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SOME IMPLICATIONS OF KHRUSHCHEV'S SECRET SPEECH

Note by the Acting Chairman  
of the Working Group on Trends of Soviet Policy

The attached paper, which was prepared by the Political Division, has been discussed in the Working Group on Trends of Soviet Policy, which agreed that it should be forwarded to the Council.

In this connection the Working Group, in order to facilitate discussion in the Council, has drawn up the following list of questions:

1. What, in member countries of NATO, have been
  - (a) the extent of the diffusion of the Khrushchev speech in the Press and its limitations?
  - (b) the nature of Press and other comment on the speech?
  - (c) the general effect of (a) and (b) on public opinion?
  - (d) What use has been made of the speech in broadcasts by member countries of NATO directed towards Iron Curtain countries?
2. How far is the speech to be interpreted as directed towards the "managerial" class and intelligentsia and as:
  - (a) registering a necessary fulfilment and strengthening of the Soviet system (and its long-term aim of building a modern technologically-advanced "socialist" state);
  - (b) registering a new and somewhat risky step which may in the long run have effects incompatible with (and, if uncontrolled, prove ultimately disruptive of) the present principles and policies of the Soviet régime?

What, arising from these considerations, should be the long-term uses of the speech?

(Signed) J. CAHEN SALVADOR

Palais de Chaillot,  
Paris, XVIIe.

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SOME IMPLICATIONS OF KHRUSHCHEV'S SECRET SPEECH

I. The Ethical Assumptions of Mr. Khrushchev

The emotional impact of Mr. Khrushchev's speech largely arises from its disclosures of actions repugnant to elementary justice and decency. He frequently refers to "human dignity" as having been outraged by the use of moral and physical pressures, and he makes use of heartrending letters from broken and tortured Bolsheviks to inflame the righteous indignation of his audience of Party members.

2. Nevertheless, Khrushchev's moral fervour is parochial - he "to Party gave up what was meant for Mankind", and the focus of his indignation is that Stalin should have used torture and ruthless terror against good Party members. Khrushchev explicitly justifies the use of ruthless terror by Lenin in circumstances of danger to the régime, and also justifies its use by Stalin, in his earlier phase. In his view the use of ruthless terror is right, even indispensable, when directed against class enemies, or "real enemies" of the Communist Party. It could properly be revived at any time when the régime deemed itself endangered.

3. Even in his later use of wholesale terror, Stalin's motives are not impugned - what he did was done out of conviction that it was necessary for the defence of working class interests against enemies and the imperialist camp. "In this lies the whole tragedy", adds Khrushchev. Stalin was wrong to have used terror against the members of the Communist Party when all real opposition had been crushed. He was also wrong in using it against the Georgians and other nationalities when "bourgeois nationalism" had ceased to be a danger. It was an error of judgment, rather than of moral principle.

4. Stalin's real fault was the character-defect of "lack of modesty", for as Lenin had stressed "modesty is an absolutely integral part of a real Bolshevik". Lack of modesty lead to terror.

5. Khrushchev can hardly find words strong enough to condemn Rodos, one of Stalin's investigative judges, ("He is a vile person, with the brain of a bird and morally completely degenerate"), Beria, and others. Judge Rodos

defended himself with the argument "I thought that I was executing the orders of the Party". Khrushchev castigates this as "cynical", although much of his own speech is taken up with explanations of how Stalin acted in the name of the Politbureau and Party machinery which rubber-stamped his decisions. For the Party leaders it was a sufficient excuse that they were "in a very difficult position", and that any opposition to Stalin would have led to their becoming victims of repression. This is the central argument used to exculpate the Party leaders, although it clearly applied also to Beria and Judge Rodos. It is the standard defence of the henchmen and tools of a dead dictator: a denial of any moral responsibility (except for the dead dictator who conveniently bears the whole load).

## II. Exculpation of Party Leaders

6. As stated above, the essential defence put forward is that they "were in a very difficult position", and would not have survived had they tried to oppose Stalin's actions or policies.

7. This central defence is buttressed by accessory casuistical arguments:

(a) their lack of cohesion: Politbureau members "took different views at different times";

(b) initially many of them backed Stalin actively, because it was then "indispensable" to wage the struggle against "Trotskyites, Zinovievites, Rightists and bourgeois nationalists";

(c) it was "difficult for any member to take a stand" because plenary sessions of the Central Committee were not convened, and the Politbureau sessions were "only occasional", whatever that may mean;

(d) many of the decisions were taken by one individual, or "in a roundabout way";

(e) the importance of the Politbureau was "reduced" and its work disorganized by creating within it "quintets", "sextets", "septets" etc., the membership of which was shuffled like a pack of cards by Stalin;

(f) some members of the Politbureau (e.g. Voroshilov and Andreyev) were often prevented by Stalin from participating in "reaching decisions on important State". (By implication, the others were not, despite the attempt by Khrushchev to minimize the responsibility of the Politbureau members);

(g) a specific defence is made respecting the "Leningrad affair", that "the majority of the Politbureau members did not at that time know all the circumstances in these matters, and could not therefore intervene". This would imply that only if all the members, or a majority of members, knew all the circumstances could they, or might they, have intervened. The affair could not have happened "had a normal situation existed in the Party's Central Committee". (It was evidently "abnormal" from 1934 to 1952);

(h) again, in the Doctors' Plot, although members of the Politbureau received the documents, "the case was so presented that no one could verify the facts". This suggests that if only they could have verified the facts, the Politbureau members might have acted, but the judicial temper of their minds is clear from Khrushchev's explanation that as they knew some of the doctors personally, "we felt, however, that the case of the arrested doctors was questionable". The survival of the doctors was due to the fact that Stalin "did not have the time" in which to kill them off. This language does not exclude the possibility that some action was taken to reduce the time at Stalin's disposal, but in no way implies it;

(i) the final plea for sympathy of the audience is the assertion that "Stalin evidently had plans to finish off the old members of the Politbureau" after the XIXth Party Congress, following which he raised "baseless charges" against Molotov and Mikoyan. "It is not excluded", says Khrushchev, "that had Stalin remained at the helm for another several months, Comrades Molotov and Mikoyan would probably have not delivered any speeches at this Congress". The phrase "remained at the helm" suggests the possibility, admittedly highly speculative, that some step was taken to curtail Stalin's powers before his fatal illness.

