INTERNATIONAL MARXIST GROUP

Communism versus Stalinism

PYOTR GRIGORENKO

series 'Communism versus Stalinism' no. 1

15p

INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES 'COMMUNISM VERSUS STALINISM'

This is the first number of a series of pamphlets attempting to provide information, analysis and polemic concerning Eastern Europe. The series 'Communism versus Stalinism', is produced by members of the International Marxist Group, the British Section of the Fourth International in the hope that the pamphlets will be of use in assisting socialist militants in Britain to make sense of developments in Eastern Europe today.

The traditional picture of East European societies as oceans of grey immobility and silence can no longer be taken seriously. In almost every single one of these countries, recent years have witnessed the emergence of revolutionary anti-Stalinist currents, intellectual dissent and working class revolt, while the bureaucratic regimes have been faced with economic and social difficulties not amenable to the nostrums of economic reform so fashionable amongst Stalinist strategists in the late 1960s. We hope to bring some of these new strands of East European reality to the attention of socialists in Britain via this series of pamphlets.

Our second pamphlet will concentrate on the movement of dissident intellectuals in the USSR, containing an analysis of the movement as well as some documents.

The third pamphlet will be devoted to the revolutionary left in Czechoslovakia, with a study of Jiri Mueller's current, which led the Czech students' Union's resistance to the invasion. It will also contain the complete text of the Manifesto of the Czech Revolutionary Socialist Party, probably the most advanced programmatic statement from Eastern Europe since the War. Peter Uhl and the leaders of this party were the first to be rounded up in Czechoslovakia after the invasion. The pamphlet will also contain the first ever publication of the agreement signed between the Czech students Union and the 900,000 strong Czech Metal-Workers Union, in December 1968, outlining their joint plans for resistance to the invasion and to the backsliding of the Dubcek leadership.

In addition to this series, we would like to recommend the journal 'Critique' to those interested in the debates among Marxists on Eastern European society today. Copies of the journal can be obtained from Red Books, 97, Caledonian Rd., London N1.

In conclusion, we would welcome any comments on our pamphlets, suggestions or material for future pamphlets. We can also supply extra copies of the pamphlets, and a range of revolutionary Marxist literature in English and in various East European languages about Eastern Europe today. Finally, members of the editorial board of 'Communism versus Stalinism' will be very willing to speak on Eastern Europe putting forward the views of the International Marxist Group and to debate with other tendencies of the working class movement. To contact us on any of these points, write to : Oliver MacDonald, c/o IMG, 97, Caledonian Rd., London N.1.

PREFACE.

" I am a communist, and as such I hate with all my soul organs of oppression and despotism based on a caste. The organisation created by Stalin on the advice of ministers of the USSR and today called KGB is such an organisation.

I do not conceal from anyone my hatred of this organisation, which I consider hostile to the people, and I will fight by all means possible for its early liquidation." (Letter to the Prosecutor-General of the USSR, December 1968)

The voice of revolutionary socialism is not often heard in the Soviet Union. However, in one place it is still possible to hear it—in the special wards of the "mental hospitals" run by the KGB;

It is in one such "hospital"—at Stolbovaya, near Moscow—that Pyotr Grigorenko was held for five years until his release in July of 1974. Arrested in Tashkent six months after writing the above "Letter to the Prosecutor-General" he was declared to be perfectly sane by local psychiatrists. They even commented on the exceptional clarity of his thinking.

Shortly afterwards, however, a team of more reliable experts from the Serbski Institute of Forensic Psychiatry took up the case. Ever since the Stalinist purges of the 1930s this institute has been the principal body responsible for the development and application of techniques of psychiatric interrogation, repression and "diagnosis". At every level the white coats of science cover over the uniforms of the KGB; the head of the Institute, Professor Daniel Lunts, has a life-time's experience of such work and is a colonel in the secret police. In 1955, at the begginning of the Khrushchevite "de-Stalinisation", a special commission was set up by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) to investigate the activities of the Institute— its findings were never made known and clearly led to no action.

It is hardly surprising, then, that such an authoritative body was quickly able to discover " paranoid disorders of a permanent nature ...requiring forcible treatment (of Grigorenko) in a special psychiatric clinic." Thanks to the courageous action of his fellow—dissident, Bukovsky(1) the international workers' movement is able to assess for itself the scientific value of this diagnosis.

A typical passage from the official report lays out the " grounds": "He considers his struggle absolutely legitimate, and the path he has entered on to be the only correct one. When attempts are made to dissuade him he becomes angry and ill— tempered and declares to the doctor that the whole of life consists of struggle, that he had foreseen the possibility of arrest, but that that never stopped him, as he could not renounce his ideas. At the present time he considers himself to be mentally fit." (2)

The report merely confirms what is evident enough to anyone who has had any contact with Grigorenko: it is precisely his unbreakable devotion to communism that enabled him to withstand more than five years of such treatment. When faced with regular demands for capitulation, his reply remained constant throughout: "To have one's convictions change it is necessary to have more impressive grounds than intimidation."

During the long years of "treatment", however, real physical disorders developed, resulting in two heart attacks and the formation of cataracts that threaten to leave him completely blind. His present condition is the clear responsibility of the tortures of the KGB, who denied him access to the most elementary medical facilities.

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NOTES: (1) After his release in January 1970 from a labour camp, Vladimir Bukovsky smuggled out 150 pages of documents that give a clear idea of the treatment of political prisoners in the USSR. He was himself re-arrested in March 1971 and sentenced to a further 7 years in prison, where he is still held in conditions that are destroying his already frail health.

(2) Samizdat, Voices of the Soviet Opposition, Monad Press, New York, 1974, p.362. This excellent collection contains a lengthy extract from the official report as well as a number of Grigorenko's own writings.

Born in 1907 in a family of poor peasants, Pyotr Grigorenko became active in the organisations of the Bolshevik Party from his earliest youth. He was the first Komsomol member in his native Ukrainian village of Borisovka and , soon after joining the Party itself in 1927, he was transferred to military work. During the 1930s he fought against the Japanese imperialists in the Far East and against the Hitlerite armies after 1941. He was wounded twice and decorated with five orders and six medals.

