a tip from Ligachev).

In the meantime, the independent press, including “Kommunist,” is publishing their employee’s statements that they will not join the RCP. In retaliation, at the meeting of delegation representatives, Latsis (member of the “Kommunist” editorial board) was expelled from two Congress committees, and bawlers immediately demanded that he be expelled from the party.

Gorbachev's speech at the Plenum was sharp and tough. He said that he will not tolerate any more rudeness as there was at the Russian Congress. When he is in our circle, he has a vigorous and ironic outlook; he looks deadly tired. This is his element—to struggle. Here he gains strength.

It looks like things are moving in the direction of turning the CC and Politburo into an average team that will work solely on party affairs. M.S. is not going to let them have access to power. On the contrary, most likely he will strengthen the Presidential Council as an institution of power rather than a consultative body. As for the General Secretary position, he needs it to keep the party from getting out of hand and becoming a completely hostile force. If Ligachev becomes head of the party (even as the second from the top) then two parties will form, one of them on the “democratic platform.”

Novo-Ogarevo. On the next day after the last CC CPSU Politburo session in history, a large table was brought to the banks of Moscow-river, and situated at the edge of a precipice. Waiters brought appetizers and cognac. Someone started to develop a 35-gramm theory. I am sitting there and thinking—here is a man around whom the whole world is turning right now.... And we are sitting with him at a round table, like buddies. Sometimes he becomes so familiar, especially when reminiscing about Stavropol' or MGU. But who are we around him? Who am I? Around ten days ago he paid me such a compliment in front of everybody. “You've got style, he says. “Neither Frolov, nor Shakh, nor Bekkenin have such style. Anatoly's style! He feels me better than anybody. And his style is stricter than my own; he doesn't like verbose explanations.”

I included the famous phrase *Hic Rhodas, hic salta!* in the text of his speech. The expression remained in the text until the very last draft; everyone made a fuss and asked for it to be removed, but Gorbachev held on to it until the last draft.

July 8, 1990.

The Party Congress is in session. It is an assembly of crazed provincials and metropolitan demagogues. The level is so primitive that they are simply incapable to understanding anything besides the Higher Party School-taught “Marxism-Leninism.” Everything else is betrayal in their eyes. The best case scenario is the absence of ideology.

Yesterday Medvedev offered a brilliant rebuff; he was on the offensive and tried to prove that now we need to view the very essence of ideology differently. People listened to him because his speech was powerful, but in the end they were critical. One man came up to the microphone, held up his party ticket (it was red) and said: “Comrade Medvedev, do you know what this card would mean in the hands of a soccer referee? So, I am showing you a red card, i.e. ‘Off the field!’ as someone who grossly violated the rules of the game.”

The masses are thirsty for blood; they are demanding to hear every PB member in order to turn the Congress into an execution. Although Yakovlev did manage to slur them over with his sincerity, he's a smart cookie. They even applauded him. Overall he did not let them tear him apart. But yesterday during the Q&A he showed himself to be completely useless, simply unprofessional. He said a mass of dumb and banal things about Eastern Europe, about the

Communist Movement, which according to him became even better. He started reading quotes from his speeches in Lithuania, but people countered with other quotes from the same speeches—showing how he played up to the Balts. They brought up a transcript of his conversation with leaders of the “democratic platform” from the day before yesterday. He got so carried away with his talking that following the example of Tret’yakov from “Moskovskie novosti” he presented himself as an ideologue and pioneer of *perestroika*; implying that this is his role and Gorbachev merely translated his idea into slogans.

In general he was tongue-tied and pitiful.

Gorbachev said to me after meeting with raikom [regional committee] and gorkom [city committee] secretaries: “They are seekers of personal advantage. All they want are easy pickings and power.” He cursed. I told him: “Let them go. You are the President. You see what this party is, and you are practically turning into its hostage, its whipping boy.” His response: “You know, Tolya, you think I don’t see it? I see it very well. All your (!) Arbatovs and Shmelevs... write me notes in a similar vein. But you cannot let this mangy dog off the leash. If I let it go, this entire mass will turn against me.”

Yesterday at the Congress Ivashko took M.S. aside and whispered something to him. It turns out he warned M.S. there were plans to give the General Secretary an evaluation of “Unsatisfactory” in the Congress’ resolution. Immediately M.S. took the chairmanship of the Congress into his own hands. The majority had just voted to listen to every member of the PB and give them individual evaluations. M.S. rushed to “save the situation”: “If you do this, the party will split.” So it goes, instead of splitting the party himself two years ago he keeps trying to save it now, when it turned into a force hostile to him and to *perestroika*.

Sometimes reasonable voices break through at the Congress, but they are immediately knocked down. There are some “heartfelt cries,” for example yesterday’s speech by a woman from Tver’, but they only strengthen the general outcry against Gorbachev.

He is isolated. The days are gone when crowds of people would rush to him with questions after his speeches. He walks off the stage alone, accompanied by his bodyguard Volodya. One feels pity for him. And it is terrible when you feel pity for the head of state. But he is already pitied publicly, in newspapers and on television.

He blames his opponents for not realizing that we are living in an already different society. But he does not realize it himself, because his view of “a different society” does not correspond to what it is in reality. And for the most part, in reality it turned out to be bad, not good—as he expected it to be when he gave it freedom.

July 9, 1990.

Yesterday Gorbachev spent all day with “workers and peasants” at their Congress in the Kremlin. Then—a commission on the Party Charter. Relentless and persistent. Only what is he striving for? To have Ligachev as the General Secretary’s Deputy? And what will he “have” from a party like that?

All of Moscow's intelligentsia press is railing against the Congress and Ligachev with Polozkov, and they are at a loss regarding Gorbachev's tactics. There are indications that creative unions are planning to leave the CPSU en masse.

On this day came a message from George Bush, in which he tells about the meeting of the NATO Council in London. It is a good, friendly letter—moral support.

Yesterday Gorbachev gave an interview after meeting with the workers. Once again: "The CPSU is a workers' party. Its ideology stems from the working class." The people who stand with Gorbachev, or even without him but with *perestroika*, are in utter confusion. He says one thing in the Congress report, but under the threat of a strike in Kuzbass and the pressure from the Congress' loudmouths he says something else. He does not hear the rumble of history, as he had himself once warned Honecker.

Yeltsin's speech stands in contrast. It was written for him by Poptsov. One of the delegates called it Bonapartist, perhaps correctly from the populist perspective with an aim to prevent a civil war. Yeltsin in general looked more reliable than the President because he has a more definite stance. Meanwhile the latter thrashes in his tactics of compromise, even though a politically semi-literate person could understand that there will be no consolidation.

Today the candidates for General Secretary will be proposed. They will make decisions. I wonder, what will remain of the market and New Thinking ideas?

Yakovlev called, upset at having failed in his answers at the Congress. No, Sasha, you cannot speak well without preliminary preparations!

This week Kohl and Wörner (Secretary General of NATO) are already in Moscow. It is time for me to do my job. Meanwhile, the theatricals in the Kremlin continue... while the harvest, they say, is unprecedented this year. Who is going to reap it?

July 10, 1990.

It looks like today is a key day of the Congress. I don't know, maybe it is also key to all of *perestroika*. Gorbachev won once again, although there were 1300 votes against him. His concluding remarks were brilliant. I am particularly happy that he used everything I prepared on ideology, including about the "short course;" also that he offered the dissenting generals to retire. He made a strong comeback to questions about the market and agrarian policies, and all of foreign policy, not giving in on any point! But in answers to questions he again sang of "the socialist choice" and gave an unfortunate response to a question about Yeltsin ("if he is with us...").

Ligachev was not nominated for General Secretary. They must be saving him for the post of First Deputy.

From two sources I heard a rumor about a conspiracy by military-men (I heard from one major from Arbatov's institute and from a member of the Political News Agency, to whom

Makashev opened up, taking him to be one of their own). I need to warn Gorbachev, even though I have no facts.

July 11, 1990.

Gorbachev called me at midnight, satisfied. He was going over the twists and turns on his way to victory. We talked about the intellectual level of the Congress. Cohen told him: "By the end, the Congress turned more to the left." I replied: "Westerners reduce everything to the simple formula of 'left—right'." Reality is much more complex.

He told me that he is going to travel with Kohl in the Stavropol region. Here, Comrade Falin, is Yuri's Day for you.

He asked me to make a list of candidates for the CC from the intellectuals (as General Secretary he gets to propose a list of 75 people). He named Zhurkin and Martynov (director of academic institutes). I supported the choices. "But we no longer need Arbatov," he said.

Where am I going to find intellectuals under 60 for him? He asked me to name some women. He agreed with me that we are doing very poorly with the question of women. I said that I have only one in mind—Iskra Stepanovna Andreeva. "How old is she?"—60. "Well, it's a bit late."

He asked me to prepare materials for talks with Kohl.

July 12, 1990.

Today Yeltsin made a theatrical gesture from the podium at the Congress and announced that he is leaving the party. He left the room to the occasional cries of "Shame!" M.S. called me in the evening and started to explain that this is the "logical end." I replied, "You cannot underestimate this move." These kinds of things make a strong impression:

Firstly, on an emotional level. He allowed himself to do it, which elicits respect and interest in him.

Secondly, it is a signal to the public and the Soviets that from now on, one can disregard the CPSU. From now on, you can deal with the Party apparatus like this.

Thirdly, it is a signal to the communists. You no longer have to cherish your Party ticket and still ride high.

Fourthly (at the time I did not say this point to Gorbachev), you are the one who brought matters to the point where this became possible.

Fifthly, for two weeks you have been arguing over where to place the commas. You are ruining your authority by spreading out this empty jabber in front of the whole country. Meanwhile, the harvest is falling in the fields. And in general everything is coming to a standstill.

Finally and most importantly (I kept this to myself also) you fought fiercely to keep the Party General Secretary post to yourself. While he (Yeltsin) spat in its face and went off to do what you should have been doing.

Gorbachev got upset when I started praising the team of ministers and parliamentarians Yeltsin and Silaev put together. Gustily—in the Gorbachev manner—he started to predict failure for them. Just let them come face to face with real life, he said. That’s just it, I replied: I think they will get a hold of Russia pretty quickly. Oh, how worked up he got, accused me of being professorial, of applauding them, of being euphoric, etc. Of course, I was not too delicate... after the musical moment with Yeltsin’s outburst at the Congress.

June 14, 1990.

Yesterday I prepared materials for Gorbachev’s meetings with Kohl. In the end I wrote that they should come to an agreement on how Kohl will publicly respond to Gorbachev’s consent to Germany’s entry into NATO. After all, the world does not know about the agreement made with Bush in Washington, so it could appear that Bush was not able to convince Gorbachev, but the German quickly won him over with loans.

I do not attend the Congress. All that goes on there is shameful fussing over paragraphs, words and phrases. They are reviling against the “democratic platform” of Shestakovsky, Sobchak, Lysenko, “who disgraced the Congress;” they are demanding to expel these individuals from the Party and even strip them of their academic titles, because their dissertations are probably not based on Marxism-Leninism. This is the party for which Gorbachev fought.

Gorbachev filled his quota of CC members... and it is something! Among them are obvious enemies of *perestroika* such as deputy heads from the apparatus: Babichev, Degtyarev, Afonin, and others. They say he wants to make Van’ka (Frolov) a PB member.

Yakovlev came by, he is sad. He is in the position of “the Moor has done his duty...” On the whole, so am I. We are scribblers compared to Van’ka. Yakovlev is also offended by the fact that “towards the end,” Gorbachev fired his adviser Kuznetsov for chasing skirts and drinking, but in reality for being friends with general Kalugin, who caused a scandal at the KGB.

It must be said Kryuchkov turned into a vulgar informer, and vindictive to boot.

In this situation, I really don’t want to fly with him and Kohl to the Caucasus. Maybe I won’t have to? M.S. is becoming unpleasant to me on a human level.

July 15, 1990.

Wörner was visiting Gorbachev yesterday. This is an event.

Today—Kohl. In the morning they are meeting at the Schechtel mansion on Alexei Tolstoy Street. Gorbachev confirms his agreement to unified Germany’s entry into NATO. Kohl is decisive and assertive. He leads a clean but tough game. And it is not the bait (loans) but the

fact that it is pointless to resist here, it would go against the current of events, it would be contrary to the very realities that M.S. likes to refer to so much.

I feel somehow dilapidated; I can't understand what's wrong with me. Of course, the Congress left an oppressive impression. I am also affected by Gorbachev's treatment of people who are loyal to him till the end, who help him to remain at his level and realize his potential. Without them a lot of it would have been impossible. His attitude to us is also increasingly frustrating. He is beginning to be spoiled by power, as everyone does. Too bad.

Lately I have been thinking about retirement. Of course, it is ridiculous to take offense at the President of a superpower, and in general what are my feelings in the face of his tremendous workload. Still, there is a sense of personal worth. Moreover, considering his behavior, the work I do for him has lost its excitement. This was exactly how I was feeling when I "skipped work." From the mansion on Alexei Tolstoy Street I went to the CC instead of going to the airport to fly to the Caucasus. I used the excuse that he (M.S.) did not invite me personally. Although I knew that my name was on the confirmed list of the accompanying party. I really did not want to go with him this time, so I gave myself a little absence without leave. Later many people asked me, especially the Germans, why I was not at Arkhyz. Some suspected politics...

For some reason my thoughts about retirement correspond to Yeltsin's, Sobchak's, and Popov's withdrawal from the Party, and the intentions of many intellectuals to do the same. Most likely this is not a simple coincidence.

July 21, 1990.