### III. Khrushchev and the "distortion" of history

8. Even in adducing the fact of Churchill's warnings to Stalin as evidence of Stalin's blindness to the danger of Hitler's attack, Khrushchev ungenerously distorts Churchill's motives, and repeats the classic misrepresentation of the facts he had already used in India.

9. In referring to Russian war supplies, he not only makes no reference to supplies given to Russia by the West, but explicitly claims that Russian industry supplied all Russia's needs for victory.

10. In the same way, despite a passing reference to the heroic deeds of hundreds of millions of people of the East and of the West during the war, he claims "the main rôle and the main credit" for the victory as belonging to (a) the Communist Party, (b) the Soviet armed forces and (c) the Soviet people raised by the Party, in that order.

11. Khrushchev castigates the "bragging tone" of pre-war Soviet declarations of military might, although since Stalin's death not dissimilar statements of strength have been heard, and Khrushchev's own statement at Birmingham on Soviet nuclear weapons was not distinguished by modesty.

### IV. Khrushchev and the "philosophy of History"

12. Khrushchev's account of the scale and dire consequences of Stalin's character faults must make curious reading for those familiar with the Marxist interpretation of history, which explains historical dynamics in terms of mass social and economic forces. How could the character faults of one man then produce such far-reaching results?



13. Khrushchev nevertheless cites the Leninist view that "history is created by the millions and tens of millions of people". He does this to claim the achievements of the Stalin régime for the party and the people, while assigning its worst features to Stalin. But on the basis of the facts he gives it could just as well be said that "one man was able to make history and to unmake hundreds of thousands (if not millions) of people". Khrushchev says that Stalin's errors delayed the onward progress of socialism and increased the cost of its achievements enormously. But he also states that Russia would have been unable to build-up a powerful heavy industry if Stalin had not used repression in the fight against the Kulak and "cotton-dress" industrialisation (i.e. the demand for consumer satisfaction).

V. Centralisation and safeguards against one-man dictatorship

14. Despite the obvious fact that Stalin was able to act arbitrarily because in the CP and the Soviet State all authority was centralised, eventually into the hands of one man, Khrushchev defines the future aim in terms of "collegiality of leadership..... in a party built on the principles of democratic centralism".

15. In other words power is still to be centralised, but this time in a collegium. Yet this was the set-up which Lenin left and which Stalin transformed, and Khrushchev gives no really valid reason why the same thing could not happen again.

16. The policy which Khrushchev enunciates as now necessary is briefly:

- (a) to condemn and eradicate the cult of the individual as alien to Marxist-Leninism;
- (b) to fight all attempts to bring it back;
- (c) to stress the rôle of the people and the decisive rôle of the Communist Party;
- (d) to revise (and thereby to correct widespread erroneous views) history, philosophy, economics and other sciences, as well as literature and the fine arts. In particular, he wants a new textbook of Party history, and a new history of the Civil War and the Great War;
- (e) to observe meticulously the principle of collective leadership;
- (f) to observe the "norms" of Party life as prescribed by its statutes;
- (g) to widen the practice of criticism and self-criticism;
- (h) to restore Leninist principles of Soviet democracy as expressed in the (Stalin) Constitution;

- (i) to fight wilfulness of individuals abusing their powers;
- (j) to correct completely the evils stemming from violation of "Soviet legality".

17. Khrushchev puts these forward at the end of his speech as "proper conclusions concerning both ideological-theoretical and practical work". Earlier he speaks with heavy emphasis of the need to "preclude any possibility of a repetition in any form whatever of what took place" under Stalin. It will be seen that as a plan to safeguard against the rise of another Stalin, most of these prescriptions are simple assertions of intention, based either on a reaffirmation of supposed Leninist principles (which the record shows to have proved ineffective for the purpose in hand), or on reprobation of such familiar aspects of human nature as ambition, self-assertion, and abuse of authority as being "un-Leninist". The most concrete and "practical" step to be taken is to rewrite the textbooks of Party history and Russian history, i.e. another manipulative exercise in authority. No attempt is made to explain why party statutes and constitutional safeguards proven nugatory in the past should be effective in the future.

#### VI. International Relations

18. The Khrushchev analysis of Stalin refers in general terms to the errors of Stalin in international relations: "During Stalin's leadership our peaceful relations with other nations were often threatened because one-man decisions could cause, and often did cause, great complications". The available text of the speech, however, does not deal with foreign policy except for the account of Stalin's unrealistic and arrogant attitude vis-à-vis Tito.

19. This suggests the possibility, already voiced in the press, that the available text has been subjected to deletions on questions of Stalin's foreign policy. The reasons for this, and for the exception made in blaming Stalin for the break with Yugoslavia, are obvious. This leaves open for the future the possibility of explaining other indefensible steps in foreign policy as being "mistakes" of Stalin.

20. The present text contains certain slighting references to Turkey, the context being an attempt to demonstrate that Stalin was wrong to think that bourgeois nationalism in Georgia could have involved a real danger of Georgia joining Turkey.