Already, during the war, he was penalised by the Party for criticising the conduct of the war. Many years later, he was to write a well-researched account of the criminal incompetence of the bureaucratic leadership in the early period of the war. Like much of his work, this was stolen by the KGB in a raid on his flat, although some of the material has been circulated in "Samizdat" in a different form. Despite these early criticisms, Grigorenko does not wish to hide the fact that he was a loyal supporter of the Stalin regime throughout the thirties and forties. It was above all the revelations of Khrushchev at the 20th Congress of the CPSU (" not the whole truth or half the truth, or even one thousandth of the truth") that brought to crisis both Grigorenko himself and the whole of the world communist movement. However, whilst the vast majority reacted with either a profound confusion and demoralisation or the same unquestioning loyalty to a new, vacillating leadership, Grigorenko was amongst those communists who quickly saw that the Stalin terror was but one of the forms and consequences of a fundamental bureaucratic degeneration of the Party and State. He refused to give any confidence to Khrushchev and came more and more openly into conflict with the Party apparatus. In 1963, after further sanctions had been applied he founded the clandestine "Union of Struggle for the Revival of Leninism". This group engaged in a systematic study of Lenin's writings and produced several pamphlets dealing with workers' struggles — in particular, the 1962 uprising in Novocherkassk, during which several hundred workers were shot down by military units of the KGB.

In February 1964, Grigorenko, who was then still head of the department of military administration at the Frunze Academy, was arrested and charged with " anti-Soviet propaganda and agitation". Fearing a trial, however secret, the KGB employed a tactic that seems especially favoured for use against Marxist oppositionists— Grigorenko was diagnosed as mentally ill and locked up in a psychiatric prison. At the same time, he was demoted from the rank of major-General to that of private and expelled from the Party.

In October 1964 Khrushchev was replaced by Brezhnev and Kossigin and , although this signalled the stepping up of the repression of dissidents, a number of political prisoners were released in the early months in an attempt to gain a certain measure of popular support for the regime. Grigorenko was one of these and was thus allowed a brief interlude of four years before being re-arrested.

During this time Grigorenko began to develop an analysis of Soviet history and of the present tregime that in many respects follows that of Trotsky and the Left Opposition. Of extreme importance was his very close association with Alexei Kosterin, an old Bolshevik , who was released in 1966 after 17 years in the labour camps. Together, they showed an understanding of the importance of a fight within the international workers' movement against the Stalinist bureaucratic leaderships. By his call on Western communists to "sever" all realtions with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and declare clearly and unequivocally that they do not consider that party to be communist and do not recognise the country that it rules to be socialist", Grigorenko earned the hostility not only of the bureaucratic apparatuses, but also of fellow—dissidents like Roy Medvedev who seek to gain the support of the pro—Moscow Communist Parties' leaderships for a self—reform of the CPSU leadership.

What distinguished the group around Grigorenko and Kosterin most clearly was their preparedness to mobilise forces and stimulate mass action against the bureaucratic apparatus. In this way they openly challenged the most jealously guarded "right" of the bureaucracy— its exclusive power to initiate and control any action of the masses, whether it be a demonstration in support of the Chilean or Vietnamese resistance, a struggle for higher wages or even a celebration of the anniversary of Lenin's birth. Whatever its content , the "guidance" of the Party must be maintained with the clubs of the regular police or, where necessary, the machine—guns of the KGB.

Grigorenko and Kosterin were particularly active, during the period from 1967—1969, in defence of the national rights of the Crimean Tartars, who were deported en masse to Uzbekistan by Stalin. At meetings they were asked to address, they never ceased to call on the Tatar leaders to stop begging concessions from the bureaucracy and to start demanding their democratic rights, guaranteed on paper by the Soviet Constitution of 1936. It is precisely these rights that the bureaucracy is forced to violate everyday in defence, not of the workers' power that it has usurped, but of its own caste power and privileges.

When Kosterin died in November 1968, his funeral became a political demonstration of a kind not seen for

decades. Watched closely by the secret police, over 400 people gathered at the cemetry to listen to 18 speakers , including several from the Tatars and other oppressed nationalisties. (3)

The reaction of the KGB was not slow in coming. As we have mentioned, Grigorenko's own flat was searched and a number of documents seized. In Uzbekistan, a group of Tartars celebrating the anniversary of Lenin's birth were brutally attacked by the police. It was these two incidents that formed the background to his protest letter to the Prosecutor–General.

Grigorenko was finally re–arrested on 7May,1969, whilst organising the defence of leaders of the Crimean Tartars, themselves under arrest. Soon after, the Brezhnev regime launched an all-out attack on dissident forces and succeeded in halting for a time the appearance of the underground bulletin, "Chronicle of Current Events". It had decided that it could no longer tolerate the sligthest open opposition, which it saw as threatening the stability of the whole bureaucratic apparatus.

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The document that we are re-printing here is without doubt the most important, but also the least widely available, of Grigorenko's statements to have reached us. It was written in the form of an open letter to the Conference of Communist Parties, held in Budapest in February 1968 in preparation for the full conference of pro-Soviet Communist Parties that met in Moscow the following year.

The principal concern of this conference was to restore at least the semblance of unity in the Stalinist movement in the wake of twelve years of unprecedented crisis that hadwitnessed the outbreak of mass anti-bureaucratic upsurges in Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, the consummation of a split between the Soviet and Chinese Communist Parties and within several Western Parties. The call for a closing of the ranks emerged from that conference was ,however, an utterly false and demagogic one in that it totally avoided the causes of the crisis and attempted to cover it over with a series of paper resolutions. The basis of that "unity" was silence– about the invasion of Czechoslovakia, about the repression of dissident intellectuals, about the new rise in revolutionary forces and the counter-revolutionary role played by the Communist Parties in France, Latin America etc.

It is on some of these questions that Grigorenko, through this open letter attempts to address the rank-and-file militants of the international workers' movement. He is committed to a different kind of c o m m u n i s t unity and recognises that the greatest single obstacle to the forging of this unity is the anti socialist bureaucratic leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet UNion.

"What , then, can serve as the basis for unity? " Grigorenko asks. "Some believe that there can only be one answer to this question– no less than completely eliminating from Communist ideology the stench of Stalinism."

In a major part of the document, Grigorenko traces the historical process whereby the Soviet bureaucracy freed itself from the control of the masses and erected a massive apparatus of lies and terror to defend its positions. His judgment on those years that are referred to as the years of the "personality cult" and left as blank pages in the history books is far more devastating than the "thousandth of the truth" revealed by Khrushchev: "In all practical matters in the USSR there was a fundamental departure from Marxist-Leninist theory".