At work I was preparing materials for Gorbachev's meeting with the Indian Singh. It seems like Gandhi has been passed over. So many solemn words were said. M.S. had sincerely believed that relations will blossom with "great India"... Nothing happened. In economic relations everything is as it was; we are reducing the military relations. The main focus was wrong.

Delors visited him. He is also taking a close look. Promised to study everything. But he will not give us money "for nothing." Overall, Gorbachev's name is becoming an increasingly questionable mortgage for the West. Look how much he has said recently: to Kohl, to Wörner, to the Indian Prime Minister, to each of the excellent foreigners? That we will have a credible Presidential Council, a strong Federation Council, and that we are going to have a union agreement. But when this Federation Council assembled, Yeltsin did not show up, and the Baltic States sent minor officials. Although, Prunskiene came, but immediately said that she has no intention of participating in any Union agreements; that Lithuania is leaving and she is only interested in this question. Gorbachev personally asked Gorbunov from Latvia to come, but he did not. Yeltsin is claiming the Kremlin as the President of Russia and for greater show. He gave a bunch of orders, compared to which the Estonian laws from last year—which practically disavowed the Center's rights—are mere child's prattle. Gorbachev has turned into power without connections and levers. How does he plan to govern?

No, Mikhail Sergeyevich. The logic of life is by far not the logic of correct reasoning. You started a process that has to have logical development. You built this into *perestroika*'s main idea. And it happened. So do not discredit yourself by trying to rule from the Center. You are left to wisely watch as everything starts working on its own; your job is not to interfere or harm anything. After all, this is your slogan—not to interfere. Except you were saying it in relation to the *kolkhozes* and their fate. But now it needs to be extended to everything, to the entire country. To begin with—do away with the ministries. The British Minister correctly pointed out when speaking to you in regard to our reform: “It hurts less when a cat’s tail is cut off in one swoop than piece by piece.”

Gavrila Popov made a Moscow-wide order to call back all policemen from guarding public sites, starting with the CC, the Moscow City Committee, raikoms, etc. He said there are not enough policemen to fight crime, while they stand around guarding Volynskoe-1, Volynskoe-2 and however many more of them there are.

Gorbachev told me “You are coming,” i.e. he is going on vacation to Crimea and I am accompanying him. But Kruchina did not provide me with a government car this time. Will they give me stenographers? After all, the Presidential Council is still a gray mouse.

July 29, 1990.

It was a difficult week. Singh is handsome, smart, calm, and is more interesting and serious than Rajiv. Immediately after him we had Andreotti. The preparation for him was even more serious. In between them Gorbachev managed to meet with Sakurate [sic] from Japan, after whom he complained: “if we keep talking about nothing but the islands, I am not going on a visit to Japan.”

Luckily, a meeting with Ikeda was scheduled soon after. He is an interesting figure. All the time he kept patting Gorbachev on the shoulder and every now and then would call out something in Japanese—out of delight for this great person. This inspired Gorbachev. He started philosophizing and again “went a long way.” The same thing happened with Andreotti. However, there is a hope that this one will provide some real help, unlike Delors, Bush, Hurd and others. In the meanwhile, Yeltsin addressed his fellow countrymen with a call to take in the harvest and promised a reward, i.e. not working for free! With these slogans and more he has done what I advised Gorbachev to do. He ignored it and is once again late.

By the way, Yeltsin’s address contains the following words: “Let us save what there is left to save in Russia, which has been the subject of such a careless experiment.” That’s about *perestroika*.

In an interview to an Austrian newspaper Yeltsin again wrote off Gorbachev. Right now he is vacationing in Yurmala and making agreements with the Balts about allied relations as equals. Here he is ahead of Gorbachev as well.

He is openly taking advantage of Gorbachev’s undertakings and the results of his policies. There would be no Yeltsin without Gorbachev.

Yesterday I re-wrote the text for the agreement with Germany after Kvitsinsky and Falin. Then I packed my suitcase and books. Tomorrow I am off to Crimea for “sweet forced labor.” This time with Petrakov and three women.

Shakhnazarov stopped by yesterday and said, “Maybe he (Gorbachev) does not need me anymore?”

“Why?”

“How is he taking on a third Armenian?”

At first I didn’t understand whom he meant. I thought Brutents, whom I pressed upon Gorbachev as an adviser. I was wrong. Primakov became the third.

August 21, 1990.

(The entry was made after returning from Crimea to Moscow)

On the day we arrived in Crimea for vacation, M.S. stumped me with an assignment to write an article on the subject of “Market and socialism.” “They accuse me of wanting to lead the country away from socialism, of betraying the socialist choice,” he said. Two days later I brought him a draft. “You misunderstood me. It is possible that I did not express my idea clearly.” I understood from what he said that he wanted something completely different.

Three days later I brought a new version. He grimaced, but said that it seems to be getting better. In a word, the cat loves fish but hates water. Most importantly, the combination of the two words in the title doesn’t work.

At the same time he assigned Shakhnazarov to prepare an interview on the issues of a Union agreement. When Shakhnazarov sent him a draft, Gorbachev rejected it and grumbled for a long time. He was upset because Shakhnazarov portrayed realistically what is inevitably going to happen. M.S. does not want this and is again lagging behind. First he struggles to restore a Leninist understanding of a federation, then struggles for a renewed federalism, then for a union of sovereign republics. Finally, for a Union of states, this is after some republics already announced their withdrawal from the USSR. Shakhnazarov changed his draft and sent over a tearful jumble, an admonition—do not leave, so to say, you will be in a bad way, while in the new Union it will be good!

But Gorbachev changed his mind regarding the article and the interview.

He decided to go to the Odessa military district maneuvers to make a speech touching upon these themes. Three times he re-dictated the texts. There seemed to be progress on the market question. For the first time he said that private property lies at the core of everything, without the “socialist” adjective or some other. He made up his mind regarding the crisis of socialism, calmed down about privatization, included it into socialist choice, but at the top of everything he decidedly placed denationalization. In a word, ideology, or rather mythology, still

has a strong hold on him because he believes that the majority of the population is still attached to it. He pays it a tribute, although less and less.

Upon returning from Odessa he asked me what responses there were to the speech. Alas! I could not tell him anything. I did not hear any responses from Moscow or among the vacationers at the sanatorium where I lived. He cannot accept the fact that word is only valued as deed nowadays, not as a reflection of ideology. Ideology is truly finished everywhere.

From Crimea he responded to various organizations' requests and sent greetings to all kinds of conferences, conventions, international meetings. But they were not published even in the national newspapers, much less were there any responses to them.

On August 11, 1990, in the evening he gathered in Mukhalatka some of the big bosses, who were vacationing in Crimea at the time. He has been doing this every year, but it was the first time I was invited to such a get-together. Present were Nazarbaev, Yazov, Medvedev, Frolov, Nishanov, Niyazov, Primakov; those with wives brought them too. Primakov, of course, was the master of ceremonies. Everybody was saying toasts. Gorbachev personally called on people to take the floor.

Nazarbaev spoke several times and there was a marked note of confidence in his voice. He was talking a great deal about the free market and about the unique natural wealth of "his state" without which other states in the Union would not survive.

Meanwhile, the crisis in Iraq was developing. I was afraid that M.S. would be hesitant to sharply condemn Hussein. Luckily, I was wrong. Plus, Shevardnadze was acting resolutely in the spirit of New Thinking. He coordinated everything with Gorbachev over the phone though, starting with the agreement to meet with Baker in Moscow and issue a joint statement. Sometimes, if he called at night, I would not disturb Gorbachev and take the responsibility on myself, assuring Eduard Amvrosievich that Gorbachev would support the decision.

One evening Gorbachev invited me and Primakov to a family dinner at his dacha. We had a sincere conversation, mostly about Yeltsin and Polozkov.

Gorbachev: "Everybody sees what a scoundrel Yeltsin is; he is a man of no rules, no morals, and no culture. Everyone can see he is engaged in demagoguery (Freedom to Tataria. Freedom to Komi. Freedom to Bashkiria—no problem!). It is Gorbachev that will have to pick up the tab. There is not a single criticism, not to mention a condemnation of him in any newspaper or TV program. Nothing is said even on his offensive interviews to various Swiss and Japanese newspapers, where he cannot but speak disparagingly of Gorbachev. I can have nothing to do with him as a person, but politically I will maintain a position of compromise because you cannot do anything without Russia."

We started talking about Polozkov. I said that the worse the situation in the RCP, the better. The more Stalinist it is, the sooner it will be off the political stage.

Primakov said there is a danger of a Yeltsin-Polozkov union. I agreed. There is. If the RCP grows weaker, Yeltsin will do it a favor by picking it up and using it to serve his Bonapartism. If it grows stronger, he will try to make an enemy out of it. Primakov suggested that we should be nice to Polozkov, give him some good position and let him leave the post of first in the RCP, while we put a *perestroika*-man in his place. I objected that this is an illusion. Polozkov may be dim, but he understands that if he leaves the post or gives up his Nina-Andreeva program, he will be a political corpse.

M.S. ignored our moves around this topic. He concluded like this: I have known Polozkov for a long time. He is an honest, decent guy, but he is dense, uneducated. Even in his last interview he showed that he does not understand what he says—whatever someone writes for him, he reads.

The conversation turned to Ryzhkov. Primakov's take: we should say goodbye to Ryzhkov. He unites the Military-Industrial Complex, the directors (including the military men), and he unites them on anti-Gorbachev positions. He is incapable of grasping the market, much less of implementing market concepts. He publicly opposes his program to the President's program, discredits the "Group 13,"⁶ and Abalkin has turned into his minion.

I supported Primakov. Gorbachev said: "You are little kittens. If in this situation I create another opposition front here, it will be the end. Ryzhkov and even the Council of Ministers will fall as the natural victims of the market system's objective development. The same will happen with the party's state power, and it will happen this year." Primakov and I agreed verbally, but not in our hearts, because we are again losing time. An economic program needs to be accepted not at some vague point in the future, but this September.

Shortly before his departure from Crimea Gorbachev (at Primakov's suggestion) invited Ignatenko to offer him "Fitzwater's post" (Bush' press secretary). Ignatenko is handsome, smart, talented. He has taken the magazine "Novoe vremya" [New Time] in a very good direction. He was very flattered by the offer, behaved in a very dignified manner. He reminded Gorbachev that had once made a film about Brezhnev, for which he got the Lenin Prize. M.S. did not make a big deal out of it. "The important thing," he said, "is what you are thinking and doing right now. All of us came from that time." In the evening they took a walk down the trails surrounding the dacha. Gorbachev was sounding him out on various subjects.

Ignatenko flew to Moscow and the next day called Primakov. According to Zhenya, he sounded somewhat sour—either because he got scared, or he doesn't want to leave the magazine and lose his freedom, or he is afraid to get too engaged with Gorbachev. Although during the conversation with Gorbachev he said boldly: two years ago I might have been hesitant, i.e. when Gorbachev was still on the rise, but now I agree irrevocably (when Gorbachev is doing worse and worse).

⁶ A group created by Gorbachev in concurrence with Yeltsin to prepare a market program (Shatalin, Petrakov, Yavlinsky and others). (author's note)

There was an order to reinstate citizenship for Solzhenitsyn and twenty-three other people. Gorbachev is late in this, too. This should have been done two, two and a half years ago, when such an action would have been attributed to him personally. Now nobody would give him credit for it; and in reality it is the result of the logic of the times. He gave it the impetus, but nobody connects it to him anymore. By the way, we (I, Shakhnazarov, Yakovlev, Arbatov) have been pestering him for a long time with Solzhenitsyn, even when the Politburo was in shape and had power. But at the PB he said: never! Although he had instructed us many times never to say “never.”

August 26, 1990.

Yesterday M.S. met with Dumas, France’s Minister of Foreign Affairs. Dumas was bowing and scraping: “France and the USSR make an irreplaceable [alliance]. It is particularly important for the Near East and Europe in light of German unification. Also it shows the United States that Europe where France is together with the USSR can do without them.” And the like. M.S. was in his top form and talked about his most sore points—the economy and the Union. He does not rule out the possibility that the former will be obstructed and the latter will collapse. He mocked Yeltsin. He no longer analyzes, as he used to do with foreigners, but waits for what is coming, ready for everything.

By the way, not too long ago in Crimea he told me, “I don’t want to work. I don’t want to do anything, I’m only continuing out of decency.” Quite the Boris Godunov kind of fate. Every day brings something new: either the tobacco riots, or fighting on the Armenian-Azeri front, or an explosion at the Ufa distillery and phenol in the water supply of a city with a million people, or Yeltsin’s games with handing out freedom to all of Russia’s regions and republics. He told the Frenchman that he will meet with Yeltsin soon, maybe on Tuesday, and will try to curb his populist style, to say that he is no longer at a meeting and has for a while been endowed with government responsibilities...

The people (mob) simply hate Gorbachev. He can feel it. He told me that “all of them” (i.e. Yeltsin & Co.) are deliberately exacerbating the destabilization, using people’s hatred and anger to seize power. He sees it as his task not to let them take it, because this would push the county into chaos and dictatorship. The atmosphere is ripe for it.

Ryzhkov does not want to leave the Kremlin. I think while he is in office the Council of Ministers will remain.

A scene at the airport. The following company was meeting M.S. on his return from the Crimea: members of the Presidential Council (for now this body has no state power, it is more a group of consultants and companions-in-arms), some people from the Politburo (Dzasokhov). Ryzhkov clashed with the authors of the “Group 13” program until he was white in the face. Gorbachev had to separate them. After Gorbachev left, Ryzhkov walked up to us, the advisers, to say goodbye and, shaking with hatred, said to Petrakov, “Oh, I will have you go down in history!” Lukyanov, who was standing nearby, added, “If you keep going like this, the Supreme Soviet will overthrow the government in September, and in November the Congress of People’s

Deputies will be disbanded, as well as the Supreme Soviet itself. New elections will be scheduled and no later than December the President will be overthrown... and you, too.”