#### VII. Motives and Objectives

21. The reasons behind the decision of the Soviet leaders to make these disclosures to the Party Congress, and the policy which they aim to follow, may include some or all of the following:

- (a) the "revenge" motive;
- (b) the need to reaffirm elementary principles of justice;

- (c) the desire to dissociate themselves from Stalin and his excesses;
- (d) the desire to prevent the rise of another Stalin;
- (e) the desire to free themselves from the "dead hand" of Stalin's authority;
- (f) the need to revivify initiative in the Party and the bureaucracy.

22. It is probably wrong to suppose that the Soviet masses were envisaged as the target for this "operation candour". Although the operation is in the first instance confined to Party channels, the general objective is probably to improve the relationship between the top Party leaders and the now considerable and increasingly important "managerial class" - Party officials, army officers, the top layers of the bureaucracy, scientists, scholars and the intelligentsia generally.

23. The language of Khrushchev's secret speech suggests strongly that behind it lies at least one readily understandable emotion: revenge. If Stalin in any way resembled the monster depicted by Khrushchev, then the bitterest hatred must have animated all those who came into close contact with him and suffered from his tyrannical whims. Khrushchev gives a great deal of space to the tribulations of various members and ex-members of the Politbureau, but almost nothing is said about the tribulations of the Soviet people as a whole. The human suffering entailed in Stalin's monumental drive for collectivisation is not even mentioned. This myopia is what one would expect of Khrushchev: his fervour seems related primarily to his own prolonged, painful and, in retrospect, astonishing feat of self-control in the presence of Stalin.

24. One can hardly be too cautious in ascribing even traces of a desire for justice to the current leaders of the Soviet Union, but instead of confining the rehabilitation exercise to a few striking cases, they have extended it apparently systematically to many thousands. It remains to be seen, however, whether this process will ultimately be extended to the enormous number of cases which are unexamined. As the Soviet leaders are unlikely to have undergone a moral rebirth, it is probable that they have somehow dimly perceived what the West has long taken for granted, i.e. the expediency, the utility of justice. This is supported by the fact that Khrushchev does not exculpate a number of Stalin's most prominent victims, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, etc. These are the persons who were accused, inter alia, of opposing collectivisation and industrialisation and it would clearly be inexpedient to rehabilitate their alleged policies, even by implication.

25. The Soviet leaders may well have felt strong pressure from within the Party to dissociate themselves completely from the Stalinist past. We have little enough data indicating even the existence of such pressure, let alone information from which we could gauge its strength. All we can say is that Khrushchev and his group have been acting as if such pressure did exist and had been building

up steadily over the past three years. It is as if for a time they held a finger in the dyke, allowing only small leaks, but now, seeing that the tide could not be held back, decided to swim with it, even to run ahead of it, if possible. Here note should be taken of Khrushchev's transparent attempt in the speech to pose as the protector of Zhukov, the one member of the Presidium who came reasonably untarnished through the Stalin period.

26. Closely connected with the foregoing is the possibility that the inner circle may even contemplate claiming credit for Stalin's exit from the scene. Whether or not they actually deserve the credit, this process of loading all the sins of the régime on to the dead dictator is a means of exculpating his associates from any blame for either his life or his death.

27. Another objective of many, if not all, of the Soviet leaders seems clearly to have been to prevent a recurrence of the nightmare. Both in the secret report and in published material on the "cult of the personality" this is put forward as a central lesson which the Party must learn from its experience. And most observers agree that the violence and the detailed nature of the indictment of Stalin's technique of government have made it much more difficult for any of the present group to imitate him for some time to come.

28. Further, it seems likely that the leaders saw the advantages of freeing themselves from Stalin's dead hand on their policies. He is, after all, even less accessible to reason in the other world than in this while his pronouncements, thirteen volumes of them, stand as an obstacle in the way of discontinuing his outworn ideas. This process of discarding Stalin's policy dicta was begun by Mikoyan several days before the Khrushchev speech.

29. It has been widely suggested that Khrushchev and his associates felt that a shock of this magnitude was necessary to stir the Party and the bureaucracy out of its lethargy, out of the habits of caution and routine to which it became accustomed under Stalin. The text of the speech, as well as other material flowing from the Congress, lends considerable support to his thesis. Here is Khrushchev on the evils which flowed from the cult of Stalin: "...faulty principles in Party work and economic activity ...sterile administration ... covering up of shortcomings ... uncertainty ... over-cautiousness ... fear of all which was new ... fear of their own shadows ... less initiative ...". It is clear that whether or not they decided to denounce Stalin in order to revitalise the Party, the leaders, having denounced him, are trying to draw this particular benefit from their action.

#### VIII. The limits of de-Stalinisation

30. The Soviet leaders clearly saw certain dangers in their attack on Stalin and planned to minimise them. Among these dangers were (a) that the attack would spread to Stalin's closest associates, i.e. the attackers, (b) that it would develop against certain policies which they inherited



from Stalin and wished to retain, (c) that it would undermine the system as a whole. They have therefore from the beginning handled the speech in such a way as to maximise their control over the course of discussion. The basis of this control has been the dissemination of the speech through purely Party channels.

31. In the West so many headlines have been made by the speech that it is difficult to realise how differently it has been handled within the Soviet Union. No Soviet publication has carried any reference to its existence. Published attacks on the cult of the personality have only in one or two instances mentioned Stalin's name. The removal of his name from factories, farms, cities, museums, art galleries has advanced very slowly since February. He remains enshrined in Red Square. Re-evaluations of his rôle in various events, and rehabilitations of his enemies have appeared only in scholarly journals of limited circulation, and even there have been presented with diffidence.