What is more, he sees the brezhnev regime as, in all fundamental respects, the same as that under Stalin. He realises that it will only be possible to fight for the socialist future of the Soviet Union and the other workers' states by calling thinga by their name and drawing the appropriate political conclusions. Grigorenko has now been released from the psychiatric prison, because the Soviet bureaucracy thinks that the past five years have brought him sufficiently close to death to remove the dangers from his being at liberty.However, whatever the immediate prospects may be, the years of Grigorenko's literary and practical activity in opposition to the bureaucratic regime will provide numerous lessons for the new layers of oppositionists that are emerging

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(3) The texts of these speeches were also stolen from Grigorenko's flat. However an attempted reconstruction was subsequently made and is contained in the collection, "Samizdat".

throughout the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. What distinguishes Grigorenko is, above all, the clarity with which he sees the need to break the links with the Soviet bureaucracy in the interests of the development of the world struggle for socialism.

The challenge that Grigorenko poses affects the whole of the international workers' movement and, in particular the militants of the Western Communist Parties. Ever since the consolidation of power by the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union, the leaderships of these parties have attempted to tie the energies of the working masses to the interests of that caste and to its counter-revolutionary intervention in the world arena. Despite the occasional muted criticism, the Gollans and Marchais continue to point to these bureaucratic dictatorships as examples of 'socialist democracy' and slander as 'anti-communist' those revolutionary militants who fight to defend the conquests of the proletarian revolution against imperialism and against the bureaucratic wreckers who hold power today. The 'peaceful co-existence' between the Soviet bureaucracy and world imperialism long ago found its counterpart in the co-existence between the Western Stalinist leaders and their respective bourgeoisies. The tragedy of Chile is the latest example of the consequences of the surrender of the political interests of the proletariat to an ephemeral alliance with 'progressive sections of the bourgeoisie'. The same 'democratic' officer caste that was called on to defend the Popular Unity and friendship with the Soviet Union has now 'freed itself' of the embrace of Stalinism and rules Chile over the rotting corpses of tens of thousand of communist and socialist workers. Why is the world Stalinist movement incapable of learning the lessons of Chile and the countless similar defeats it has organised since the 1920s? Why are Cunhal and his Soviet backers today breathing life back into the repressive apparatus of the Portuguese bourgeoisie and leading the masses to new disasters at the hands of that apparatus? What lies behind the theories of a 'peaceful road to socialism', 'political alliance with the progressive bourgeoisie', etc. (theories that Lenin knew well enough and used to call *revisionist*) is not any fundamental change in the world situation, but the commitment of the Soviet bureaucracy to the maintenance of the international status quo. It is only that status quo, periodically reaffirmed by Nixon and Brezhnev, that preserves the privileges and monopoly of power of the bureaucratic regimes of Eastern Europe. The extension of the world socialist revolution and the democratic regeneration of the existing workers' states will both require the throwing off of the bureaucratic straight-jacket imposed on the working masses by the Stalinist leaderships.

JOE GREENWOOD
August, 1974.

GRIGORENKO'S OPEN LETTER TO 1968 CP MEETING

To:

Comrade J. Kadar, Central Committee, Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party

Comrade W. Rochet, Central Committee, French Communist Party

Comrade L. Longo, Central Committee, Italian Communist Party.

Copy to:

Comrade L. Brezhnev, Central Committee, Communist Party of the Soviet Union

Dear Comrades:

Guided by an awareness of our duty as communists, we the undersigned have decided to send letters of appeal to those attending the Budapest Conference.

We earnestly request that you:

1) **Distribute these letters as Conference documents**
2) **Support our request that we be invited to attend the Conference.**

P. Grigorenko
A. Kosterin

To the participants of the Budapest Conference:

Comrades:

I assume that you have gathered in Budapest because of your concern with the fate of the world communist movement.

I, like you and all true communists, am very much troubled by the presence of a deepgoing crisis in our movement. But I am even more alarmed that in the Soviet press the existence of this crisis is concealed in every way possible. Publications that broach this issue insist that communism is marching triumphantly across the planet and that only enemy propaganda, passing off wishful thinking for reality, is making noise about the crisis.

You know better than I do that – to put it mildly – such information does not correspond to the truth. Manifestations of the crisis are so obvious that to dispute its existence shows, at best, a lack of seriousness. The only people who could dare to do that are those who do not care what happens to the movement and are looking not for a way to cure the disease but for a means by which they can deceive and tranquilize the general public and lull it to sleep.

The only thing that there may be some debate about is whether this exceedingly unpleasant phenomenon is worthy of special attention or if it is better to try to smooth over the differences quietly, keeping it in the family.

The leadership of the CPSU, as can be understood from its official statements, supports the latter course. It has repeatedly proposed that we put aside the disputed issues and re-establish unity by concentrating our efforts on resolving tasks upon which a general consensus has been attained.

For communists, **the question of unity** is undoubtedly a decisive one, inasmuch as communists are fighting for a goal that is international in character - to reconstruct human society according to communist principles. And when the leaders of the CPSU talk about achieving unity on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, I suppose they have in mind this very goal, common to communists the world over.

Supposedly, the entire question is quite simple: If you agree with the goal, join our ranks; if you do not agree, go and join the camp of communism's enemies. But this simplicity is more apparent than real. The trouble is that the fundamental conceptions of how the science of Marxism-Leninism should be applied in the contemporary situation are not being defined in a way that is clear and acknowledged by all.

THE ROOTS OF THE CRISIS

In order to explain how this has come about, it is appropriate to present a brief history.

It is well known that half a century ago communism passed over from being simply a theory into a real-world phenomenon; and from that moment, many people began to judge communism not by what was written in books and not by the utterances of the communist leaders and theoreticians, but by practical achievements in the Soviet Union.

And in the early years, these achievements served as an inspiring example for the workers of the entire world. Despite the enemies' resistance and the most colossal domestic difficulties, the workers and peasants were able to uphold the power they had won, and the country, under the leadership of its elected representatives, experienced one success after another:

– in an extremely short historical period, it moved from a state of semi-barbarism to the most advanced levels of industrial development;

– the economy based on peasants with small or very small holdings was collectivized and a highly mechanized agricultural complex, the greatest in the world, was created.

– a genuine cultural revolution took place: the broadest number of the working masses had access to the achievements of science, and all the benefits of culture and art were brought within reach of the people.

Broad masses of communists within the country and the communist public beyond the borders of our native land did not know how and by what methods this was accomplished, and hence did not ponder over the question of whether these successes were socialist in nature. The Soviet people and our friends abroad were impressed by the fact that all this was accomplished by the workers themselves without the landlords and capitalists; without the czarist officials or aid from outside; without foreign loans or contributions and without recourse to colonial plunder. And all that was accomplished under conditions of capitalist encirclement.

On the question of this encirclement it is proper to be more specific.