August 27, 1990.

Today Meguid was here—Egypt’s Minister of Foreign Affairs. M.S. incorporated a “Soviet-Egyptian” factor with a nuance, an accent on the Arabs. It is good that he is restoring relations with Egypt in time, essentially giving them preference in the Arab world, despite Assad’s pretensions. Overall, so far we are in a “white jabot” over there. And we are maintaining New Thinking. But if Hussein does not back down, it will be a nightmare.

Telegrams from all over the place are coming in for Gorbachev: crime is taking us by the throat in the worst forms—murder, burglary, robbery, rape of minors, arms depots. The provinces are asking to arm the citizens. There is an outcry regarding the authorities’ and the President’s helplessness. The crime rate is exacerbated by the empty shelves, the tobacco shortage (there have been tobacco riots), economic and national disorder. This is the perfect atmosphere for dictatorship. Where will it come from? Gorbachev is incapable of it. Should power be handed over to some emergency committee?

What a symptom of the crash of communism—in Sofia the CC building was burned down and for three hours they would not let the firefighters get close. It is 1933 Reichstag in reverse! With the same potential outcome.

This time a united Germany will save Europe. But who is going to save us? Should Gorbachev leave, everyone will distance themselves from us.

August 28, 1990.

It looks like Gorbachev met with Yeltsin. Yesterday he was receiving the Hungarian Thürmer. He leads the party that replaced the HSWP. I remember how 12 years ago, he was a young kid accompanying me around Budapest, carrying my suitcase. I recall I slammed his hand with a car door. He was talking about “imperialists” who are pressuring Eastern Europe’s communists.

Shakhnazarov stopped by. He suggested that Gorbachev write a letter to Bush and Thatcher, urging them not to stir up the neo-fascists against the communists in Eastern Europe. I mocked the idea. In general, Ostroumov—Gorbachev’s adviser on CPSU affairs—out of his over-suspicious nature and Shakhnazarov out of concern for public property (Armenian nature) are calling not to be too soft on our own fascists, who also can burn down buildings, including the CC. I find it funny and hard to believe, and I am not afraid even though something is clearly coming.

M.S. does not see it, or maybe he does not want to react. I think Russia will not be renewed without a shock, especially after such collapse and disintegration. And what hatred can be felt towards communism everywhere!

September 1, 1990.

The Presidential Council was in session for two days. Afterwards, M.S. gave a press conference and quite confidently talked in the spirit of “let’s be friends.” In fact, there had been a scandal. The demand for Ryzhkov’s resignation sounded as the session’s refrain. In response, Ryzhkov said that he needs a day to think about it, and immediately burst forth with, “If it comes to resignations then we should all resign (he looked at M.S.). We all played a hand in the collapse, all brought the matters to blood, to economic chaos, we were all striving for what we have... Why do I have to be the scapegoat?”

At a press conference today Yeltsin was merciful to Gorbachev, but said, “Ryzhkov should leave himself. If he doesn’t, we will leave him.” He highly praised Shatalin’s program and promised to implement it as the core of Russia’s reform.

The program (I examined it) is not even the European Common Market, but more like EAST [sic]. Little is left of the Union. But, it looks like there is no other way to maintain a semblance like the USSR had been. Although, Yeltsin offered to form a “Council of Presidents” as a supreme power with equal representation.

The people in food lines are seeping with anger and hatred for Gorbachev. Today “Pravda” published a collection of workers’ letters, which sputter at *perestroika* and Gorbachev. Next to them is praise for Stalin and Brezhnev. Yes, this is the start of the road to Golgotha.

Yeltsin has credit to last him at least two years, while Gorbachev’s credit is moving closer to zero every day. Yeltsin is freeloading off Gorbachev’s ideas and statements, and off his inconsistency. Everything he says right now has been said by M.S. at the corresponding stages over *perestroika*’s five years. But he was too hesitant to act, ideology held him by his coattails. He is still not free from it.

In Crimea this year he started off by coming up with a concept for an article that would make excuses and show that he is for socialism. At the same time he patronized the “Group 13” with Shatalin, Petrakov, and others, who do not even use the words socialism, socialist choice, ideology, etc.

Maybe he tried to reconcile them at the Presidential Council, too, along the lines of “why should we push away Ryzhkov. If someone cannot handle the work, he can be replaced. But why such extremes—resignation of the government.” Although he said even in Crimea that Ryzhkov is hopeless.

In the end, he has cast aside everyone with whom he started *perestroika*, except Yakovlev and Medvedev. Everyone ended up overboard or as his fierce enemy who has his own groups and followers. But he stretched this “process” out for 3 years, while this revolution should have been made like revolutions ought to be.

September 2, 1990.

M.S. asked me to work out (for the meeting with Bush) three possible outcomes for the Persian Gulf.

- Blockade (how long will Hussein be able to hold out, will it yield results);
- A military solution (outcomes for both sides and for us);
- Compromise (what kind?)

He assigned me to ask Mitterrand and Mubarak what they would “advise.” Also, send a message to Hussein: can he say anything new in relation to the Bush-Gorbachev meeting?

While Shevardnadze is travelling to China and Japan, Kovalev has been “coordinating” every line with me, including who is going to be present at the breakfast in Helsinki: this is really not my “profession”!

What is going to happen with Ryzhkov? With the economic program? With the Union? I think by New Years we are no longer going to have a country. Will we have Gorbachev? Probably yes.

September 4, 1990.

At a breakneck pace I have been preparing materials for M.S.’ meeting with American senators, with Aziz (from Hussein), and doing some major work on the “five blocks” for Helsinki with Bush. Brutents gave me an acceptable block. The materials from the MFA are cheap and bureaucratic texts.

“Izvestia” is printing Shatalin’s program. The Russian parliament is in the initial stages of adopting it. All the while the Congress of the Russian Communist Party (stage two) is calling all of this anti-Soviet, a betrayal of socialism and the surrender of the country to capitalism. All of this is happening against the background of the “latest deficit” (after which there can only be a rebellion in Russia)—the bread deficit. Thousand-people-long lines form at the bakeries where bread is available. Something incredible has happened to Russia. Maybe we really are on the threshold of a violent catastrophe?

It seems Gorbachev is at a loss. Power is crawling out of his hands before his eyes, while he spends entire days in meetings with various representatives of the economic platform and the union agreement, instead of waiting for the parliaments to do it. And he spends half his day attending the RSFSR CP Congress. What does he expect from them? It looks like he is completely confused and does not know what is going on. He does not see what can be done. He asked Shakhnazarov this question yesterday.

September 13, 1990.

On the evening of September 9th we flew to Helsinki with M.S. There was a conversation with Koivisto at the Presidential Palace. Lunch of two presidential couples and Kalela and I (he is Koivisto’s Chief Clerk). M.S. became very open as if he were with a bosom (Soviet) friend, talking about the market, the soul, the fate of a statesman, the fact that he has “accomplished his mission” and can leave. In a word, there was a completely informal atmosphere.

At night M.S. gathered his compatriots-in-arms for a brainstorming session before the meeting with Bush. We stayed up until 3a.m. Shevardnadze did not say much. Primakov was

pushing to consider the Arabs. Falin kept returning to the “class line,” referring to a conference of Europe’s “left” in Tampere. I was calling for “Realpolitik”—America has to be given preference over the Arabs. This is our salvation and our future. To my surprise, at the meeting with Bush, 95 percent of the time M.S. took my direction and left 5 percent for the Arabs. This has an effect, because the Americans do not trust us completely.

I stayed up practically until morning, making a conversation diagram based on the discussion. In the morning we were walking from the hotel to the Embassy, hearing tipsy Finnish couples saying “Hello!”... (Actually, one could have a special discussion about this—friendly, happy, calm, well-fed, self-confident people).

On the 10th in the morning, M.S.—Bush + Scowcroft and I. M.S. dominated. Bush really wanted support, he was nervous that Gorbachev would fall through, after all the Persian Gulf and Hussein have put Bush’ presidency on the line. But M.S. gave him the maximum: even unexpectedly, without waiting for Bush’ suggestion, he said that the Sabah family (Kuwait’s rulers) should be reinstated. He almost convinced [Bush] of the necessity to connect dealing with Hussein with the Palestinian question.

Then we had lunch. Afterwards there was a meeting of the delegations, to which I was late because I was composing the background for the press-conference. The press-conference itself was quite an event! M.S. was confident and very good. In a word, he showed the world that he is the leader of a power, a great power, despite the chaos at home. And the whole world believed in him once again.

But to our people, it’s like water off a duck’s back. Even this they did not appreciate. They did not notice history being made in Helsinki.

September 14, 1990.

Yesterday 22 American businessmen visited Gorbachev. M.S. charmed them, but they are business people and through Matlock’s lips persistently tried to find out: with whom do you do business here? Herein lies the main problem of Soviet business.

Stopping the conversation mid-way through, Gorbachev, Shevardnadze, Baker, Ross, and I went to the adjoining room. As if continuing the enthusiasm of his businessmen, Baker said openly to Gorbachev that in his entire political career he had not met a more courageous, bold, and great leader, who dared to turn the country around, overturning 70 years of its history. “Until last year,” Baker went on, “I was hesitant and cautious. But today Bush and I are wholly behind you. We sincerely wish you success.”

The conversation, as they say, went arm-in-arm. M.S. called him Jim. However, he did not promise transport aircraft to transfer Syrian troops to Saudi Arabia (later, when Shevardnadze asked him about it he replied: we don’t need to get involved!).

He asked Baker for a non-binding loan of billion to a billion and a half dollars with repayment in five years. Baker personally would have agreed, but he said the law does not allow

it. If they were to go to Congress with, “you’d be able to finish two *perestroikas* in that amount of time.”

By the way, in relation to such closeness between Gorbachev and the Secretary of State, I remembered Helsinki. The one-on-one talk with Bush was finished, but Bush was hesitating about something... Then he held out his hand, “Until lunch! See you soon!” and suddenly, “Can I call you by your first name?” (i.e. by the familiar address) M.S. gladly replied and immediately called him George. From this moment on M.S. became Michael.

In the meantime, we both still have weapons capable of destroying each other ten times over. As it turns out, the START talks in Vienna are going badly (this is Baker and Shevardnadze’s evaluation, which they gave yesterday in a talk with M.S.). This means Michael and George’s Helsinki plan to come to an agreement this year is in jeopardy.

I told Akhromeev about this today. He says, “We cannot do anything. The Americans are refusing to negotiate on marine aviation.” That’s Mike and George for you! And there is Comrade Moiseev too (Chief of General Staff), who is worse than Akhromeev.

Today Gorbachev met with Hurd (Great Britain’s Minister of Foreign Affairs). Before the meeting I armed him with some information I got from Zamyatin (Ambassador in London). He writes that Thatcher is offended, she is jealous of Gorbachev’s attention, says that he has lost interest. He is always with Kohl or Mitterrand, while she deserves to be treated better. M.S. tried to “compensate” and in the conversation with Hurd he flowed with praise for Margaret and even offered to make an agreement similar to the one with Germany and France. In the evening Gorbachev met with two Israeli ministers (finances and energy).

We are counting on getting 10 billion... Well, well! In any case this meeting is a sensation with enormous consequences. Especially in the context of the Persian Gulf War.

By the way, Gorbachev notified Baker yesterday that he will meet with the Israelis. Baker, laughing and shaking his finger, exclaimed, “Just don’t ask them for money! Look at the fix Reagan got himself into.” (The fact of the matter is that with Israel as the intermediary, Reagan asked Iran for money, in order to send it to the Nicaraguan Contras). Later, when we were leaving from the Kremlin and Gorbachev put me in the car with him I blurted out, “Then what are these ministers for, anyways?!” He laughed. But I tried to suggest the economist (!) Petrakov for this meeting with the Israelis. He and Yakovlev attended.

September 15, 1990.

The Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs De Michelis visited M.S. On behalf of Andreotti he announced that Gorbachev had been awarded a prize by the Fiuggi Foundation (Italians equate it to the Nobel Prize). After the Italians left, and Shevardnadze and Adamishin with them, Gorbachev said to me, “Tolya, what should I do? What is there to grasp on to?” Indeed. Yesterday at the Supreme Soviet there was a competition between the programs offered by Abalkin, Aganbegyan, Shatalin. Each defended his own, while the people’s jaw is dropping. Ryzhkov keeps insisting on his own plan: “My program is realistic, sparing.” Should there be a

referendum on the programs? It is silly. The Republics were sent the alternative options; they can each choose whatever they like. But Russia has already entered the market and in general does whatever it wants. Ryzhkov promised to raise the purchasing price of meat starting January 1st. Word got out and meat disappeared completely. Then Silaev announced that prices in Russia will be raised on September 15th. What is Ryzhkov's resolution without Russia?!

Yesterday the Politburo discussed in panic what to do about the demonstration by half a million people that is scheduled for September 15th in Moscow and other cities under the slogan "Down with Ryzhkov" and in some places Gorbachev, too.

I am swamped this week; I have been writing materials for Gorbachev's daily talks with foreigners, then recording what they say during the meetings, then writing messages for TASS and the newspapers. My imagination is worn thin; there are not enough words to escape the banality, although Gorbachev does help out—he always has some unusual turn of thought or some "such" phrase.

Nowadays he is asking everyone for money and loans. Today, for example, he asked De Michelis for a billion and a half.

September 16, 1990.