32. The speech itself seems to have been circulated only to high and medium-level officials, to be read by them to meetings of Party members. The masses, conditioned to leave political thinking to their betters, seem to be only dimly aware of its import. The principle guiding this procedure was clearly set forth in the speech itself: "We cannot let this matter get out of the Party, especially not to the press ... We should know the limits; we should not give ammunition to the enemy; we should not wash our dirty linen before their eyes." (The "enemy" is evidently at least as much domestic as foreign.) So long as the speech is not officially acknowledged in the Soviet Union, the régime retains the power to regulate overt discussion of it almost at will. Recent reports indicate that it has now seen fit to shut off debate, at least for a time.

33. The wide circulation of the speech in the Satellites is somewhat surprising in view of Khrushchev's remark quoted above. Perhaps we have to do with an element of indiscipline not foreseen in the original plan, a lack of control on the part of the satellite parties.

34. Khrushchev must, however, have realised that any "secret" speech would leak to the West, and would in fact secure additional publicity and reverberate over a longer period than if it came out en bloc and straight away. That he proceeded on these lines is further evidence of the contempt with which the leaders of Western Communist parties are treated by the Soviets. It is these allies who have suffered most from the way the affair has been handled.

35. Beyond the restrictions on its circulation designed to keep the reactions within bounds, the content of the speech itself reflects the leaders' concern over the dangers noted above. Few of Stalin's policies are attacked, the fire is concentrated on his methods. The speaker reaffirms his support of industrialisation and collectivisation, the cornerstones of Stalin's economic structure. "Stalin was one of the strongest Marxists... The Party fought a serious fight against the Trotskyites, rightists and bourgeois



nationalists.... Here Stalin played a positive rôle". Far from seeing any sign of weakness in a party which could become the tool of such a monster, Khrushchev says that the fact that the question is under discussion is "evidence of the great moral and political strength of our Party".

36. Khrushchev also indicates that criticism of the leaders themselves is not in order. He answers, at least to his satisfaction, the question of what they were doing all this time and brings up instances in which a number of them tried in vain to reason with Stalin. He also dwells on the achievements of the present leadership in restoring life to the Party and correcting the difficult situations, especially in agriculture, which they inherited from Stalin.

IX. The impact on the Soviet people

37. The first effect of the speech was certainly to place a tremendous burden on the intermediate and lower levels of the Party leadership. In the thousands of meetings which followed on the heels of the Congress, this "priesthood" had to explain to the faithful how their Party could ever have fallen into such straits. And the nature of the task made it inherently more difficult than earlier explanations of other sharp twists of the Party line. Here there could hardly be a question of arbitrarily shutting off uncomfortable lines of inquiry. The explainers were compelled to observe "party democracy", "patiently to explain" like Lenin, not to impose their concepts like Stalin. How successfully they fulfilled their duties will only be apparent in the future.

38. Even after the difficult initial period is over, as it must be by now, the speech cannot fail to be in some ways, a continuing source of trouble for all the directing elements in Soviet life, despite whatever satisfactions it may otherwise bring them. Accustomed to make and enforce their decisions with a minimum of free discussion, they now find themselves open to accusations from below of becoming "little Stalins". Thus squeezed from both sides, they may in this respect come to look back almost nostalgically to the Stalin era.

39. The status of the officer class in the Army has certainly been enhanced by the speech. They have been absolved of blame for the defeats suffered by the Soviet Army early in the war and praised for their loyalty and competence under very difficult conditions. Their authority toward their own rank and file has not been impaired; unlike the Party bureaucracy, they are not urged to revert to the sort of democracy that characterised the Red Army early in the Civil War. They must, all in all, be well satisfied with developments.

40. Among the elements most affected by the sudden de-Stalinisation the student class must surely be counted. It is in any society the class most affected by ideologies, the one group which spends a major part of its time in discussing fundamental ideas. It seems significant that most of the rumours from Moscow of "excesses" in de-Stalinisation involve students.

41. The other group which one can confidently predict will have taken the Khrushchev speech to heart will be the intelligentsia writers, artists, and scholars in various fields. The "revelations" of Khrushchev can hardly have surprised many of them; their position has always made them reasonably well aware of what went on in the Kremlin. What they will see in the speech is a lever for securing from the régime concessions in the areas important to them. The questions of the Iron Curtain and of politically guided "scholarship" which have been so painful to the better representatives of this class will now be raised with greater force. If they no longer have to fear the Terror, they are likely to use the denunciation of some aspects of Stalinism to attack other aspects most repugnant to their views.

42. At least for the moment, the masses of workers and peasants must remain relatively unaffected by the repercussions of the speech. Even though no hint of its existence appears in the press, many of them must be hearing reverberations through friends or relatives in the Party, but discussion will surely be very cautious and generally limited to the family. Moreover, the matter of the speech is relatively remote from their daily lives. Its application to work norms or compulsory grain deliveries is not really apparent. Scandal is naturally interesting and the speech is highly scandalous; but once the gory tales have gone the round there seems little call for the masses to act one way or another. A climate will, however, have been created in which further "liberalisation" will be well received.

43. Presumably the references in the speech to deportations of national minorities will reach the ears of those mentioned and of those who are omitted from the list, such as the Baltic peoples. The result will be to stir hopes, perhaps even demands for redress. However, there has always been a chasm between the proclaimed nationality policies of the Soviets and their real practices. If redress is granted the minorities it will be because the leadership finds such action expedient, not because these minorities can quote Khrushchev on Stalin's aberrations.

44. The Georgian riots of early March provide an interesting commentary on Khrushchev's discussion of "nonsense" about nationalist plots, and on his glowing description of progress and contentment in Georgia.