The interventions that were engineered abroad and the subsequent blockade evoked in turn a reaction: We did everything by ourselves. This natural and healthy response grew, as time passed, into a reactionary isolationism.

The clearly hostile and slanderous bourgeois propaganda caused our foreign friends to fully distrust all the bourgeois reports. And within the USSR, especially among the new intelligentsia, there arose a determination not to give out for use in this propaganda campaign the actual data on our shortcomings. It is precisely this objective that has explained the fact that not only in foreign relations but even domestically, the negative aspects of our life began to be hidden, spoken of only behind closed doors to a narrow circle of party and state leaders.

Stalin was able to derive considerable advantage from the domestic as well as the foreign reactions to the propaganda that was hostile to the Soviet Union. Introducing the strictest censorship, forbidding Soviet citizens – under penalty of death – to make any kind of contact whatever with foreigners, making the lie an instrument of governmental policy, he managed to insure that life in the Soviet Union was illuminated only in a light that pleased him. every success – real or imaginary – was blown up and extolled in every way possible. Every mistake or failure was attributed to enemy intrigues or passed off as a lie.

This was so much the easier to do because he had found reliable assistants.

On his deathbed the great Lenin warned the communists of the Soviet Union that he was bequeathing to the party not simply Soviet power but 'Soviet power with bureaucratic distortions'. While doing so, he indicated that the bureaucrat is the central, most dangerous enemy of Soviet power. The party, unfortunately, did not heed his warning, and the Soviet bureaucracy began to become more and more entrenched. The bureaucracy sensed perhaps unconsciously, that the masses – their control – presented the greatest threat to its existence. Therefore, when tendencies to limit open criticism of shortcomings began to appear among the masses, the bureaucrats actively supported these tendencies and used them toward their own ends. It turned out that way because, as the poet N. Korzhaven said to the protagonist of his poem Tanka, an enthusiastic communist who had given himself body and soul to the party, 'You lied for a good cause ... but those who were more capable than you at contriving lies took up the lie as a tradition'.

When Stalin undertook action directed toward getting out from under the control of the party and the working masses, the bureaucracy proved to be a most reliable ally for him in this cause, since it was freeing itself by this means from a potential control that could only terrify it: the initiative of the masses.

Thus Stalin and the apparatus he led ended up beyond the control of the masses inside the country and beyond the criticism of the Communist parties of the world. The experiment in building a society that the best minds of humanity had dreamed about, the success of which was in the interest of the broadest masses of workers, ended up being handed over to a small group of 'communist priests' who 'solemnly perform rites' somewhere behind closed doors, passing off the outcome of their efforts as the highest achievements of human genius. In other words, conditions were deliberately created such that a scientific experiment that was to be the first attempt to organize a socialist system could not take the correct course.

Worst of all, it turned out that there was no one to reveal the mistakes of the experiment. Mass terror was soon instituted in the Soviet Union, striking not only the real opponents but even the potential critics of Stalin's regime. This repression was carried out in an environment that was exceptionally favorable from Stalin's point of view. The major portion of the population believed in the insidiousness of the enemies – in the enemies' enduring determination to harm us and their ability to penetrate every sector of our life, cleverly masquerading as friends. They believed that the victorious construction of socialism was under way in our country.

Even the people who fell into the hands of the Stalin-Beria torturers were for a long time unable to comprehend what was taking place. They did not understand how this power that had promoted them to the highest levels was now emerging as their executioner. It seemed to them that this was all some kind of terrible mistake, that it was intrigues of the class enemy; that their party and government would examine every aspect of the matter and that for the time being they had to endure and obey.

It never occurred to them that what they were observing in the case at hand was a totally new phenomenon, unprecedented in history – the population that was being 'worn down' by a bureaucratic machine for the purpose of converting it into the meek implementors of an alien will were not ignorant and impoverished masses. Rather they were people who had access to all the benefits of culture, who had ascended to the very heights of contemporary science, literature and art. To attain this unprecedented objective, unprecedented methods were applied. While in times past the most brutal of tyrannies resorted to such a method as executing every tenth person only in cases when it was necessary to subdue

rebellious military units, now all the people were dealt with more savagely than the mutineers of old had been.

But before the war, none of our friends abroad could have found out about this. During the Second World War the peoples of the world looked to the Soviet Union as the saviour from the inhuman Hitlerite tyranny. Progressive people of the world were imbued with an inexhaustible love for our country and for a long time would hear nothing negative about it.

Therefore, the cries of those tortured in Beria's chambers and the moans of millions who liberated Europe and were now perishing in the boundless expanses of Siberia and the Far East were not heard by the world community for a long time. Bitter cold and disease literally decimated the poorly clad people who had been weakened by starvation, backbreaking labour, the unbearable living conditions, and savage treatment. But the world heard only the florid marches and bombastic reports about the happy life afforded the people by the 'great leader and teacher', our 'own beloved Stalin'.

Nevertheless, times had changed in the postwar world. The fact that Communist parties came to power in a number of countries in Southeast and Central Europe and in Asia, particularly the revolution in China, led to a weakening of the USSR's position in the world Communist movement. The day when Lenin's dream of a 'World Union of Soviet Socialist Republics' could be realized not only failed to draw closer, but was put off for a long time to come. Centrifugal forces began to manifest themselves with particular strength after Stalin's death. The leaders of the new socialist states were no longer of a mind to tremble in fear before Stalin's machine for reprisals against objectionable persons. This situation, along with certain of the Soviet state's domestic phenomena, compelled the CPSU leadership to come out with partial disclosures of the Stalin calamity. However, the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU did not disclose the full essence of what had gone on. What was said at the congress was not the whole truth or half the truth, or even one thousandth of the truth. All in all, what was reported to the congress - in a very restrained manner and distorted form - was only a very tiny part of the truth on one issue: the brutalities of Stalin's period of rule. But even reporting this tiny bit frightened them, and immediately after the Congress they began to equivocate: First, 'Stalin performed this and that horrible crime'; later on we hear,'We will not allow Stalin to be insulted'.

However, the brutality did not exist in a vacuum. It was only one consequence of the particular system of government administration. The whole truth was far more terrible. **In all practical matters in the USSR there was a fundamental departure from Marxist-Leninist theory.** The points listed below attest to this.

1. The social structure created under Stalin's leadership was not able to provide a higher level of labour productivity than had capitalism. But according to Marxist teachings this is the main criterion for determining the viability of the new social structure.