I am catching up on my reading for a week. Viktor Nekrasov in "Literaturnaya gazeta" [Literary Gazette] published an article called "Testament," written in 1981. It is about the tragedy of a generation, about us, history, about his famous book ("V okopakh Stalingrada" [Front-line Stalingrad]); he finishes his article with the words: "The enemy was defeated! We were victorious! But our cause turned out to be wrong."

Petrenko's article about Lenin's illness. Sick and nearing death, Lenin reassesses his work. There is a desire to step aside. Reality did not match up to theory and he (Lenin!) started to look for justification in flattering and enthusiastic mass praises of his genius.

Sokolov's article on the situation in the country—no reform program is going to work here, even if it is made by the best minds in the world with the help of the most powerful computers. Because there is no stability, no law, no continuity of solutions, no security, citizens are unprotected... Because the state is collapsing.

The three articles are three "points" that define my personal drama right now—hopelessness.

September 18, 1990.

At the Supreme Soviet Aganbegyan, Shatalin, and Abalkin continue their battle. The first two are saying that it is not a choice between socialism and capitalism, but between life and the grave. Abalkin defends Ryzhkov, he wants to save him (and himself) with populism. The Congress of People's Deputies gives more and more material to people like Sukhov (driver from Donbass) to blame Gorbachev for betrayal of the party and socialism.

M.S. asked me yesterday whether I've been going to the Supreme Soviet sessions. I said, "No."

- Out of principle?
- No time.
- I see.

He wanted to know my opinion of his speech yesterday at the Supreme Soviet. Petrakov told me it was good... if everything had not been adjusted and forced to comply with the socialist idea.

September 20, 1990.

All day today I was preparing materials for M.S.' meeting with Lafontaine tomorrow. For several months I have been trying to resist this meeting, especially lately. We do not need this double game. Even if he becomes chancellor (with Genscher's support) he will be doing the same thing as Kohl—German unification (no matter how upset he is with us).

However, the lobbying efforts by Falin & Co., and M.S.' social-democratic friends (even Kvitsinskiy joined them) won him over: M.S. will see Lafontaine. So I was racking my brains on how not to ruin the "party" with Kohl during this most crucial stage of united Germany's emergence. I am also going to have to "adapt" the conversation's results for the press: M.S. might be overly frank.

Solzhenitsyn: a brochure in "Komsomolskaia Pravda" and "Literaturnaia gazeta." Ignatenko's conversation with M.S. about Solzhenitsyn: he will remain in history... and you. Lenin will fade away, but you two will remain. Think big, right?

September 22, 1990.

Everything is becoming more and more confused. The Supreme Soviet did not accept the market program. The Abalkin-Shatalin-Aganbegyan group has been reestablished. There will be different versions. Gorbachev demanded emergency powers to implement a market. The RSFSR Supreme Soviet bristled and produced a decree: none of the USSR President's resolutions are valid in Russia without the RSFSR Supreme Soviet's ratification.

Travkin later told me about the accusations Russia's deputies threw at Gorbachev: he destroyed the CPSU, broke up the Union, lost Eastern Europe, liquidated Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, dealt a blow to the army, emptied the shelves, spread crime, etc. By the way, in his speech at the Supreme Soviet before the discussions of market programs, Gorbachev made a bad "faux pas"—again he started talking about a federation instead of a Union of States. By the way, who is telling him that the era of sovereignty has passed?

During a break M.S. spoke with Lafontaine. In the evening Aitmatov pressed upon him to meet with a Mufti and some foreign Mullahs to discuss the role of Islam. This is becoming absurd—the difference between his position internationally and domestically.

All the mass media can talk about is Yeltsin's minor car accident, in which he sustained a small bruise. The weekly "Souz" [Union] published an interview with him. He is truly growing into a leader. He has surpassed M.S. in the definitiveness of his positions, in his ambition and impudence, not to mention popularity.

Days, days, weeks. The sense that everything is going to come crashing down grows ever sharper. The life I have in my work reminds me every day that a change of regime has taken place and I, together with others in a similar position, are finding ourselves like the former people in 1917. Everything that I had or earned came from the old regime. It was a reward for serving it. Now I can no longer boast that I've been working all my life. Ask for compensation? From whom? They will tell me: ask from whomever you served. And overall, it will be fair.

September 23, 1990.

I took Khodasevich off the shelf, what poetry! "Khranilishche" [Repository] and others get under your skin... It is strange that only in old age I really began to feel poetry, to distinguish its language from a simple "method of expression."

The revolution is coming. The one Gorbachev caused. But he was not expecting this and for a long time did not want to call it a change of government, not to mention a change of regime. Even still, he only talks about a change in the economic system. No, what is happening is truly equal to 1917, even if "in reverse."

September 25, 1990.

To use Gorbachev's term, yesterday was a breakthrough. M.S. made several heated speeches about the market program and demanded special powers to implement it. But the decision was delayed once again, and yet another committee was formed, to be headed by Gorbachev, and again it will try to combine the incompatible. Everyone can see it, but they are conceding to his indestructible compromise tactics.

Yesterday "Izvestia" carried an article by Pavlova-Selvanskaya—a most intelligent and angry aristocrat. She gave a careful analysis of Gorbachev's "strategy and tactics," which led to what we have, and provided a striking and deeply consistent personal, economic and systemic analysis.

In the meanwhile, everything is going downhill, the harvest is spoiling, communications are breaking, deliveries have ceased, the stores are empty, factories have stopped, and transportation workers are striking. By the way, there was an announcement on TV—the salary for some shabby little position ranges from 300-1000 rubles! There is no market yet, but the prices are already climbing up.

September 27, 1990.

It is 11 a.m. and I am still home. Even here "discipline is lacking." I would never have allowed myself something like this before...

Today I will have to prepare M.S.' telegram to Weizsäcker on the occasion of Germany's unification; find some materials for his meeting tomorrow with General Electric; decide on a schedule for October-November: Mitterrand, the Standing Consultative Commission (WTO's funeral) in Budapest, Spain, Kohl at his birthplace with a big Soviet-German Agreement; Andreotti with an Agreement and the Fiuggi; the Pan-European Summit, etc.

He keeps postponing the decision; Shevardnadze is already knocking... (By the way, at the UN, E.A. made a very "progressive" speech, which means that we have completely torn with ideology-based foreign policy. "Over there" it created an impression, but here I had to pressure Efremov ("Izvestia" editor) to publish the full text.)

M.S. called last night: "People say that after Helsinki Gorbachev did not do anything for the Persian Gulf crisis..."

"Who says that?"

"The Americans..."

"How is that possible? You meet with various foreign dignitaries practically every day and you confirm the approach you developed at Helsinki... Plus, consider Shevardnadze's speech, it also demonstrates your policies. Nobody would think that he 'allowed himself' to give that speech."

M.S. calmed down. But where did he get these ideas? Who is feeding them to him? I haven't seen such information, but he must have a special source.

Yesterday with Andrei Grachev we were picking people for the Presidential Council's International Department. Some from the CC International Department, but the majority will be fresh people who made themselves known through "party-unaffiliated" newspapers.

Bovin keeps asking: Count, let's get together and have a real heart-to-heart. I keep promising him, but things come up, and I don't really want to drink. Most importantly—it is no longer interesting to me. There is nothing I could get from him that I could not get from the newspapers. Nowadays, the kitchen conversations that were so popular during the stagnation period are somehow no longer appealing.

Frolov spent 10 days with his wife and two advisers touring France by car (for the *Fête de L'Humanité*), two weeks in Italy (at *L'Unità*'s festivities). On October 2nd there will be a party meeting in "Pravda." On the agenda: expressing distrust in its leadership. I would be very happy if he were slammed precisely when he "achieved" his highest point. Kulak nature. And so M.S. would see whom he cherished and exalted!

September 29, 1990.

Last night at work I finished up M.S.' greetings for Weizsäcker and Kohl on the occasion of Germany's unification. Then M.S. met with the intelligentsia. I was devouring telegrams. I wrote him a proposal—something should be done about our specialists working in Iraq. Unlike

the Americans and others, we once again do not take care of our own people, and they are beginning to mutiny. We did not evacuate them early and now they are trapped. Hussein is already including them in the “human shield.” I wrote a note about Lafontaine and Bahr’s suggestion to train our officers in civilian professions.

Gusenkov and Arbatov called regarding the “threat” of a military coup and civil war. My friends, this will not happen! It will be worse.

It is truly time to get rid of the Supreme Soviet. Today it discussed the issue of cancelling the friendship agreement with the GDR. It would seem this is a routine-formal act. The Germans cancelled this agreement by a government decree, since the subject of the agreement has disappeared. But our people kept discussing it until they decided to make Kohl the successor of this agreement, which by the way mentions the inviolability of the border between the two Germanys, the struggle against West-German imperialism, etc.! And in the end, they did not accept a resolution. Tomorrow they will continue the discussion.

I advised Kovalev (Shevardnadze is in New York right now) to tell M.S. about this. M.S.’ reaction was: tell them to go to hell! But it is not only stupidity at work here. It is a conscious provocation against Gorbachev’s policies towards Germany from people like General Makashov and others, who believe that we gave Eastern Europe away “without a fight” and the like; against all of “this so called New Thinking.” They do not really try to hide their attitude that it would be nice to have Stalin back to deal with “all these politics of ours.” Falin, the CC, and “my” International Department, which is desperately struggling for survival, are playing along to these types of politicians.

Ambassador Blech from Germany visited me. He was effusive in gratitude to Gorbachev. He left a message from Kohl. M.S. did not want to publish it here. (I insisted on a review in “Izvestia”). It is his obkom fear before the people—not to appear to be flirting with the Germans...

Nevertheless M.S. agreed to my proposal to publish his greetings to Weizsäcker and Kohl. It has already been broadcast today on TV’s “Vremya” [Time].

Yesterday I glanced at my diary from the end of the war and 1945 up until mobilization. I had not looked at it in decades. I was stunned—the language is intelligent and literary, expressing an educated view. In some places it did not even sound like me! After all, I had only three years of university behind me and the war....

October 6, 1990.

Yesterday after a meeting with the ILO (Hansenne) I stayed with M.S. to work on his speech for the CC Plenum together. Shakhnazarov came over and we once again started rewriting. We worked on it until 9p.m., as always getting frequently distracted... He was railing against “Izvestia” for supporting all anti-Gorbachev sentiments, I objected.

Frolov called M.S., complaining about the beating he took at the party meeting of “Pravda” editors... I was listening to the conversation... M.S. saying into the phone: “No need to publish, we will figure it out, this is the CC Secretariat’s job. Send me a transcript.” He was calming him down, but not too approvingly.

When he finished the conversation, he came up to us. I said: “How quickly Ivan brought things to a mutiny aboard. You know what was the last drop? His trip with his wife and team in France and Italy. Two weeks instead of two days at the expense of the treasury and “friends,” and at such a time in our country!”

“That was nothing... It was those drunkards, who with Afanas’ev (former “Pravda” editor) had a nice party and stirred things up... It is aimed against me...”

“Clearly. Ivan can’t say two words without referring to how you love him and support him in everything.”

“Stop, Anatoly. You are not objective, I know how you feel about Ivan...”

“How can one be objective?! For over two years he has been an adviser and brazenly and defiantly did nothing. The only thing he did was become an academician... As for him not doing any work—here are live witnesses (I pointed to Shakh, the secretaries), you could bring the whole staff of typists here, they would tell you how they retyped for the umpteenth time his twenty-year-old book on the ‘Man and Lysenko’—at the public’s expense and on government paper! Meanwhile, you made him CC Secretary, editor of ‘Pravda,’ member of the PB!!”

“Let it go Anatoly, I am telling you that you are not objective. Subjectivity fits neither science nor politics! See how worked up you’ve become!”

That was the end of the conversation...

When we started talking about the tarnishing of our history on TV, Gorbachev again “jumped” to talking about Stalin’s hatred for the peasants and his deliberate campaign to destroy them. But on our TV they “keep showing these lies that life in villages was good, while in reality, I should know, it was rags, poverty, and hopelessness.”

When M.S. decided to introduce into his speech an already worn-out topic of how people came down on Lenin when he was introducing the NEP, I told him, “The most important and relevant thing is not that they came down on him, but that they did not understand it and rejected it, with the ensuing consequences. Everything went awry.”

I bought Nietzsche’s “Thus spoke Zarathustra.” It swept over me. I had read it when I was a student, before the war, after finding it in a used-book shop. How engrossed I was! How clearly I remembered my impressions from it. But now I am having difficulty getting through it. Probably there is a proper time for everything, even in personal development.

I am reading the White-Army officer Roman Gul, “Ledovoi poxod” [Ice March]—everything is turning over. Our whole history is before my eyes. Naumov visited me; he is the

“team-leader” on the project of writing “Essays on the History of the CPSU.” They raised such layers that the whole world is flipped upside down. We did not have history for practically a century. What we knew and what we were taught was sheer forgery and lies. This concerns our side—the revolutionaries and the Bolsheviks; it concerns White Russia, it concerns all our people during the revolution and afterwards.

However, I remember my childhood in Maryina Roshcha. There were some material difficulties, yes... after 1929... Something with the kolkhozes... how we would go to the dacha during the hungry years, how we waited for father at the station—he would bring a little bag of bread. But overall the memories are bright... Mother’s quasi-aristocratic impetus must have saved us from the reality of daily life: the piano, German lessons, French lessons, a foreign governess, distance from the Roshcha’s raggedy environment—“blue blood.” Books, books. Then an elite school.

October 9, 1990.