45. Beyond its immediate impact on certain groups, the speech will continue to work in various directions over a long period unless the régime makes an about-face. It seems to have stimulated already certain more or less scholarly revisions of Party and Soviet history and Khrushchev specifically called for further work of this kind. Articles have downgraded Stalin's rôle in the early revolutionary movement in the Transcaucasus, have pointed out his vacillations in 1917, and have rehabilitated a number of military leaders not mentioned in the speech. The defects in Soviet justice which Khrushchev's text makes so dramatic have been taken up on the theoretical and the practical planes. The speech cannot fail to give new impetus to the

legal reform which has been in process for almost three years now. In almost all areas of intellectual activity the demotion of Stalin's works from the sphere of dogma will tend to free creative elements from their straitjacket. It is true that Lenin's works have become more holy than ever, but they are much more remote from contemporary life than Stalin's, they do reflect a higher intellectual level, and they are so varied and so voluminous that a quotation can be found to support almost any side of any argument.

X. Impact of the speech abroad

46. Outside the Soviet Union, de-Stalinisation is a rather different process. For one thing, even the Satellite communist parties were not nearly so soaked in the cult of Stalin as is the Soviet population. The movement in reverse was therefore less of a shock and could, perhaps even had to proceed more rapidly. Much stronger denunciations of him have appeared in print in Poland, for example, than in the USSR.

47. In the Satellites the general effect of the speech is analogous to that on the party bureaucracy in the Soviet Union. The leaders are squeezed between the directive from the Centre to be more "democratic", the demands of the lower ranks at this democratisation be realised, and their own knowledge that such a course would make their already difficult task of running the country almost impossible. Like the ruling class in the Soviet Union they are being told to drive the mule as hard as ever, but not to use the stick.

48. The Communist Parties on this side of the Iron Curtain are also in difficulties. Much more exposed to hostile propaganda, they have to make a sharp readjustment without antagonising their rank and file. The short-run effects cannot fail to be unfortunate from their point of view.

49. On the other hand, the Yugoslavs could not be more pleased. The speech seems to have removed their doubts about the genuineness, depth and irreversibility of the anti-Stalin trend in Moscow. However, Tito's appetite has not been sated, and the Belgrade press remains unhappy about the reluctance to de-Stalinise in Hungary, Albania and perhaps Bulgaria.

50. The reaction from other neutralist quarters is less clear-cut, but one can expect the speech to become one more link in their argument that the Soviet Union has outlived its dangerous revolutionary stage, and is now a respectable member of the family of nations.

XI. What possibilities does the speech open up ?

51. The Voice of America, and possibly other Western broadcasts directed towards the Soviet bloc, have already broadcast accounts of the Khrushchev speech. On ordinary Western standards of news-handling, of freedom of information, and of the intrinsic interest of the story, wide diffusion of the text would appear to be unexceptionable and desirable. 'Magna est veritas et praevalabit' is a basic Western principle.

52. The importance of such wide diffusion is underlined by the fact that within the USSR the general public has received only inklings of the story, and a strenuous endeavour is being made to confine the information to the Party. The newspapers have barely touched the fringe of the de-Stalinisation issue and the 'go slow' instruction has recently received further emphasis.

53. From the longer term point of view, the possibilities open to the West are manifold and will grow as and if further disclosures or evolution take place. The considerations involved, however, are complex and debatable. What attitude is adopted towards the present Soviet régime depends in part on what view is taken of its future possibilities of development. This involves such broad and fundamental questions as:

(a) How inflexible is Soviet policy likely to be on major issues of foreign policy, and how can the West best induce Soviet flexibility on these issues (re-unification of Germany in freedom, the Middle East, disarmament, control of the Satellites)?

(b) How flexible will the Soviet régime be in retaining, reinforcing or loosening the controls imposed on Soviet bloc citizens which inhibit basic freedoms? Bound up with this is the question: How far will the régime be flexible in respect of cultural, informational and other exchanges with the West?

54. On (a) the available text of the Khrushchev speech is relatively unhelpful. It is possible that the speech as delivered covered a much wider field of international relations than those with Tito, and it is conceivable that Stalin could be used as a scapegoat on a later occasion if it were decided to make a concession in Soviet foreign policy. The speech gives the West a cue for pointing out that Stalin's policies created an atmosphere of uncertainty and fear in the West, as well as in the Communist bureaucracy, and that if the present Soviet leaders genuinely desire "peaceful co-existence" they should now repudiate the "excesses" of Stalin's foreign policy. In general therefore - and the argument can be spelled out in great detail - the West has been given in the Khrushchev speech, material of considerable utility in the information and political fields.

55. The Khrushchev speech, with the revelations it contains, also offers the West an opportunity for an impressive and convincing vindication and affirmation of the values of Western freedom, democracy, and the rule of law, in contrast to the Communist system as revealed in the Khrushchev speech. For this purpose it is to be hoped that a series of temperate and thoughtful analyses will be published by leading political, philosophical and historical writers. Such studies may have limited use as regards the mass of the Russian people, but their impact in the West may also percolate to the Russian intelligentsia.



56. On (b), the question of the internal controls in the USSR, the Khrushchev speech offers important material and possibilities. At the same time it must be borne in mind that the scope of the issues raised in the speech is clearly envisaged as applying within the Party circle, rather than to the Russian public at large. It may be doubted whether the Russian leaders will be able to limit the effects, as far as the general public is concerned, to the renaming of Stalingrad, etc., the removal of statues, and the publication of two new textbooks, and it would appear to be clearly advantageous if a 'ferment' begins to work among the Russian public, as well as the intelligentsia and the 'managers'.