2. The Soviet Union was not only unable to attain the main goal of the proletarian revolution — the elimination of the state through its depoliticization. It did not even open up a practical avenue toward this end. In fact, the course of events in the post-October period followed the same road as all previous revolutions. A machine for suppression was created that was more perfect than the one that had existed before October. But according to Marxist-Leninist theory the old mechanism for governing is supposed to be smashed and broken and replaced by a state that 'is withering away', that 'will begin to wither away immediately and **cannot do otherwise**'.

3. Instead of the unlimited expansion of democracy envisaged by the teachings of Marx and Lenin, democracy ended up being totally liquidated, without a trace remaining. A state was set up that had an unprecedented degree of totalitarian control. There was a monstrous centralization of every area of Soviet life. In the entire country there was not one independent popular organisation. Not only the party and the state apparatus, but also the trade unions, scientific and cultural societies, religious communities, editorial boards, publishers, and so forth, were all only appendages of a single, far-flung bureaucratic apparatus directed from the centre and controlled by an organ especially created for this purpose. (At the present time this organ is called the KGB).

A gigantic bureaucratic octopus has the entire society in its tentacles and is strangling it to death. It is impossible to undertake any organized public activity if it isn't arranged and authorized by the higher bureaucratic body. Religious activities are possible only on that condition. Gatherings, meetings, demonstrations, and other activities organized by the bureaucratic apparatus are carried out in accordance with well-known models or carefully prepared stage directions. No one can say or do anything that does not correspond to the organizer's wishes.

All this applies not only to ordinary people but even to functionaries of the bureaucratic hierarchy on all levels, and to scientists, writers, and artists as well. Every person who has attempted to resist these methods has been eliminated or completely isolated from society. Bulgakov, Mandelstam, Pilnyak, Platonov, and hundreds of other writers scientists, and artists whom it would take too long to enumerate are some of those who sought to defend their right to free expression of ideas and sentiments and would not say or do what was commanded if doing so would mean violating their convictions....

The speeches of the party and its leadership role during the period of Stalin's personal dictatorship are nothing but demagogic chatter, devoid of meaning and having nothing in common with reality. The party, to use Gramsci's expression, was at that point 'nothing but the simple executor that doesn't discuss .... Its name is merely a metaphor having the properties of a myth'.

What was involved in fact was the complete failure of humanity's first attempt at creating a social system fairer than capitalism. No one (except a fool) would want to replace the most backward capitalism with a backward 'socialism'. It is possible that this is precisely why those on whom all of that depended were opposed to disclosure of the truth.

But we all know that the truth cannot be hidden, and it becomes ever more widely known. But since the attempt was made stubbornly to hide the truth and since the truth was disseminated above all through bourgeois channels, the people began to think that the Soviet system and communism were one and the same.

'DE–STALINIZATION'

It is precisely on this level that the present crisis developed. It is from the Soviet system that anticommunism draws arguments for its struggle against the world Communist movement. In such a situation the world Communist movement could save itself as an ideological current in only one way: by totally and unequivocally distinguishing itself from the 'socialist' system of the USSR. But this was not done and it is the CPSU that is above all responsible for that fact.

After the Twentieth Congress, the leadership of our party not only failed to become involved in correcting the anticommunist course of Stalinism, but it began to impede denunciation of Stalinism. The line in the direction of a complete return to Stalinism was expressed most clearly after the Twenty-third Congress of the CPSU.

At the present time the censor does not permit the publication of any document revelaing the true nature of Stalinist rule.

Even the term 'personality cult' has been secretly banned. On the other hand, everything that in a more or less veiled manner whitewashes Stalin and his time are encouraged. We observe the same line in the official statements of leading party and state figures.

Thus L.I.Brezhnev in his address 'Fifty Years of the Great October Revolution' completely forgot not only the entire period of prewar and postwar repression, but also the Twentieth and Twenty-second Party Congresses, which exposed the savage character of Stalin's dictatorship. However he did not let pass a chance to place Stalin as unobtrusively as possible on the same level as Lenin: In the Civil War 'in order to mobilize the country's forces to crush its enemies, the Soviet for Workers' and Peasants' Defense was created with V.I.Lenin at its head'; and in the Great Patriotic War 'there was a State Committee for Defense with Stalin presiding'.

Yu.V.Andropov, in an address on the fiftieth anniversary of the state security organs, could not help but mention the illegalities of the Stalin period, since the organs he was praising — and they actually were glorofied — were the organs contrived to annihilate many outstanding organizers of the VChK (All-Union Extraordinary Commission, Cheka). However, while making a very obscure reference to 'violations of socialist legality' (not in the period of Stalin's dictatorship or even in the time of Stalin's cult, but in the times when 'political adventurers worked their way into the leadership of the security organs'; do you sense how easily Stalinism is replaced by its offspring, Beriaism?) he indicated then and there that this did not alter the *socialist* nature of these organs.

Thus was perfected the 'ideological' preparation, if we can scall it that, for the revival of Stalinism to its full scope. No less have been the 'successes' in the sphere of its revival in practice.

We know that the changes took place in the country after the Twentieth Party Congress applied only to the most loathsome manifestations of Stalinism, but in no way affected its foundations.

For example, the massive repression and brutal torture were discontinued, but the possibility still remained that both might be resumed, since just as in Stalin's time there is no publicity about legal proceedings, and just as before we have no control over the functioning of the KGB.

One positive phenomenon has been a certain leveling of the discrepancies in living standards. And although as a result of this, the living standard of the urban workers, the engineering and technological personnel, and the lower-echelon office employees sharply declined, on the otherhhand collective farm workers stopped going hungry.

Some other small changes took place. But for the most part the components of the Stalinist order were left untouched and their authority is tenaciously defended.

The isolated signs of a democratization in internal party life that followed the Twentieth Party Congress have long since been suppressed. Members of the party have been deprived of any rights whatsoever and have only one duty: unquestioning obedience to the party, state, and industrial administrative apparatus.

The rights the organs for state security had in the rprevious period have been restored to them. It is well known that after Beria's clique was crushed, these organs' main line of activity was intelligence and counter-intelligence. Therefore, their numbers were sharply cut back and an intelligence specialist was appointed to supervise the work. Now these organs have been directed once again, as in Stalin's time, mainly into the struggle against popular protest within this country. In connection with this, they have again been given the right of total control over the activity of every institution and organisation, including the party. Accordingly, the numerical strength of the security organs has been restored and the leadership has again passed into the hands of a political figure who is joining the ranks of the party-state elite. Now the KGB is a committee in name only. By virtue of its importance and its numerous personnel, it is the same kind of superadministrative organ as it was under Beria.