The Plenum started yesterday. “Vremya” mentioned it in 20th place: the announcer stated the agenda and that Gorbachev spoke. That was it. It is a sign that the party is truly leaving the stage. Gusenkov was telling me that the Plenum was nothing but whining that the party has been open to debasement, everyone tramples and drives it away, mocks it and pushes it aside. And there is no one to protect it. The General Secretary abandoned it; he has no time for it. And in general—the market is dealing the final blow to the conditions in which the party could have meant something. M.S. was allegedly annoyed by Ivashko and Dzasokhov’s weak reports; afterwards he convened the PB.

Why does he bother with this? The first rule of politics is to be able to leave behind something that has already been worked out. I still cannot figure out, did he want to reduce the party to such a state? If yes, then why try to galvanize it? It is impossible to revitalize “this” party, without disbanding it.

Or did it happen by the logic he endowed *perestroika* with? I.e. he did not expect such a precipitous destruction of the party’s authority and together with it of Marxism-Leninism—a term that has practically turned into an obscenity. But then he should have resisted the collapse. Instead, he tolerates anti-Gorbachev articles in “Pravda” itself. Although, they say the Sunday “Komsomolka” already revealed the contents of “Pravda’s” party meeting—they demanded to remove their top leadership.

I finished reading Solzhenitsyn’s “March of 1917.” A brilliant work—he predicted everything. I think future generations are going to formulate their idea of our Great Revolution through the Solzhenitsyn’s “Krasnoe Koleso” [Red Wheel], just as many generations imagined 1812 based on L.N. Tolstoy’s “War and Peace.”

October 14, 1990.

I was preparing M.S.’ meeting with Reichman & Co. (a Jewish-American millionaire). Nobody has worked on it since the spring meeting—neither Sitaryan, nor Malkevich, who sent

200 runners to Canada to “feed.” Now Reichman cannot stand him and even asked not to invite him to the meeting with M.S.

There was an episode with Primakov’s “packet” for Hussein (after his trip there). Shevardnadze blocked it, he was jealous. It is amazing. I wrote M.S. a note, he wrote a resolution on it (taking out the paragraphs about jealousy and other that would be offensive to Shevardnadze). He ordered E.A. and Primakov to urgently prepare a proposal on Primakov’s trip—Rome-Paris-Washington D.C.... But Primakov later called, Shevardnadze blocked the proposal, “without me, I am not participating in this, the Americans will not start a war.” By the way, to a great extent Primakov owes his political career to Shevardnadze, it was thanks to him that Gorbachev decided to promote Primakov and not Arbatov.

Yesterday after work I took a walk down Moscow streets. I felt like I’ve outlived my time and simply do not understand anything around me anymore. The angry public has lost all criteria of a decent life. Very rarely you see a normal Muscovite, or an intelligent face. The city’s atmosphere is saturated with vanity and crime.

For the umpteenth day M.S. has been sitting on the Presidential Council and the Federation Council. Again he is leading the discussion of a new version of the market program. I don’t know, I don’t know... He has already recoiled from Shatalin. “Life,” he told me, “has raised this beautiful program to the clouds.” Now at the Supreme Soviet he is going to be defending a symbiosis or just Ryzhkov’s program, although he promised “not to make a jumble out of them.”

M.S. made a strategic mistake during the transition from *perestroika*’s destructive period, when his ratings were soaring, to the “constructive” period. Despite saying on numerous occasions that the natural logic of society’s development needs to be freed instead having yet another plan imposed upon it, he is now trying to play the role of chief designer and architect of a new society. But this is already impossible even in principle, not to mention that for all his talent he is not competent for this function.

I had hoped that after becoming president he would rise “above” the daily political process. It turns out that he only intended to obtain a way to “control the process.” Pernicious nonsense. He is grasping at everything and imposing himself on the party, the parliament, all kinds of committees, and scientific gatherings.

It looks like we are going to Spain on October 26-28th and to France on the 28-29th.

I am uneasy. My diligent work under Gorbachev seems ever more meaningless. The work in foreign policy that brought the turning point has already been done. What remains is to keep the military men at bay; more precisely—to wait out until this generation of generals is gone.

October 17, 1990.

Today, by the way, is a fateful date: on October 16, 1941 there was a panic in Moscow. Precisely on this date, yesterday, Yeltsin made a speech at the RSFSR Supreme Soviet. It was a declaration of war on Gorbachev. In essence: the President broke the agreement with Yeltsin. The market program he proposed at the USSR Supreme Soviet is unachievable. It is a betrayal of Russia. Now Russia has to choose from three options:

1. To separate (its own money, its own border customs, its own army, etc);
2. A shared coalition union government: half from Gorbachev, half from the democrats and Russia,
3. A card system until Gorbachev's program falls through. Then, in the chaos, we will figure it out; the people will take to the streets.

At 10a.m. Gorbachev called a meeting of the Presidential Council. Not everyone had read Yeltsin's speech yet. The discussion started. Meanwhile, in my "historical" memory I saw a session of the Provisional Government in the Winter Palace in October of 1917: Smolny dictates, otherwise an assault.

Lukyanov called for tough measures. Kryuchkov supported him. Revenko noncommittally agreed, adding by the way that Ukraine had already fallen off and after Yeltsin's speech there will be a chain reaction, and hesitation will be fatal. The academician Osipyan analyzed extensively why Yeltsin made the speech now as opposed to some other time. Only Shevardnadze spoke against confrontation and against having M.S. appear on TV to censure Yeltsin. Medvedev also urged to "continue the legal process" without asking for trouble or playing up to Yeltsin by responding in kind with rudeness and threats. Ryzhkov raged: here we go again! The government is a whipping boy! Nobody listens to me. I, the chairman of the government, call some official and he does not show up. Orders are not carried out. The country is out of control. The collapse is in full swing. All the media is against us. Everyone is in opposition. Even the All Union Central Council of Trade Unions and the party. But we are communists, Nikolai Ivanovich clamored, we are from this party! Even "Izvestia" and "Pravda" are working against us. We should at least get the CC organ newspapers back. And clear out half the television people.

Rasputin spoke in the same vein. In a word, everyone is scared. It was comical, bitter and shameful to watch this highest Areopagus of the state. What shallow people it is made of, who are incapable of statesmanlike thought or action. M.S. was sitting there and letting emotions get the better of him, furious, he agreed that he should make a televised appearance today and give a rebuff.

Then it was 12p.m., time for his meeting with Cheney (US Defense Secretary). They went into a different room, and it was like a different Gorbachev. Once again in the saddle, the leader of a great power, in control of the situation, who knows exactly what to do, certain of success. He did not let the American even open his mouth.

Afterwards he came back to the room where the Presidential Council was gathered. People had gotten up and were starting to leave. Lukyanov whispered something to him. M.S. turned to Shevardnadze and said, "Eduard, reschedule some foreign trips and cancel some

altogether, including Spain and France.” I was taken aback. What a present to Yeltsin. What a demonstration of loss of power and self-control. M.S. started walking to his office through the enfilade. Petrakov, Shatalin, Ignatenko and I ran over and surrounded him. We started to argue against his speech on TV. He cursed us all: “I already decided, this is not something you can let go. If I don’t respond, what will the people say? It would be cowardly, a trump for Yeltsin. That paranoiac is aiming for the President’s chair, he’s sick. Everyone eggs him on. He needs a good punch to the face.”

He kept walking. Ignatenko ran up to me, “Anatoly Sergeyeovich, we have to break it off.” The two of us went after Gorbachev. I said ironically, “Mikhail Sergeyeovich, should I quit preparing the materials for Spain, then?” He says, “Come to my office.” Ignatenko rushed after me. We both fell on him. I said, “What are you afraid of? Ryzhkov has started threatening along the lines of: in the best case scenario we get shot, in the worst—we get hanged. But I, for example, am not scared. Yeltsin is blackmailing us, he is bluffing. He does not have the capacity to become a real threat. How is he going to make a Russian army, customs, etc. You need to rise above this latest provocation.”

He is standing in front of us, silent. He picked up the phone, Shevardnadze was not in his office. He talked to Kovalev: “Have you already cancelled Paris and Madrid?” “Not yet,” Kovalev responds. “Hold off on it.”

Having made sure that he would not do anything stupid such as cancelling Madrid, Ignatenko and I again started talking about the appearance on TV. In the end he called Lukyanov and ordered him to do it instead.

October 19, 2010.

How right we were with Ignatenko to latch on to M.S. and dissuade him from giving Yelstin a televised rebuff that same day.

A Supreme Soviet session convened. Steadily and calmly Aganbegyan argued that the “general directions” is the most realistic approach we can take and that it is impossible not to take it. He elegantly exposed Yeltsin by showing that the text of his speech had been written before the distribution of the presidential program, that Yeltsin had not read it, and that no matter what program Gorbachev presented, Yeltsin invariably would be against it. Today Gorbachev calmly acknowledged in his big report: yes, we have made some mistakes, but now we have to this program. And the Supreme Soviet accepted it today. He touched on Yeltsin a little, without the panic that reigned at the Presidential Council, produced by Lukyanov and Ryzhkov. Maybe it was my exclamation during the squabble at the Presidential Council that did the trick: Yeltsin has scared everyone to death! But I am not scared. At first glance it is clear he is bluffing.

By the way, Boldin told me that yesterday Yeltsin had tried to reach Gorbachev, and when he reached him he tried to extricate and justify himself.

Glazunov painted a portrait of King Carlos. This is so he would be taken to Spain, and he insisted that M.S. give the portrait to the King himself. I took a firm stand against it... also

against including Lukyanov in the team. Glazunov started threatening me with Raisa. Haven't her eyes been opened about this bastard?

Raisa Maksimovna called me to ask why we are not reacting to the stream of congratulations about the Nobel Prize. I replied: we are. I ordered the MFA to send all the telegrams about this to Kravchenko in TASS, so he produces a review with an appraisal and quotes. I am sure that nobody will do anything.

October 20, 1990.

All day I worked on materials for Spain. M.S. came to the CC to take care of some papers. Shevardnadze reported that Mitterrand invited Gorbachev to stop by his farm in the Pyrenees on the way back from Spain. M.S. agreed.

Two people from the American embassy came by, brought a letter from Bush to Michael. Bush thanks M.S. for sending Primakov to Bagdad, but insists that we do not give Hussein "premiums and do not let him save face." On my suggestion, Primakov stopped by London in the course of his travels to meet with Madam (Thatcher), "otherwise it's all Andreotti, Mitterrand, Bush, while she is left out."

Upon receiving the letter from Bush, M.S. gave him a call. He caught on that the US President needs Michael! I also caught on... but things are moving towards war.

Ignatenko stopped by, relayed M.S.'s comment: "I am going to scatter this riffraff (Council of Ministers)..." M.S. also said to me, when we were trying to convince him not to "rebuff" Yeltsin—"What Ryzhkov! Is it about him? He is yesterday's news!" This is to say that despite the fact that Yeltsin named Ryzhkov three times in his October 16th speech, he is not really aiming for his place; he is "looking to be President," i.e. going for Gorbachev's place.

Shevardnadze called: the Czechs and Hungarians have prepared such a draft of the declaration for Budapest (WTO PCC) that it would be better not to convene it at all... a dishonorable funeral! M.S. agreed to reschedule it for after the Paris summit (November 3-4th), even though it has already been announced in the newspapers.

October 21, 1990.

Primakov returned from his travels (Rome-Paris-Washington-London). He called me last night: "I felt with my skin that a strike is inevitable. It is a matter of a week." He asked for help in talking with M.S.—he wants to go to Cairo, Riyadh, and to Hussein to say, "We've done everything we can. If you do not concede you have yourself to blame."

M.S. approved my writings for Madrid. There are still "toasts," minor points and materials for talks. I asked him to see Santra with Gusenkov (without me), and give the interview to *El País* with Ignatenko. He agreed.

October 22, 1990.

I was writing the texts for Spain. At 12-volume dictionary of the Russian language is no longer sufficient to find words that would not sound trite. Actually, stylistic beauty is beginning to look ridiculous against the background of what is happening in the country. KGB agents are reporting from different parts of the Soviet Union that Gorbachev's Nobel Prize is viewed negatively by the majority of the population. *Time* is carrying an article called "Praised Abroad and Cursed at Home" with a caricature portrait of him as a monument.

Phone calls are wearing me out—various people and departments trying to go to Spain. Boldin is simply "recommending" all his new servants. I reminded him that the KGB is sending 150 security personnel... and nobody wants to say a word against it, or he will be accused of undermining the President's security. During every visit, this hoard brazenly feeds itself, shaming everyone and everything around them, making a laughingstock out of us!

The country is falling apart. The People's Front of Moldavia has already pronounced the decision to join Romania and rename the State "People's Republic of Moldova." The situation is on the verge of a civil war between the Gagauz and Russians.

In Tatariya, October 15th has been announced the national memorial day for the defenders of Kazan from Ivan the Terrible (1552)!

The devil knows what is happening in Russia's regions. The "Democrats of Russia" Congress created a mass opposition to the CPSU and made a resolution: resignation of the President and the USSR Supreme Soviet. Meanwhile, we are going to Spain, where crowds will be chocking with delight to see Gorbachev. We will be talking about the Soviet-Spanish factor in the fate of Europe and the Mediterranean, about Don Quixote, about both nations' vocation to work together to "improve the world," while one of these nations could care less about all of this, including about Spain.

M.S. keeps consulting with economists. He is "perfecting" the style of the economic program's main provisions. Meanwhile Grushin, a political scientist and friend of Gorbachev's favorite Frolov, virtually declared on TV yesterday that no matter what you do, none of these programs is implementable.

"Rodina" [Homeland] carried Yu. Afanas'ev comments on the session of the National Assembly in August 1917—same problems as today. Afanas'ev and I were close before *perestroika* and during its early days. He came to me for support, first from me, then from M.S. If it were not for me, he would not be rector of the Historical-Archival Institute. I persuaded Zimyanin back then. M.S. had really esteemed him at the beginning. Now he repays him by "objectively analyzing" Gorbachev's strengths and weaknesses, and his doom.