57. The reactions of Soviet audiences to the speech can be expected to focus on more specific points rather than against their system as a whole. It is doubtful, for example, if Khrushchev's version of the rôle played by the present leaders will satisfy any but the most naive. Khrushchev's prescription for preventing a repetition of the tragedy may seem inadequate. There may be pressure for rehabilitations on a much wider scale than seems contemplated: the cases of unjust imprisonment probably total in the millions, against which the 7,679 cited by Khrushchev seems a derisory figure. As the word spreads that this or that individual complained or criticised and got away with it, the habit may develop until the régime is forced increasingly to give real redress or else to fall back on its powers of repression.

58. The régime will unquestionably retain these powers of repression essentially unimpaired for a long time to come. They will only be weakened (barring a violent revolution) when they have lain idle so long that their use becomes virtually unthinkable. The USSR faces a long and complex development in which the denunciation of Stalin is only one step. Until this development has advanced far beyond the present stage, the temptation will remain open to the leaders to start the machine moving in reverse. It is a temptation to which they can succumb any time they feel that the ferment in Russia has become a threat to their own position or to the plans and policies which they wish to put through.

59. An unskillful use of the Khrushchev speech could possibly inhibit rather than accelerate its effects in Russia, but there is no reason why Western Communist parties should not be made to feel the full embarrassment of the scandals and excesses now attributed to Stalin.

60. In summary, it may be said that the Soviet leaders have taken a major step - almost a long jump - in deciding to make these disclosures, even if they calculated that they can apply strict limits to the effects of their action. It would seem unlikely that the process set in motion can, in the end, be kept within narrow limits. Those who wish to exercise the right of criticism have been furnished with a powerful armoury of arguments, not least the argument that those who seek to silence them are being "Stalinist". Nor is it easy to see how a strict line can be drawn between permissible criticism of the régime and criticism which is impermissible. Above all, if Khrushchev is to be believed, only ideological persuasion, and not moral



or physical constraint can now be invoked against minorities, dissidents or critics. The potentialities of this situation, wide as they may be, are not likely to develop rapidly after the long history of repression, nor are they likely to be given publicity, but they may nevertheless assume growing significance.

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SUMMARY OF KHRUSHCHEV'S SPEECH

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1. Soviet policy since Stalin's death has been consistently directed against "the cult of the personality". But "the full practical consequences" have not been realized by all, hence the present disclosures, which do not, however, constitute a "thorough evaluation of Stalin's life and activity".

2. Marx and Engels denounced "the cult of the individual". Lenin emphasized the collegiate basis on which the directing rôle of the Party should operate, and was himself distinguished by his "great modesty" and his rigorous observance of collegiality.

3. Lenin detected the character-defects of Stalin and in his "Testament" made this known to the 13th Party Congress (1924), which, however, did not remove Stalin from his post as Secretary General of the Party. Stalin's rudeness is shown up in letters from Lenin's wife and Lenin.

4. Stalin "played a positive rôle" in the necessary inexorable fight against the Trotskyite-Zinoviev bloc and the Bukharinites. Russia would have been unable to build up a powerful heavy industry but for his fight against the Kulak and "cotton-dress industrialization" (i.e. demand for consumer satisfactions).

5. But Stalin "did not tolerate collegiality" and "practised brutal violence" especially after the 17th Party Congress. In the period 1935-37-38 Stalin applied repression against an opposition defeated long before, and later against many "honest Communists". His use of the term "enemy of the people" overrode any question of proof or legal procedure, and made discussion impossible. "Confessions" replaced legal methods, and were procured by "physical pressures" (i.e. torture). Stalin's use of violence, mass repressions and terror on an increasingly larger scale created "conditions of insecurity, fear, and even desperation".

6. Lenin advocated that Party discipline (through the Control Commission) should take the form of persuasion ("even a type of therapy"), and practised this himself in dealing with "those who deviated from the correct Party line". He did not use violence against Zinoviev and Kamenev, although their past record included treason. Nor would he have used extreme methods against the repentant Trotskyites who returned to "Leninist positions".

7. Lenin and repression. Lenin used "the most extreme methods" against "enemies of the Revolution", and was ruthless against them, and against "enemies of the working class", e.g. in 1918. But these measures were against "actual class enemies", and severe methods were used "only in the most necessary cases", and at a time when there was a struggle for survival, including a Civil War.

8. In contrast, Stalin "used extreme methods and mass repressions at a time when the Revolution was already victorious". "His intolerance, his brutality and his abuse of power" were directed not only against actual enemies, but also against persons who had never acted against the Party.

9. Stalin's excesses were done in the name of the Central Committee or the Politbureau, but often he did not inform them of his personal decisions on very important matters. Lenin, on the other hand, emphasized "collegiality of leadership" (which "flows from the very nature of our Party, a Party built on the principles of democratic centralism"), and practised this principle by convoking Congresses, plenary sessions of the Central Committee etc. even in 1918, when attack threatened from "the imperialistic interventionists", and in 1919 during the Civil War. During Lenin's life, Party Congresses were convened regularly and he addressed himself to them or to the Central Committee on all questions of policy.

10. Although during the first four years after Lenin's death more or less regular meetings of the Party Congress and the Central Committee plenum took place, Stalin increasingly violated the principle, especially in the last fifteen years of his life. No Central Committee plenum took place during the war, though there was an attempt to call one in October 1941, but Stalin refused to meet with the assembled members.

11. Stalin's "wilfulness" vis-à-vis the Party became fully evident after the 17th Party Congress in 1934. Lately, "especially after the unmasking of the Beria gang", a Commission under the Central Committee Praesidium has made an investigation of mass repressions. This showed that 70% (98 out of 139) of the Central Committee elected in 1934, were arrested and shot. A majority (1,108 out of 1,956) of the delegates to the 1934 Party Congress met the same fate, although 80% were old Bolsheviks (joined before 1921) and 60% were of working class origin.