The main features of the Stalinist structure have also been preserved – government be means of lies and terror. It is true that the terror is not being displayed so openly and does not have the same abominable forms it did not so long ago. But to make up for it, the lying has reached most incredible heights. The lying is done openly – in the press, on radio, and on television – and secretly at different kinds of meetings and conferences, in reports, conversations, instructions, and seminars.

The open lie is used to present our economic and social life in the way that is most advantageous to the ruling circles – to misrepresent the facts about what really has taken place, exaggerate the significance of isolated successes, maintain silence about failures, etc. Particularly notable distortions can be seen in the way historical events are rendered.

The histories of the party and of the Soviet state have been falsified to such a degree that it is embarassing to read them, the very same event being presented in different ways in different years, but all of them false. Even Stalin's illegal and savage annihilation of those he imagined to be competitors for power – the best students and closest collaborators of the great Lenin the true Bolshevik-Communists: Bukharin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, and the others – until now has been presented as a blessing in disguise, the liquidation of socialism's worst enemies. Anyone who attempts to restore historical truth is viciously persecuted. Not long ago A'M'Nekrich was expelled from the party for venturing to raise ever so slightly the curtain hiding the secrets about how criminally ill-prepared we were for the war.

But particularly disgusting is the undercover falsehood, which is calculated to appeal to the ill-informed and ignorant listener and earmarked 'for internal use only', for distribution by the philistines 'by word of mouth'.

We would say one could judge the character of such undercover statements by the speech of the chief editor of 'Pravda' (truth!) Zimyanin, at the Leningrad press building October 5, 1967. He stated that when the text of his speech was distributed in Samizdat without any commentary whatever, he was forced to issue a refutation.

Falsehood has literally become a fundamental element of the official practice of the bureaucratic apparatus. Here is ta small illustration. The trial of (yYuri) Galanskov, (Aleksandr) Ginzburg, and the others was literally shrouded in lies. Vice-Chairman of the Moscow City Court aMironov, who presided at the trial, lied when on the eve of the trial he announced to ci to citizens who made appeals to him that the case in question was not under the jurisdiction of the Moscow City Court and that he did not know what court would handle it. A department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also lied in announcing to a 'L'Humanite' (French CP paper)

correspondent on the day the trial began that the date of the trial had as yet not been established. Deliberate lies about this trial, and slander of the defendants and witnesses, were publicized by *Komsomolskaya Pravda* (truth!) and *Izvestia*.

Lies continue to be cultivated at the highest levels regarding the basic law of the land, the Constitution. Our constitution to this very day is purely for show, serving only to foster the myth abroad that workers in the USSR have every democratic right and freedom.

In fact the Criminal Code completely ignores the Constitution in every way. It contains an article (the article on anti-Soviet agitation) which can be used to block realization of any of the constitutional freedoms. One can judge the nature of this article by the mere fact that analogous legislation exists only in a country with a fascist dictatorship. Not one bourgeois democracy has such a statute. Even in the United States where monopolization and conformism have become very highly developed, no law on anti-American activity has yet been forced through.

INTENSIFIED REPRESSION

But in our country it has now turned out that even this antipeople article is not enough. New, draconian laws against potential opposition have been passed. Thus, in September 1966 two additions to the Criminal Code were adopted that completely abrogate the citizens' constitutional rights to free speech, press, meetings, gatherings, demonstrations, and also the greatest conquest of the working class - the right to strike. These amendments were adopted in the greatest secrecy amid the noisy clamour of a struggle against hooliganism.

The camps for political prisoners are now, as in Stalin's time, barely distinguishable from Hitler's camps.

As before, for political 'criminals' in the USSR there is neither a trial nor an investigation in the normal sense of the words. If anyone had any doubts on this score, the trial of the writers (Andrei) Sinyavsky and (Yuri) Daniel and especially the recent political trial in Moscow (Galanskov, Ginzburg, Dobrovolsky, and Lashkova) left no room for such doubts. And dozens of similar trials have been conducted over the past two years although it is true that Soviet society at large and the world community do not know about them.

The trial of Ginzburg, Galanskov, and the others, referred to above, provokes particular concern. It does so by its clearly provocative nature. The people were arrested because they dared to utilize their constitutional rights and spoke out against earlier illegalities (committed by the government). They were condemned on the basis of a totally unfounded charge, concocted during the year-long 'investigation', of having ties with the NTS (Narodno-Trudovoy Soyuz - Popular Labour Alliance, a right-wing exile group). In the wholly unfounded nature of the charges, the trial under discussion is fully on a par with the provocative trials of the 1930s, when the sole proof of guilt was the unsubstantiated assertion that the accused was 'an enemy of the people'. The only difference is that back then they were more frank about it. There were brazen reprisals behind closed doors with no trial, and now the comedy of an 'open' trial is played out and the newspapers even carry a 'report' - the most disgusting nonsense, containing not one shred of truth, which is nevertheless purported to be an objective court record.

The appalling genocide continues, on a lesser scale than in Stalin's time, it is true; but it continues nonetheless. With respect to the Crimean Tatars and the Volga Germans, it has taken forms and methods that are particularly intolerable. By order of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, ie. under the aegis of the highest official bodies, the Crimean Tatars were even deprived of the right to call themselves a nation. In the Order of September 26, 1967, and in subsequent documents they are referred to as 'citizens of the Tatar nationality who had previously lived in the Crimea'. Evidently one could just as easily speak of Hungarians as 'citizens of the Tatar nationality now living in Hungary'.

Naturally, under such conditions, no normal social relations could be developed.

BANKRUPTCY OF THE BUREAUCRACY

Amidst those who serve the bureaucracy, careerism and moral and ideological indifference are flourishing. None of them, although almost all have a party card, have seriously studied Marxism-Leninism. They only talk about and swear by it; but they do not know its fundamental principles, and do not want to know them. The present life fully suits them. The most highly-placed bureaucrats, when the opportunity arises, paint pictures of a happy tomorrow that awaits the Soviet workers, not forgetting for a second the importance of defending their own today by every means available to them. They quote Lenin. But the secretaries and reference workers select quotes for them with the sole purpose in mind of using the quote to strengthen the orator's 'general' idea. And woe to Lenin if nothing can be found in his writings that is appropriate. If that happens, they take the first passage they come upon and so mutilate it that 'heaven becomes hell'.

It is no surprise, therefore, that the judges in the political trials often end up being totally helpless and even ridiculous when, in the course of the case, they have to join in a polemic against the anti-Soviet' defendants, among whom there are always people who have studied Marxism—Leninism seriously and extensively. A way out of this awkward situation was soon found. It was not, of course, to have well-educated people as judges. Not at all. Quotations from Marxist-Leninist classics and references to them have simply been forbidden at political trials.