October 23, 1990.

I wrote two notes to Gorbachev:

1. Having found out that yet another atomic bomb is scheduled to be exploded on Novaya Zemlya, in a rage I wrote: what's happening? At such a moment, when you

- are planning to go to Scandinavia, which is a neighbor to Novaya Zemlya, to receive your Nobel Prize for peace... You will soon be saying sweet words in Spain; you are about to attend the Paris summit and sign the Common European Agreement on conventional weapons... who needs this explosion and why all these games?! What will the RSFSR Supreme Soviet say? We cannot explode anything in Kazakhstan (Semipalatinsk test site), but we can in Russia?! He read the note and did not say a word.
2. Grinevsky sent a ciphered note from Vienna. He is alarmed about the breakdown in negotiations on conventional weapons, which means the Paris meeting would also fall apart. General Staff generals are giving directives to their people in the delegation, who in turn tie Grinevsky's hands. I burst forth in a note: it is time to choose between the generals' way of thinking (or maybe scheming) and the near future of New Thinking policies. There is a danger that all our efforts to win the West's support during this critical point in *perestroika* will fail.

Gorbachev attached a slip to my note, assigning Shevardnadze, Yazov and Zaikov to resolve all the issues in two days and give the resolution to Vienna. Then he called me, saying, "I signed your thing... I'm involving Shevardnadze, who was happy about it." But the note was also sent to Yazov, and in the note I tear apart the generals in the verge of obscenities.

Gorbachev spent a long time flipping through excerpts from letters and telegrams regarding his Nobel Prize. He read some out loud to me and commented. For example, "Mister (!) General Secretary of the CC CPSU, congratulations on the imperialist's prize for ruining the USSR, selling out Eastern Europe, destroying the Red Army, handing over all our resources to the United States and the mass media to the Zionists." Or, "Minister Nobel Prize winner, congratulations on sending the entire country to the poorhouse, on earning a prize from world imperialism and Zionism, on betraying Lenin and October, on destroying Marxism-Leninism." There are dozens of such letters and telegrams.

I asked him: why does Kryuchkov collect all of this and put it on your desk? Why do they on a regular basis calculate and bring you polls from regions and workers' collectives with a 90 percent negative response to your Nobel Prize? He responded: "Do you think I haven't thought about this?" And continued to flip through them. I said: "Mikhail Sergeevich, do you really want to spend your time and nerves on this junk? It is time for you in your Presidential position to 'soar above' this ignorance." He did not say anything.

October 31, 1990.

Four days in Madrid and Barcelona. Gorbachev is "on vacation," as Deputy Kraiko put it, from the atmosphere at home. He is once again a leader who is the best of his contemporaries. Again there are sincerely cheering crowds on the street, again the highest-level receptions and genuine respect from the King, Premier Gonzalez, and later from Mitterrand. Again intoxicating philosophical discussions about the new era, about the world's destiny, about mutual responsibility. Again the highest-level statements that *perestroika* is not only our phenomenon, i.e. not only a Soviet affair. If it fails, everyone will suffer. And the like.

I am in a golden cage again. I do not see the streets, I do not attend the receptions—only the talks... and then rush to write them down, to condense many hours of conversation into 3-4 pages of newspaper text (nowadays it is not even considered work, even though I created this style; it is signed “TASS,” even though every aspect of each word is thought through, stylistically chewed over and in general consists of my brain cells and my entire University education.)

This time he made me a member of the delegation. His other aides and adviser Zagladin are listed as “accompanying party.” But he did not say thank you.

However, he left Spain to the roar of an explosion in Novaya Zemlya and mass media overflowing with protests from Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland, Denmark, etc., as well as the Russian Parliament and USSR Supreme Soviet. Despite this, today I read his order signed on October 30th on conducting explosions in Semipalatinsk until 1993, and starting with 1991—until an unknown date—in Novaya Zemlya. This is despite the fact that Kazakhstan’s Supreme Soviet passed a law banning explosions on its territory once and for all; the Arkhangelsk Soviet passed a similar resolution regarding Novaya Zemlya; the RSFSR Supreme Soviet will pass an analogous law any day now; and the USSR Supreme Soviet is planning to today pass a ruling on the USSR Government’s violation of nuclear testing procedures (in the sense that it was done without the Supreme Soviet’s approval).

Where does Comrade Gorbachev live? Or is he so intimidated that he signs on the dotted line whatever Boldin gives him?

Teltschik is ringing the phone off the hook: we are putting Kohl in an unseemly position, especially after Gorbachev’s visit to France and Spain (the problem is that Gorbachev still has not named a date for a meeting with Kohl). Is he “afraid of the people”? Lukyanov feeds this, saying that parliamentarians perceive foreign trips ambiguously.

But we owe Kohl more than anybody else for the “new European process,” not to mention the fact that he gave us practically 20 billion, while Mitterrand gave only a billion and a half and Gonzalez a bit more, Andreotti a little more, and Saudi Arabia gave 4 billion.

This is the kind of thanks he gets... if we make the Germans mad, they will tell us to go to hell (our troops in Germany now are as good as hostages, you cannot intimidate anyone with them!). Everything is holding on the Germans’ good word!

On the Persian Gulf. No matter how Primakov and Mitterrand may try, Gorbachev is reasonably saying that we cannot separate from the Americans, no matter how much we might want to avoid war. Then everything would come undone. Some of Gorbachev’s expressions at a press conference caused a fuss in Madrid and Paris. They wondered whether Gorbachev might be excluding the possibility of a military solution altogether? I know that he is not. Today, when Arbatov called asking how to react to questions from his acquaintances the Ambassadors of Kuwait, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, I told Yurka: “Let them know that we will never sacrifice our alliance with the United States in this matter.”

Paris (Gorbachev's "working" meeting regarding the Persian Gulf). In the evening we (M.S., Mitterrand, Vedrin, and I) went straight to the Élysée Palace. Afterwards, everyone went to have dinner with the ladies, and I went to write. After midnight we went for a walk down the Champs-Élysées. Walked for an hour and a half, it was already empty, even though it is Sunday.

At 10a.m. Mitterrand picked up M.S. and we went to Rambouillet. The drive was a pleasure. Again M.S. and Mitterrand one on one, then + Rocard, Shevardnadze and Dumas. Then the signing of a Consent Agreement, then a press-conference, then lunch hosted by the "President of France." I was seated next to Rocard and started speaking French not only about the visit and the Soviet-French factor, but about Camus and Sartre. He got carried away... then realized it and asked me if I understand. I said about 80 percent. He was satisfied and continued. I could not stop being surprised at myself, how quickly the language came back to me in a French setting.

November 3, 1990.

Since morning it has been a full day of work. Yesterday M.S. finally named the date for Kohl in Germany and the big Agreement—November 9-10th. He will need two speeches, not to mention negotiations materials.

The day before yesterday he called me in the evening: "I will be speaking on the 6th at a grand meeting (on the October Revolution). Before going to Spain I asked Yakovlev to prepare something, he read it to me today with pathos... But Tolya, it is all philosophy and moralizing... Why don't you give it a try..." and he dictated some things.

However, it is all a matter of words. I was exhausted by Spain and France. In the morning, I called Verber. He brought Yermonsky and Kuvaldin. I told them what I need. In 24 hours they brought me... complete pseudo-scientific crap.

So I had to compose it myself today. Sent it off. But M.S. was busy all day with the Moldovans, where a new "Karabakh" has developed. There are some casualties, but this time among the Russians. (The Balts did not allow themselves anything like this; and the Armenian-Azeri butchery is a completely different matter.) Our people are not to be trifled with, especially if you want to give Moldavia to Romania!⁷

The outcomes of M.S.' meeting with the Moldovans were broadcast on TV. Exhortations and again, again compromises, even though it is time to act.

November 5, 1990.

Today I was at the Presidential Council. Abalkin was reporting on stabilization measures.

⁷ How wrong I was about the Russians' reaction! They endured everything—the shame of turning into a "national minority," pogroms and ingratitude. At the time I had not realized that the great nation had depleted its historical reserve. (Author's note, from 2002).

Shatalin, Petrakov and Co.'s article in Sunday's "Komsomolka" caused a scandal with its sharp condemnation of the President's economic policy and devastating attacks on Ryzhkov.

Following Lukyanov, Maslyukov, and Ryzhkov, Gorbachev cursed the authors and promised to "send them packing." The whole council makes a poor impression. Ryzhkov threatened that dictatorship is coming. Lukyanov blackmailed with democrats. Shevardnadze talked about the need to study the process of transferring power.

I left early to compose speeches for Germany away from telephones.

Today M.S. re-dictated my draft for November 7th; he took 40 percent of it, in my opinion not the strongest parts. The rest is from Yakovlev and some third text. The final result is again long, with mixed styles and full of banalities, which M.S. lately has more and more of.

November 9, 1990.

Before leaving for Germany M.S. called me at home and we had a long conversation. He has some corrections to the completed speeches on Bonn (he especially liked the paragraphs about Germans from the GDR who were the first to start breaking down the "walls" between us, even through love and marriages). The texts had already been sent to Bonn, so we had to transfer the corrections through the MFA.

Newspapers are raging, mocking October and Gorbachev. There is an intelligent article in "Komsomolka" by my friend Vladlen Loginov about the October Revolution. But it is like beating your head against a brick wall.

It seems that now, as then, we are going to go "to the core, but what then"? However, I am not afraid of anything. Maybe it is my age, maybe personality, maybe experience and my old habit (from the war) of calm and restraint in the face of the greatest danger.

November 15, 1990.

On Sunday Gorbachev is supposed to go to Italy, for another "big agreement," plus the Fuggi Prize (the monetary reward is greater than the Nobel).

Maybe we are on the brink of a collapse? Again his meeting with Yeltsin flared up the situation to a critical point. They agreed not to publicize it, but the next day Yeltsin went to the Russian parliament and aggressively, disrespectfully, in the form of an ultimatum described what happened. Gorbachev kept it all to himself. Ignatenko's attempts to convince him to make a televised appearance and "inform the public and the USSR parliament" came to naught. Gorbachev must still be thinking in terms of Politburo and the obkom—if I think so, then it must be so. Now he worked up a fury and again yelled among his people that he will no longer tolerate it, that he finally "declares war."

In the meantime, the Supreme Soviet ignored its own agenda and demanded that the President immediately report on the situation in the country and the outcomes of his conversation with Yeltsin. Gorbachev obediently agreed to this call on the carpet, instead of making it clear

who he is and politely asking the parliament to do its job. Meanwhile, deputies are shouting in front of TV cameras about “protection of people’s interests” and demanding that the “tsar” should “give” everything to these people.

Gorbachev spent the entire day dictating tomorrow’s report on the “State of the Nation” (in the United States it takes half a year to prepare such a text!). Nevertheless, despite my protests, he took the time to meet with leaders of former Communist Parties of former socialist countries (they are having a conference in Moscow). And yesterday he met with Communist Party of France trade union representatives. Today, he talked with Occhetto (General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party) for several hours. I suspect he wants to show the foreigners that things are progressing in due course.

Ambramtsumov, Bykov, Adamovich, Karyakin, Afanas’ev, Gelman, and a dozen others whom Gorbachev had once brought in, treated kindly, praised, protected and promoted—yesterday they published in “Moskovskie novosti” a message to the people and the President, in which they suggested that he should resign. Gorbachev was more hurt by this than anything else in the last few days. He saw it as a personal betrayal.

The country is in ruins and panic. All the newspapers are predicting riots, civil war, and a coup. Almost every critical statement ends with the demand for the President to “Leave!” if he cannot even use the powers provided him. Western newspapers are beginning to publish articles about him without the former admiration, now they are closer to pity or sympathetic jokes about the underdog.

In a word, something is bound to happen tomorrow. But I am afraid that he will once again “wear out” the Supreme Soviet with his calls for consolidation, unity, etc. Since the deputies themselves do not know what to do, most likely they will succumb to his arguments, or they will demand sacrifices—Ryzhkov or maybe even Gorbachev. Perhaps he himself will finally say, “I am leaving.” That would probably be the right thing to do. He would go to Oslo, get his Nobel Prize and start living as a private person. The era he stirred up has truly gone beyond him. The things he wants to avoid with his carefulness, with his gradual steps, with compromises—all of it has already happened and in the worst form, with bloodshed on the peripheries and the danger of a serious famine. You cannot ask people to justify him. After all, even after the worst catastrophe of Stalin’s collectivization, after 5-6 years (exactly the equivalent of *perestroika*) “Life had become better, life had become merrier” (Stalin). I remember that myself. I saw it with my own eyes. People ask: why has it not happened now, when we have a hundred times more resources. Yes, we could not have continued on with the system we had in 1985. It is true that you cannot break down the old system without chaos. But the people do not want to pay for 70 years of criminal policies. They will never understand why, in order to become a civilized country by the end of 21st century, you have to go through hunger, collapse, depravity, crime, and our other attractions.

In the meanwhile, I am “doing my work.” I write beautiful texts for M.S.’ trips to Rome and Paris. They turn out nicely. Even I like them! But what for? Or c’est la vie?

November 24, 1990.

On Sunday, November 18th, M.S. was in Italy, accepting the Fiuggi Prize. In the evening he flew straight to Paris. On the same day there was a meeting with Bush. For two hours they talked about Hussein. Bush to M.S., “Michael, help me!”