12. Kirov's murder, which is wrapped in mystery but involved the connivance of the secret police, was used by Stalin to issue a directive (which the Politbureau passed "casually" two days later) to abolish the possibility of pardon, and to make execution of death sentences immediate and automatic in case of "the preparation or execution of acts of terror". "This directive became the basis for mass acts of abuse against Socialist legality",

13. In 1936, after a telegram from Stalin and Zhdanov to Kaganovich, Molotov and other Politbureau members, "mass repressions grew tremendously". The message directed that Yagoda be replaced as head of the NKVD by Yezhov as that organ was "four years behind" in its work. Stalin's theoretical justification for these "mass arrests and executions" was that "as we march forward toward socialism, class war must allegedly sharpen", yet Lenin had called a halt to mass terror and abolished the death penalty in early 1920. "This terror was actually directed ... against the honest workers of the Party and the Soviet State with lying, slanderous and absurd accusations.....".

14. The rightness of this course was actually questioned at the Central Committee Plenum of early 1937; however, the number of arrests for counter-revolutionary crimes grew ten times between 1936 and 1937.

15. The rules governing expulsion and arrest of a Central Committee member were brutally abused. "Now when the cases of some of these so-called 'spies' and 'saboteurs' were examined it was found that all their cases were fabricated. Confessions ..... were gained with the help of cruel and inhuman tortures". Stalin did not reveal to the Politbureau of that time Khrushchev only joined the Politbureau in 1939 that many accused retracted their confessions.

16. The cases of Eikhe and Rudzutak, candidate members of the Politbureau, are examples of "vile provocation and odious falsification". (Long letters and statements from both were read.) During the investigation in 1955 of another case a victim of arrest in 1937 described his ordeal. "Terrible torture . . . . ordered to confess false information . . . . no need to invent anything, NKVD will prepare a ready outline . . . . study it carefully . . . . save your head".

17. Falsification was practised even more widely in the provinces. "Many thousands of honest and innocent Communists have died as a result . . .". Repressions on a mass scale resulted in heavy cadre losses to the Party. In 1937-38, 383 lists containing the names of thousands whose sentences were prepared in advance of their trial were approved personally by Stalin. A large part of these cases are being reviewed. Since 1954, the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court has rehabilitated 7,679 persons, many posthumously.

18. Mass arrests caused tremendous harm, a situation of uncertainty, sowed distrust among Communists. Resolutions of the Central Committee in 1938 brought some improvement. [Replacement of Yezhov by Beria]. However, widespread repression also existed in 1938. Only the "great moral-political strength" of our Party enabled it to survive "these difficult events". But our march forward and the preparation of the country's defence would have been much more successful were it not for the tremendous loss in cadres.

19. We blame Yezhov, but could Yezhov have decided such important matters? No. Was there an exchange of opinions in the Politbureau on this? No. "It is clear that these matters were decided by Stalin". "Stalin decided everything. He was the chief prosecutor . . . . he issued arrest orders on his own initiative. We must say this so that the delegates to the Congress can clearly undertake and themselves assess this and draw the proper conclusions".

20. "Stalin was a very distrustful man, sickly suspicious; we knew this from our work with him. He could look at a man and say: 'Why are your eyes so shifty today?' . . . . He choked a person morally and physically. A situation was created where one could not express one's own will . . . . When Stalin said that one or another should be arrested, it was necessary to accept on faith that he was an 'enemy of the people'."

21. Meanwhile, Beria's gang outdid itself in proving the guilt of the arrested, i.e. obtaining confessions. "And how is it possible that a person confess to crimes which he has not committed? Only in one way - because of the application of physical methods of pressuring him, tortures, bringing him to a state of unconsciousness, deprivation of his judgment, taking away his human dignity. In this manner were 'confessions' acquired."

22. When the wave of mass arrests began to recede in 1939 and regional leaders began to accuse the NKVD of using torture, Stalin sent all regional authorities a telegram explaining "that the method of physical pressure in NKVD practice is permissible from 1937 on". It "should still be used obligatorily as an exception applicable to known and obstinate enemies of the people, as a method both justifiable and appropriate".

23. Stalin's orders were executed by men like the investigative judge Rodos, "a vile person with the brain of a bird and

morally completely degenerate" who, when interrogated recently by the Praesidium of the Central Committee, "cynically declared: 'I thought I was executing the orders of the Party'."

24. The concentration of power in Stalin's hands led to serious consequences during the war. Supposedly Stalin had foreseen everything. The epic victory was completely due to the strategic genius of Stalin. This matter has tremendous significance from the political, educational and practical point of view. What are the facts?

25. The bragging tone in our press before the war was not based on concrete facts.

26. The thesis that "the tragedy which our nation experienced in the first part of the war was the result of the 'unexpected' attack of the Germans . . . is completely untrue". Churchill, "in his own imperialistic goals" had warned Stalin. Our military attaché in Berlin and our Embassy in London sent grave warnings. Yet steps were not taken to prepare the country properly for defence. We had the time and capabilities as proven by the fact that later we were able "to supply our armed forces with everything which was necessary to destroy the enemy". Had our industry been mobilized properly our losses would have been decidedly smaller. We did not even have sufficient rifles. In those days I telephoned to Comrade Malenkov for arms. He answered: 'We are sending all our rifles to Leningrad and you have to arm yourselves'.