Preposterous? No, it is a fact! And this fact is not surprising if one knows that many of Lenin's works, especially from the later years of his life - above all on the question of bureaucratism - were forbidden publication by Stalin and to this day are secretly banned, despite assurances taht his 'complete collected works' have been published. The impression is created that this new 'filling out' of Lenin's works was done not in the interest of Marxist—Leninist science, but in order more safely to hide the real Lenin from the broad readership. Can it really be that Leninism too is the internal business of the CPSU leadership? Do the fraternal parties really have no right to ask of this leadership? Why are these things happening?

Naturally what has been described here cannot help but provoke public protest within the country. And this protest is beginning to be manifested even more openly. Here are some facts.

In conjunction with the fact that before the Twenty-Third Party Congress rumours were circulating that a partial rehabilitation of Stalin was being contemplated at the

congress, several dozen of the most prominent scholars, writers, cultural figures, and artistic figures sent an appeal to the Central Committee requesting that this not be allowed. The people took up this appeal by sending a whole wave of letters in support of it. And although the Central Committee hid this event from the congress, it could not help but take it into account.

Still greater was the public reaction to the thoughtful, courageous, civic-minded letter of the most outstanding contemporary Soviet wrtier, A.I.Solzhenitsyn, to the Fourth Congress of the Soviet Writers' Union. And there has been already a literal torrent of letters to Pavel Litvinov and Larissa Bogoraz-Daniel in connection with their appeal to Soviet and world public opinion. The fundamental character of this mass of letters can be judged by a letter by twenty-four students, a copy of which I am attaching.

Moreover, there are also other letters that sharply condemn reality in our country. I will illustrate this with a short excerpt from such a letter (addressed to Pavel Litvinov):"Yes, indeed, your famous grandfather would not find fault with you, a grandson worthy of him. I say this to you as a Communist, a person who is not indifferent to the fate of our ideals. I remember speeches your grandfather made to the League of Nations. In his statements he castigated the fascist brown shirts. But fascists can dress themselves in any color and wear any toga, You are throwing down the gauntlet before a new fascism, one that like a chameleon has donned our glorious red. Even under the czarist regime writers were not put on trial. This only happens where fascism flourishes. We, the ordinary people, have long been asking ourselves:"How did we let Soviet powerslip away? Into whose hands has it fallen?"

But what is important here is not so much the letters as the general rise in public responsiveness. In all, only the most active-minded are writing, and they address themselves to the appeals, the majority being sympathetic. One can say with certainty that now, at least in Moscow, there are no more popular people than P Litvinov and L Daniel.

Only the party and state leadership remain silent. They have chosen the tactic of keeping silent and hushing it up. Neither letters nor petitions receive a response. Simultaneously measures are taken to impede communication of Soviet citizens among themselves and between Soviet citizens and progressive forces abroad. In the Soviet press not one letter or statement from the representatives of these forces has been published. And telegrams addressed to P.Litvinov and L.Daniel from Bertrand Russell and other prominent scholars, writers and figures in the arts and culture have not reached them. How does all this look to the rest of the world? It is evident that against such a background the statements of our leaders in defense of the Greek patriots appear as an act of sheer hypocrisy.

Not the least important feature of the present period is the fact that the people are fed up with being afraid. On a large number of the petitions sent to different governmental institutions during the recent political trial in Moscow, people not only signed their name but indicated their address and place of work. The same thing is seen in letters received by the authors of appeals. Only in one of the letters received by Litvinov was the following written instead of a signature:"Excuse me, but I cannot sign. I have no confidence in our democracy even as it concerns the sending of letters. I believe you will not condemn me". And indeed it is difficult to condemn him. He could not do otherwise. The man's civic conscience is apparently only awakening. Not so long ago, only a few people in the entire country would sign a statement.

But there are, all the same, anonymous letters in the full sense of the word. Both of the authors have received greetings on anonymous post-cards. These post-cards obviously came from the same factory. They also had an identical opening: "You are a Jew..." and continue in the same "style",

with foul language, including obscenities. I myself did not go through it, but I believe that in the times of darkest reaction during the reign of Nicholas the Bloody, members of the Black Hundreds wrote the same kind of postcards to revolutionaries. And this phenomenon also characterises not only that the Black Hundreds are again rearing their heads, but particularly that the riffraff, speaking from governmental positions, have not dared to sign their names and have used foul language and made threats while hiding like cowards.

Social protest means arrest. And social protest is being manifested everywhere. Even the anonymous letters that have been referred to indicate that it is ripening. Those who have written them understand that it is difficult to find those who sympathise with them. A very broad section of society sympathises with the protesters. These people are paying attention, looking for answers to questions that are troubling them, and they want to know the truth. In the theaters, the only productions that enjoy success are those in which pressing social problems are posed, if only in Aesopian fashion. The same applies to literature and movies. In the film *Our Contemporary* when the secretary of the oblast committee ended his speech –one that was outwardly cogent but actually shot through with lies and hypocrisy– with the provocative question: "Well, what will you tell the workers?" and the protagonist, withou hesitating, answered: "The truth, *only the truth*," the hall invariably exploded with a storm of applause. And in this also there is an undeniable manifestation of public protest against the vile stream of lies that floods the country from the Soviet press and the official rostrums.

Yet that same party leadership that is responsible for all that has been described above in its own country, persistently reiterates the need to restore unity "on the basis of Marxism-Leninism". The question arises: What does it consider Marxism-Leninsm to be? Is it really Marxism-Leninism that is at work in our country?

COMMUNISM VERSUS STALINISM.

Our country, it is obvious to everyone, cannot serve as a basis for judgment. In fact, many Communist parties have already come to the conclusion that to preserve what influence they have, they must more or less openly declare that when their party comes to power, it will not allow a repetition of what happened in the USSR. Thus, unity on the basis of endorsing what is going on in the USSR is excluded.

What, then can serve as the basis for unity?

Some believe that there can be only one answer to this question—*no less than completely eliminating from Communist ideology the stench of Stalinism.*

The great Lenin said of the Communist parties that they are the "mind , honor, and conscience of the epoch". The policies of the CPSU do not give it the right to be so characterised. And all the parties that will not openly say that this is true are themselves unworthy of this distinction. Their declarations that upon coming to power they will not repeat what happened in the USSR must be viewed in this instance as a tactical maneuver, an attempt to betray their own people.