M.S. was in his style (regarding a “political solution”) but with a clear, thought-out tendency to stay close to Bush in any turn of events. This protestant pair (Bush and Baker) is more reliable even than Kohl, because they are detached... They need very little—for us not thwart at the Security Council their punishment of Hussein, even though they would be glad to avoid military action (Bush spoke plaintively about “his boys” he had just visited on the Rhine and who were immediately sent to the Saudi desert).

Their conversation over lunch, with Shevardnadze, Baker, Yazov, was a conversation between two friends. M.S. did not for a minute object to the Security Council’s new resolution. But he also did not want to use the words “military means.” And Bush did not suggest it, even though all the newspapers wrote about nothing else and later claimed that Bush could not “break M.S.” Nonsense, there were no discrepancies between them.

The Paris meeting itself. Of course, M.S. was number one, no matter how Mitterrand tried with his “French” speeches and rare appearance in the hall.

Kohl was number two! In relation to M.S. Kohl acted in the spirit of “it was the two of us who made this possible.”

Bush was number three. Overall he was modest in his dignity and did not impose himself.

Thatcher. The same has been done with her as with Churchill during Potsdam. At M.S.’ residence I sat opposite her and admired her. Beautiful! She enjoyed my admiration. I was sure that she would “leave,” but after the vote at the Tory conference (204 instead of the necessary 214) she promised to return to London and “put everything in order”— in front of journalists right from the steps of her residence.

I was living at the Grenelle, close to M.S. I was at the meetings, recorded them, and traveled here and there. I did not get to see anything; I did not even take one walk through the streets. On the 20th he already assigned me to write a report for the Supreme Soviet on the outcomes of the Paris summit.

Later, when he was getting ready to go on round of Versailles (evening of the 20th), I happened to be in his room. Putting on his tie, he was thinking out loud... I asked him: what about the 8 points that you stated at the Supreme Soviet before this trip? Are you going say anything new after coming back tomorrow?

“Sure! I assigned people to work on it.”

“Who?”

“Lukyanov, Kryuchkov, Sitaryan, someone else...”

I did not reply. It's all clear!

One day after coming back from France he “ascended” to the Supreme Soviet and again started producing improvisations (which he had dictated on the day before until 12a.m.). Once again he provoked irritation, devaluing the “fear” he incited on the 18th.

The Paris summit was, of course, a major event. This was perhaps the last time that Gorbachev appeared as the demiurge of modern history. Everyone directly or indirectly acknowledged it. It was clear that they did not want the USSR—as Gorbachev planned to make it—cease to exist. This possibility generated fear. But obviously, they felt sympathy too. They felt Christian-like compassion toward all of us, which we failed to appreciate. Out of this sympathy arose the phenomenon of practical solidarity, which in more practical terms was the desire to help us make it through the winter. They were afraid of a Russian rebellion, collapse, and everything that could have made *perestroika* quite different from what Gorbachev presented it to be.

As for me, I am sad. Sad, because I am “strategically” tired, worn out, because the count of my life has gone from years to months, and I have not taken everything from it. There are still things to take: books, paintings, streets, people. I am also sad because I see M.S. summoning up courage, but he is out of steam. He is repeating himself, and not only in words and behavioral patterns. He is repeating himself as a politician, he is moving in circles. He is practically alone. Despite all of this, he is holding on to this deadwood: Ryzhkov, Sitaryan, Maslyukov, Boldin. What's worse, he bothers with the General Secretary post. Because of this, he holds on even to Polozkov, despite the fact that in a recent CC CPSU Plenum this Polozkov openly railed against him, saying that he broke the Union, destroyed socialism, gave away Eastern Europe, ruined the army, trampled the party and threw it to the wolves, etc. M.S. does not have people to fill the structures he announced on November 18th in his short and expressive speech at the Supreme Soviet. And he does not dare to take new people, especially from the opposition. He does not dare to break with everyone who was in the nomenclature. He does not care for them, he does not trust them. But even though they are from the “Polozkov camp,” they are familiar!

Home and abroad Gorbachev is two different people, both in how he is perceived and in his own feelings.

December 1, 1990.

Yesterday Gorbachev summoned Yakovlev, Primakov, Medvedev, and Petrakov in Kremlin's Walnut room (later Shatalin showed up on his own accord). He proposed to discuss the concept of the report for the Congress of People's Deputies (December 17th). And so it began! Instead of developing a plan and assigning tasks in 20 minutes, we sat there for a good six hours. M.S. walked around us (the Walnut room has a round table), and together we formulated versions of the phrases which, usually, ended up turning into things he has repeated tens of times.

Primakov and I ganged up and pretty rudely interrupted his torrent of words. We kept saying that this should be a short presidential speech, like the one he said on November 18th,

without any explanations, excuses and arguments. It should only define the clear position of the Head of State and briefly delineate what has been done since November 18th and what the President intends to do in the near future. Include only the most important things, namely: food, power, and the Union. Slowly we steered him toward this approach. He pounced on me several times.

Along the way he edited together with those present the Decree on worker's control over trade. We argued without concern for formalities. This again is the "class approach" and mythology of the past. Inanity. Nobody is going to carry out this decree, same as the ones before it. It will turn into an additional source of corruption, abuse, and lawlessness at the expense of millions of people.

But Gorbachev was stubborn and checked us. As the result, today the decree has already been announced by the media in the program 120 minutes. Still, we managed to get some nonsense out of there.

So... instead of long ago creating a qualified apparatus where every person would know his job (and would be able to do it!), M.S. spends most of his time writing and editing speeches. Just this week he made three or four of them.

I had started to persuade Gorbachev not to speak at the Russian Congress of People's Deputies, for which Shakhnazarov had prepared a speech for him long time ago. Primakov was also against that speech. We were both saying that regardless of this speech they are going to accept the land reform—the second edition of Stolypin's reforms—and the President will look pitiful, especially since these are good reforms. They are going to accept amendments to the Constitution, which will solidify what was already clear from their drafts, appropriate even for Sweden or Denmark. There is nothing left there of socialist choice, not even the word "Soviets." What will you look like there?

December 1, evening.

In the morning I was at work, finishing up reading ciphered telegrams. At 12p.m. I went over to Yakovlev's in the Kremlin. We assigned sections for people to work on for Gorbachev's report. Talked about this and that, particularly about private ownership of land that is being discussed right now in the Russian Parliament. Recently, at a meeting with cultural figures Gorbachev declared that he will "never agree to it." By the way, when we were discussing the prospectus for Gorbachev's report, Petrakov showed M.S. an issue of "Sovetskaia Rossia." It talked about the new "Union" party that Lukyanov created to oppose the Regions party; the article also mentioned that the Union party also demanded the President's resignation. Gorbachev waved it aside. But Petrakov persisted: why, Mikhail Sergeyevich, when Popov or Stankevich or anyone else from their group says anything like that, you become angry, but when it comes from Lukyanov you dismiss it. Gorbachev replied, "I do not need advisers who give me one-sided information." Primakov intervened. He tried to describe what had actually happened at the meeting of the "Union" party, and what happened at Lukyanov's meeting with the regional group (Popov, Afanas'ev, Yablokov, Murashov, and others). Gorbachev again got angry and said, "Well, this is what Lukyanov told me about this meeting... They set some conditions and if

the President fails to fulfill them, they will speak at the Congress of the People's Deputies in favor of his resignation. Lukyanov only reports the truth." It is amazing that Gorbachev wants to believe this, even though he has known for a long time that Lukyanov organized a special information service for himself.

Yuriy Afanas'ev actually did say that we, i.e. the interregional group and "Union" are demanding the same thing—the President's resignation—but from different positions. M.S., however, comes down for this on the "regionals" but not on the "Union" because the former is "our own," just like Polozkov & Co.

December 5, 1990. Volynskoe-II.

An event took place yesterday that is worth mentioning—a botched address by the President at the Supreme Soviet. He simply mumbled, not saying anything new in comparison to the 8 points announced on November 18th... it was received with complete indifference and even contempt in the audience. In order to calm fears about the food situation M.S. read some muddled information from ministerial inquiries about spaghetti and fish for December and March. Yakovlev, Primakov and I happened to be in the same room when the speech was broadcast by "Mayak," and we were horrified: what, how, and why is he saying this?! Shatalin, Medvedev, and Ignatenko arrived from a meeting at the Kremlin with similar and worse impressions. Shatalin cried: "We were all shocked. Although this whole Supreme Soviet is shitty... Where have the Russian talents gone?" Medvedev noted, "Gorbachev is too overworked, angry, and confused." Yakovlev was completely dejected. In a whisper, he told me, "I am now convinced that he has exhausted his potential."

December 19, 1990.

From the 3-15th we were at Volynskoe-2, working on Gorbachev's report for the Congress of People's Deputies. We went through five versions. More than once he presided... Then on Sunday before the event, already without us, he added three mentions of "socialist choice" and the "Communist Party as a pillar of the people." He warned us that he would insert things we do not want him to say. At first we argued, then gave up. When he read the part on the private ownership of land, he burst forth, "Who could include this, knowing that I will never say it?!" I raised my hand... One had to see Yeltsin's sarcastic smile when from the podium at the Congress Gorbachev spoke about the "inadmissibility" of private property.

The betrayals have started. Rasputin betrayed him with his speech at the Plenum of the Congress of Writers. Falin is betraying him with his behaviors and speeches at the International Committee of the Supreme Soviet (on the German agreement). At the same time he is disassociating himself from his closeness to Gorbachev. Then there is the betrayal of that bitch Umalatova, a Chechen, a member of the CC CPSU whom Gorbachev had personally entered into the "red hundred" to ensure her position as a People's Deputy. Promoted by him, now she was the one who opened the Congress with a hysterical speech, demanding Gorbachev's resignation because he "ruined the country and sent the people to the poorhouse." "It is the work of Polozkov's people," M.S. said about this. We soon found out that Lukyanov, who chaired the Congress, intentionally let her go first, knowing what she would say.

During this stretch at Volynskoe Yakovlev and Petrakov became academicians. They had been very nervous the night before, but with some difficulty they both passed. A party was thrown at Volynskoe for the occasion. By the way, Yakovlev was depressed: again a worker deputy condemned him from the Congress' podium for "the collapse of ideology."

Ryzhkov made a beautiful speech at the Congress today, it was written for him by Abalkin. In essence it was anti-Gorbachev. But during lunch at Volynskoe Gorbachev congratulated him, "Nikolai, I had to leave when you made your speech, but I watched it on TV. Congratulations, it was well done." In a word, the characteristically Gorbachev style.

At night I am reading Vasiliy Rozanov for the first time. How lovely! What a talent... in incredible simplicity!

December 21, 1990.

Yesterday Shevardnadze announced his resignation. He warned of an impending dictatorship. The whole world is talking about it.

Likhachev, Zalygin, Roy Medvedev, and Burlatsky took the podium to make hysterical statements. Adamovich was shrieking too. All about the threat of dictatorship. And people like Petrushchenko and Alksnis are fanning the flames. Pretrushchenko declared, "We do not want power, but you are asking us to come and take it." Alksnis, by the way, is an excellent orator, he trumpeted from the podium, "Yes, call me reactionary, call me a scumbag. Yes, I am a hawk when they tear the skin off an old man and throw a baby into the fire..."

When Shevardnadze spoke, M.S.' expression reflected something like puzzlement, but he let E.A. speak his mind. Afterwards... what will happen afterwards? Shevardnadze is not coming back, he seems to have played up the sensation and made it so he would require a very special request.

Who will replace him? The most deserving choice would be Yakovlev. This appointment would have been made by the former Gorbachev... Most likely he will settle on Primakov. But the best choice would be Bessmertnykh: he is a neutral figure, professional, intelligent. And it would be a gesture for the Americans, to say that everything is remaining the same.

From my conversations with Yakovlev, Primakov, Arbatov in the back rooms at the Congress I realized that M.S. does not consult with any of them. They are all convinced that he consults with Ivashko and Lukyanov, who are openly and enthusiastically declaring that they knocked down another one of Gorbachev's allies (Shevardnadze).

For a long time I hesitated whether to go to the session of the International Committee of the Supreme Soviet. I was afraid to lose my temper. I went... and lost my temper. In front of everybody I rather rudely accused Falin for giving a good argument to "all the Petrushchenko's out there" at the last session of the committee on the German agreement with his statement, "did we give it away too cheaply?"

M.S., in the meantime, is busy meeting with “workers and peasants.” He appeals to them, saying that they will have the final word. However, I think that especially right now, and technically always, in politics the **first** word is decisive.

There is a great deal of “intellectual potential” at the Congress, democracy’s only achievement. But there is little statesmanship and healthy pragmatism. In general it is a school of polishing orators. Everybody starts their speeches nicely and figuratively.

Of course, during these days the question is being decided—will this country continue to exist or not. It seems that it will not. And people walk on the streets as if nothing is happening.

In general, the Congress has turned into a mob. It is intimidating itself and the people. This is the source of our greatest danger. This institution should be dispersed as soon as possible. It has played its part for democracy. It is time to switch to a normal parliament, comprised of the people who have shown that they would be more or less willing and capable to be parliamentarians.

...Until M.S. breaks with Polozkov and Ivashko, nothing will happen.

December 23, 1990.

Some kind of phantasmagoria has set in: Gorbachev sits at the Congress’ Presidium next to Yeltsin. They smile at each other. Whisper among themselves. Lukyanov, who has been shamelessly playing against M.S., sits on his left. In Lukyanov’s reports on Constitutional amendments there are proposals to tie the president’s every step with parliamentary control.

M.S. is not talking with any of us, he does not call his advisers, not even his favorites Yakovlev and Primakov. Lukyanov is the one helping him put together papers and pick cadres for the new structures.