Those who are actually devoted to the ideas of Communism will not be afraid to speak the truth to the peoples of the world openly and unequivocally. Statements about how the disclosure of past flaws will make Communist ideas look less attractive are just as unfounded as the anticommunist lamentations based on the experience of the USSR and falsification of Marxist-Leninist doctrine as proof that the ideas are unviable and utopian. *But in the USSR it is not the ideas of Communism that have suffered a defeat, but a particular policy calling itself socialist but in reality nothing of the sort.*

The Communist ideal for social organization lives in the dreams of humanity on a much broader scale than the teachings of Marxism. And naturally Marxism, as the scientific expression of humanity's dream, cannot disappear just because there has been an unsuccessful attempt at the realization of that dream. Such an attempt, even an unsuccessful one, only enriches the the science and can significantly strengthen it. And the many millions of victims of Stalinism will not be lost without a trace. Their sacred blood and their torment summon us to spare no effort to overcome the present awesome crisis as quickly as possible.

I think it is clear that the resolution of this task is in no way to be found in the realm of secret agreements among party leaders.

Communism is the dream of all humanity, but the attempt to realize it was performed in secret, and information about it was concealed from the broad mass of the working people. Worse than that, the people were betrayed and deceived regarding the true results of the experiment. This is precisely why the experiment failed. But this failure occurred not behind the scenes in secret laboratories, but before the eyes of an astonished humanity. It is obvious that after that has happened the world's people cannot allow the explanation of what took place to be hidden away behind closed doors. They want to know the truth - **the whole truth!** And they have a right to know it!

Under these circumstances the people of the world are justified in regarding any closed-door conference promulgating any sort of declaration, report, or communique 'streamlined to suit everyone' as a conspiracy of totalitarians against the fundamental interests of the people themselves. And your meeting as well should be open and should be reported comprehensively and in depth in the press. Firmly adhering to such a view, I have composed this letter as an open document. For this reason I have not dealt with the most acute manifestations of social protests in our country or those aspects of the questions examined in this letter that are related to my country's defence capacity. I would speak about all this, if invited to, in one of the closed sessions that, of course, no international conference can avoid as long as the world is split into hostile warring blocs.

Put negotiations for unity in the hands of the rank-and-file communist masses! This is the only slogan that your conference can advance to fulfill the hopes that have been entrusted to it. One can only wonder why this slogan, the only one that can be effective, has not been advanced until now. In truth, the present leaders of the party have conclusively proven how totally incapable they are of settling the differences that have arisen among them. More than twenty years have passed since these differences first came to light and as yet not only have they not been settled, but in fact they are ever deepening. The matter has gone so far that countries calling themselves socialist are openly rattling sabers at one another.

The adoption of this slogan in practice will mean the restoration of international unity among the Communist parties who have adopted it. The conference will fulfill its task and in fact it iwll mark a turning point in the history of the Communist movement if it adopts this slogan, and, pursuant to it, does the following:

I. Openly condemns the present domestic pollicy of the CPSU as anti-socialist and contradictory to the fundamental ideals of Marxism and Leninism. The principle of 'noninterference in the affairs of other parties' is not only inapplicable in the present situation but is harmful and reactionary. It is impermissible to interpret this principle to mean that your party has the right to do anything it has a mind to. Communist parties are internationalist – therefore

they cannot renounce their indisputable right to openly criticize any fraternal party for breach of its international duty and violation of the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism. And no Communist party, if it is really Communist, has the right to show disregard or disrespect toward this criticism. The international duty of the CPSU is to build a social order that can serve as an inspiring example for all fraternal parties. And, if it does not fulfill its fundamental international duty, it is their responsibility to point this out.

2. Demands that the leadership of the CPSU return to Leninist norms in the party and in the country, not only in word but in deed. As a first step, democratic centralism must be restored in the party. In particular the party must reinstate everyone who was expelled for having a different understanding than the leadership of how Leninist principles should apply to internal party life and state life, and also those who were expelled for violation of party rules. As regards the internal political life, the constitution must be brought into force; and in connection with this, all laws and statutes contradictory to it must be abolished. Constitutional amendments that are necessary to make it conform to the 'Declaration of Human Rights' must be introduced.

3. Announces in all the Communist parties wide-ranging internal discussion directed toward full disclosure of the causes of the present crisis. The discussion must have an international character, which means, first, that the course of the discussions and the summaries of them are to be published in the international Communist press with a guarantee of full and comprehensive explanation of all the views, expressed by those who support them, without biased commentary. Second, the right to criticize the activity not only of one's own party but of any other. Third, the right of every participant in the discussion to demand and receive from any party any material that he or she feels is necessary in the course of the discussion. And finally, the right to an international investigation regarding any claim that a discussion was undemocratic or that any current of thought was discriminated against.

With respect to the CPSU the conference participants must recommend that the discussion to be launched with the publication of the Central Committee's platform and all other platforms, which will then serve as the basis for discussion. Subsequently the supporters of all the platforms must have equal opportunities to defend their positions, whether by means of a separate press put out by the advocates of each platform or by a joint press with all platforms allotted an equal number of pages and allowed to have an equal number of representatives on the editorial board. The discussion must be crowned by a congress of the party, with delegates being chosen on the basis of their platforms. I believe – and even without proof it is clear – that in the CPSU precisely those conditions exist that Lenin spoke of at the Tenth Party Congress as the kind that make necessary the voting for delegates on the basis of platforms.

In the USSR a transformation has been carried out that has a socialist character. It is only the bureaucratism that has taken roots in the country that prevents it from becoming socialist. And this bureaucratism can be overcome only through the development of the broadest democracy. The CPSU, if it is worthy of being called a Communist party, is obliged to take the lead in the process of democratizing life in our country. However, this is innno way solely its internal affair. I too want to fight, and am fighting, against bureaucrats. I don't want to and don't intend to contribute to the further development of bureaucratism. The Communist parties of the whole world are concerned that the socialist experiment, interrupted by Stalin's dictatorship, be continued and that a society capable of serving all the people of the world be created. And if the leadership of the CPSU will not agree to this, the true Communists of the world are obligated to sever all relations with it and declare clearly and

unequivocally that they do not consider that party to be Communist and do not recognize the country that it rules to be socialist.

Comrades participating in the conference!

I earnestly request that you give Comrade Kosterin and me an opportunity to take part in the conference. We are certain, and can prove, that what has been stated in our letters reflects opposition views that have become fully matured in the CPSU. And we believe that it will not be long before these views become the prevailing ones in the party. I believe this is reason enough for you to rule in favour of our request.

P. Grigorenko

February 13, 1968

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