I wrote him a note the day before yesterday, about the fact that Shevardnadze is not coming back and it is time to think about a replacement. My suggestions were in the following order: Yakovlev, Bessmertnykh, Primakov, Dzasokhov. I wrote a reference for each one from the point of view of foreign and domestic resonance to each candidate’s appointment, as well as a personal review. For Yakovlev, I wrote: this would be the act of the Gorbachev who does not back down from *perestroika* “despite and regardless” of anything.

Yesterday Primakov told me that he also suggested Yakovlev to Gorbachev, but M.S. objected: firstly because he will not pass, secondly because “he is giving interviews against me.” Truly, Kryuchkov and Lukyanov and the rest have told some stories to Gorbachev about Yakovlev.

In the evening M.S. called me from a car phone:

“What do we have?”

“You know better what we have.”

“Alright. What do you have?”

“Exchange of televised messages with Bush for New Years; greetings for the Arab meeting regarding the Persian Gulf; response to Fidel; an interview for “Asahi” and other small items.”

“What’s happening with the visit to Japan?” (I was very surprised by this question. As if he does not have other things to think about!)

“Two months ago you created a committee headed by Yakovlev to prepare the visit to Japan. I am not sure what it has produced, but I have my own file.”

“What else?”

“Japan’s Minister of Foreign Affairs is coming in early January. Who is he going to see?”

“Alright. Goodbye.” And he hung up.

For a long time I was offended that he did not want to speak to me about the important things, about what is happening around us. On the other hand, what am I going to do? Follow in Shevardnadze’s footsteps? There would not be a worldwide buzz about it, of course, but some people will notice a trend, and the press will consolidate it. However, it is more than just inertia that prevents me from doing this. There is also a feeling of loyalty. It would be indecent to leave him at a moment like this.

Yesterday “Ogonek” published an article by a certain Aleksandr Genis, “View from a Dead End,” about Soviet literature. He asks what held it up, even in the darkest of times. It was held up by the promise of a future—communism (even for those, who cringed at this word). Or the pure ideals of the revolution (even for those, who did not accept it, even for emigrants). The *Thaw* of 1950-60s was also based on this. Namely, on returning to the basics and the pure ideas, becoming free from the filth of Stalinism in order to proceed to the future... Then *perestroika* showed up and opened up “nothingness.” There is no future. Paradise disappeared (it never existed). Without paradise socialist realism collapsed overnight. There is no more wonderful literature.

I think this argument can be projected onto our society as a whole. Paradise disappeared and everything went tumbling down. The former Orthodox Christian paradise, which is being artificially created by the church right now, is only a dummy. It can attract the people who really want to be shut off from reality. But for the society it is too late. I projected this also onto the forthcoming Congress of the People’s Deputies. Yes, yes, we are looking in the wrong place. While Gorbachev, either instinctively or consciously wants to save the paradise with his stubborn repetition of commitment to socialist choice. He feels that an ailing society cannot do without it just like the Americans cannot do without their ideal of freedom. For example, why are they ready to fight Hussein? Not only because of oil. For them, the United States is the stronghold and symbol of freedom. That is why Iraq (Hussein) is the Americans’ purely ideological internal problem.

December 24, 1990.

Today the Supreme Soviet spent almost the whole day adopting a decision on Gorbachev's report on the situation in the country. I am surprised. Is it the parliament's job to rearrange words and together edit phrases in a draft resolution! Gorbachev suddenly became upset, took the floor and loudly, incoherently accused the Congress of ignoring presidential legislative initiatives, particularly on the land ownership referendum, and on withdrawal from the Union. I cannot understand whether he had not read the draft resolution or used the previous version, because both those points are in there. And none of the deputies from the Congress and the Supreme Soviet pointed this fact out to him, including the chairman of the editorial board Nazarbaev. Maybe they were uncomfortable, or they could not allow that the President had not read the draft and gave them a beating. They pretended that he probably wanted to have separate resolutions on these issues. I carefully watched his face from the auditorium. He was clearly embarrassed upon realizing that his attack was unfounded. But one more crack occurred, and it was his fault.

The strangest and most regrettable part was that for the referendum on withdrawing from the Union he insisted on the following wording: "are you 'for' or 'against' preserving the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," i.e. instead of the politic use of only the word "Union" in the referendum's question (Georgia, Estonia, Latvia, and Moldova might have agreed with this), he issued a challenge. They will not want to stay in a "Socialist Union."

Or had ideology come over him again? Or did the spirit of Polozkov win him over? I am utterly confused. The crowd (Congress) voted "for" it, most likely without understanding the impolitic nature of the question's phrasing.

Ignatenko suggested that we should write a letter to Bush regarding Shevardnadze's resignation. Truly, how can we not show some closeness when the whole world is judging and guessing what happened. I composed a draft letter. Sent it to M.S, then called him. He immediately agreed to send such a letter. But my draft might be overly heart-to-heart. Will he accept it?

December 25, 1990.

Today Gorbachev twice made himself vulnerable at the Congress of People's Deputies. They were discussing an amendment to the Constitution on the new power structures and came to the Chamber of Control. Back in Volynskoe we told him that it is confusing and will not pass. At the Congress nobody said anything against it, not a single comment was made, but the vote was overwhelmingly against it. The President took the floor and made a confusing argument that this is an essential organ. He spoke for a long time, with his characteristic gestures. The vote became even more negative. Then they came to the Federation Council. The question here was whether to include representatives of the autonomous republics into the Soviet. Opinions split. Again Gorbachev took the floor and made a dull argument that the autonomous republics should not be included in the Federation Soviet. The vote: from the 1890 people present, only 140 voted "with" the President. He sat there, red and pitiful.

What is happening? Has he completely ceased to realize how low his charisma has fallen? People are thinking the opposite even when they sympathize with him. Why does he open himself to such blows? It would seem the question at hand is presidential power, but it is forming in the context of the President's own authority plummeting!

The item about the Presidential Council was removed from the Constitution. Only 34 people objected. In that moment Yakovlev, Primakov, Shatalin, Yarik, and Medvedev became nobodies. Primakov came up to me, laughing. "I should go order a car from the Academy of Sciences," he says. "They won't be sending one from the Presidential Council. I remember when at the CC Plenum I was made candidate member of the Politburo, by the time I left the building there was already a 'member-mobile' (a car with a bodyguard) waiting for me outside."

1990. Afterword.

This year became truly tragic both for the country and for Gorbachev.

It became completely clear that the great and noble idea—to lead the country out of Stalinist totalitarianism and build a new, truly national society—was not accepted. The *glasnost* and freedom granted for this purpose set loose a destructive force, comprised of the energy of protest and chaos that had been stored up for decades. It broke free and by 1990 overtook practically all spheres of life in the country.

At the same time it became evident that the nation, which had been impoverished by the shocks of the 20th century, no longer possessed the creative energy to build itself a worthy new society. There was nothing left of the imperial drive that had been the source and impetus for Russia's development and transformation into a great power. But there were no other resources, because for over five centuries the Russian nation in all its aspects, the positive and the negative, had evolved and gained vitality precisely as an imperial state. This is, by the way, why it was so malleable and tolerant of totalitarian rule, whether monarchy or Bolshevik dictatorship.

But, remaining a European power, it could no longer continue in this mode by the end of the 20th century, when the Christian civilization was entering a new era.

It was Gorbachev's lot to understand this. And he offered the correct, the only possible solution—to turn the country toward the more promising direction of modern world development, to reject its "special nature" that had opposed it to the West, which was the center of this development.

In order for this to happen, we had to overcome our totalitarian past. *Perestroika*'s central mission was to find out how this could be done. Gorbachev tried to reform the Soviet, in essence totalitarian, regime. But it turned out that it could not be reformed. In 1990 this became completely clear.

To reform means to proceed in an evolutionary manner, rejecting the revolutionary-forceful methods that had discredited and eventually destroyed the high ideals of the Great Revolution of 1917, and brought the country to a dead end.

Gorbachev also could not use forceful methods due to his moral considerations and spiritual nature. Had he been a different person, more like his predecessors and colleagues, he would not have dared to start *perestroika* at all.

It is at this point that the tragic contradiction between ends and means occurred. The only way to cleanse society (Soviet and Russian) from the Stalinist legacy and **impose** new laws of life was through revolution comparable in scope and power to the October Revolution.

However, the nation had neither the strength nor the means to make this revolution. The same was true for Gorbachev as a leader, who would have needed a corresponding socio-political mass “army” for this purpose. But the path of gradual overcoming of totalitarianism with the personnel, bodies, “rules of the game,” means and methods that had **formed in** this system led to the government’s collapse and eventual dissolution of the country.

As the reader has noted, the year 1990 is filled with Gorbachev’s feverish attempts to mobilize the means—social and material—to continue and consolidate the reforms. Gorbachev spared no effort to make the Party serve *perestroika*. This was his chief mistake but he continued to intensify it despite all the setbacks, failures and disappointments that came with every CC Plenum, almost every Politburo session, and every meeting with the Party “generals.” During this year the Party rapidly turned into an open enemy of Gorbachev-style reforms. This was especially obvious in its upper echelons—in the Politburo, the Central Committee, the apparatus at all levels, and the oblast committees.

Gorbachev was fatally late in transferring the authority of highest power from the Politburo and CC CPSU to social channels, and in establishing the presidential system. Gorbachev had illusions such as the “CPSU is the vanguard of *perestroika*,” as well as fears of rejecting the Party and pushing it to the sidelines of the political process. These illusions and apprehensions hindered Gorbachev from creating a new, effective center of power in a timely manner. He became powerless in the face of the nationalist explosion and the collapse of the country’s economic base. However, I am convinced that both issues were **objectively** inevitable with the rejection of totalitarian methods of preserving the empire and centralized government.

After the first Congress of the People’s Deputies, the newly elected, largely on an alternative basis, parliamentary bodies quickly transformed from an “aggressively obedient majority” (as defined by Yu. Afanas’ev) into an “aggressively-garrulous” one. Neither the Congress nor the Supreme Soviet formed a powerful authority, and they did not have the levers to control the country. Gorbachev’s idea to recreate the Soviets, which would have taken over the CPSU’s managerial functions from the regional and oblast committees, petered out at the very start.

His attempts to establish cooperation between the executive branch (himself and the government) with the legislative branch and the parliament produced no results. The

government's authority was discredited in general by the rampant negative criticism that fell greedily upon the free platform of the "ambitious representatives of the people." This provoked further destabilization in society as a whole.

Gorbachev rushed about in search of alternatives, compromises, "optimal" combinations of former and new methods of leadership and governing. There were mistakes, miscalculations, delays, faux pas, and some nonsense. But they were not the cause of the disintegration in society and the state that began during this year. That was inevitable due to the very nature of the transformation, completely unique in world history. It was the transformation of a society with complexes, corrupted by a long dictatorship, to freedom. The people, with no experience in democracy and voluntary organization, understood this freedom in the Russian sense of "everything is allowed." From time immemorial freedom has meant *volya* to the Russian people, something akin to anarchy.

It was the beginning of a chaotic movement without any effective rules. **The process of collapse of the Soviet state had begun; it became uncontrollable and irreversible exactly during this year, in 1990.**

From a historical point of view it is pointless to try to assign individual blame, though alas! Some of our (and to a lesser extent foreign) demagogues and dilettantes are still doing this, heaping the majority (and sometimes the entirety) of the blame on Gorbachev.

It was not accidental that during this year Gorbachev started thinking (and speaking about in his close circle) about leaving. He sensed that the mission assigned to him by God and history had been fulfilled. Beyond that, nobody could have presented a paradise on earth in exchange for the Soviet system to a nation of 240 million, consisting of over a hundred nationalities. But this is what people wanted and expected of him. Nothing less. Only in that case would have they recognized Gorbachev as a great politician and the "savior of the Motherland." Empty shelves turned into Gorbachev's curse and at the same time a symbol of *perestroika*'s limited capabilities.

The Soviet people could not deal with freedom and... stepped off the historical stage. The leaders of Russia who usurped power were no longer dealing with a people, a great nation, but with a motley population.

And, apparently, this fate was predetermined for my country by the start of the third millennium of its existence in this world.

At the same time, it was in 1990 that the world witnessed the outstanding results of Gorbachev's foreign policy. Precisely during this year the turning point in the history of the 20th century became evident—a turn from a disastrous confrontation to the peaceful period in the civilized part of the world.

The coincidence with the beginning of decline and collapse of the main "agent" of great changes on the world stage should not be surprising. There is a historical precedent, for example the Directorate period after the French Revolution, when at home there was hunger and the post-

Thermidorian nightmare but Napoleon at the head of his Italian army tore a path through Europe to the 19th century. Except Napoleon did this by force of arms, while Gorbachev made a break into the next, 21st, century with his **dynamic peacemaking policy of New Thinking**.

This policy responded to humanity's historical needs at the turn of an era. As the result, it was welcomed and accepted by the more advanced, democratic part of the international community. Here, Gorbachev's historical choice was not only right, but implementable. After justified hesitations, doubts and suspicions, his impulse towards the West (which aimed primarily at progress and benefits for his own country) was finally understood. The West was ready to accept the reformed USSR (on certain conditions) into its "settled" family. But the USSR was not ready.

Thus, the seemingly inevitable convergence stopped halfway. Moreover, one of the parties of the barely started process collapsed and disappeared, fueling the other's temptation to return to the rules of the game in the spirit of "old thinking."

Gorbachev's foreign policy achievements were not in vain. We can feel this in the new century... Humanity can live and develop only along the criteria of New Thinking. I am not referring to specific components of it as a doctrine, but its inherent fundamental ideas of a salutary development of the present and future of the world.

The year 1990 is also related to noticeable changes in the relationship between the author and the great Gorbachev. But this is a detail.