27. Suggestions that border areas be prepared were rejected as provocation. The attack itself was thought by Stalin to be merely lack of discipline in sections of the German army. The warning by a German deserter on June 22 was ignored by Stalin. The result was that in the first hours and days the enemy had destroyed a large part of our air force, artillery and other equipment annihilated large forces and disorganized our military leadership. We could not prevent the enemy from marching deep into our territory.

28. Grievous consequences followed the annihilation of many military commanders and political workers in 1937-41. "Repression began literally at the battalion level". The cadre of leaders who had gained experience in Spain and the Far East was almost completely liquidated. This policy also undermined discipline "because for some years officers and even soldiers were taught to 'unmask' their superiors as hidden enemies". Yet those who survived despite severe tortures (Rokossovsky, etc.) have shown themselves real patriots.

29. After the first disaster Stalin thought that this was the end. "In one of his speeches in those days he said: 'All that Lenin created we have lost for ever'." For a long time he ceased to do anything whatever. Only when some members of the Politbureau urged him did he return to active leadership.

30. Even later, his "nervousness and hysteria" caused serious damage. He was far from understanding the situation at the front, having never been near it except for one short ride on the Mozhaisk highway. He rejected my pleas from the Kharkov region to drop an impractical operation (Marshal Bagramyan here can corroborate this). I phoned Vasilievsky and begged him to explain its impossibility on a map. (Stalin planned operations on a globe.) Then I telephoned to Stalin at his villa but he would listen only through Malenkov and rejected my appeal. The result was that we lost hundreds of thousands



of our soldiers. Once after the war Mikoyan suggested that Khrushchev had been right. "You should have seen Stalin's fury".

31. At the end of 1941 Stalin demanded frontal attacks. We paid with great losses until our generals succeeded in shifting to flexible manoeuvre operations. All the more shameful was Stalin's postwar move to downgrade many commanders. He often asked me for my opinion of Zhukov and I praised him. Then after the war he said that Zhukov used to take a handful of earth, smell it and decide whether or not to attack. I said this was not true, though he may have invented it himself to minimize the rôle and talents of Zhukov.

32. He tried to inculcate in the people the version that all our victories were due to his genius. In the film "The Fall of Berlin", only Stalin acts. There is nothing about the military command, about the Politbureau, the Government. "Not Stalin, but the Party as a whole, the Soviet Government, our heroic army, its talented leaders and brave soldiers, the whole Soviet nation" - these assured the victory.

33. "The Soviet Union is justly considered as a model of a multi-national state .... All the more monstrous are the .... mass deportations of whole nations, together with Communists and Komsomols without any exception". At the end of 1943 the Karachai were deported, in the same period the Kalmyks, in March 1944 the Chechen and Ingush peoples, in April the Balkars. The Ukrainians avoided this fate only because there were too many and no place to deport them.

34. After the war the country experienced a period of political enthusiasm, the Party was even more united. Nobody could have thought of the possibility of some plot in the Party. And at precisely this time the Leningrad affair was born. It was fabricated. Those who innocently lost their lives included Voznesensky, Politbureau member, Kuznetsov Secretary of the CC, Rodionov, Popkov and others. "Had a normal situation existed" in the Central Committee and Politbureau this and other affairs would not have happened. After the war Stalin became even more capricious, irritable and brutal. Everything was decided by him alone. His unbelievable suspicion was cleverly taken advantage of by the abject provocateur and vile enemy, Beria. Why did we not do something earlier? "It was because Stalin personally supervised the Leningrad Affair and the majority of the Politbureau members did not, at that time know all the circumstances in these matters, and could not therefore intervene."

35. Instructive in the same way is the case of the Mingrelian nationalist organization which supposedly existed in Georgia. We know that there have been at times manifestations of bourgeois nationalism in Georgia as in several other republics. But in this period was there a danger of Georgia's leaving the Soviet Union and joining Turkey? Nonsense. Georgia has developed economically and culturally, the prosperity of its working people has grown tremendously under Soviet rule. "There was no nationalist organization in Georgia. Thousands of innocent persons fell victim of wilfulness and lawlessness. All of this happened under the 'genial' leadership of Stalin, 'the great son of the Georgian nation' as Georgians like to refer to Stalin.

36. The wilfulness of Stalin showed itself not only in decisions concerning the internal life of the country but also in the international relations of the Soviet Union.

37. The July Plenum of the Central Committee studied the reasons for the development of conflict with Yugoslavia. "It was a shameful rôle which Stalin played here". There were no problems which could not have been solved through discussions. This does not mean that the Yugoslav leaders did not make mistakes but they were magnified in a monstrous manner by Stalin. Stalin once told me "I will shake my little finger - and there will be no more Tito. He will fall". We have dearly paid for this. But Tito did not fall. He had behind him a state and a people which gave support to its leaders. We have carefully examined the case of Yugoslavia and have found a proper solution.

38. Let us recall the Affair of the Doctor Plotters. Actually there was no affair outside of the letter of a woman doctor, a collaborator of the organs of state security, stating that doctors were applying improper methods. Such a letter was sufficient for Stalin. He issued orders to arrest eminent specialists. He personally issued advice on the conduct of the investigation and the method of interrogation. He said the academician, Vinogradov, should be put in chains, another should be beaten. He told the then Minister of State Security, Ignatiev (present here): "If you do not obtain confessions from the doctors we will shorten you by a head". He advised the investigative judge which methods should be used: "these methods were simple - beat, beat and once again, beat".

39. We members of the Politbureau received protocols from the doctors. Then Stalin told us: "You are blind like young kittens; what will happen without me? The country will perish because you do not know how to recognize enemies". The case was presented so no one could verify the facts. "We felt, however, that the case was questionable". We knew some of these people personally. After Stalin's death we found the case to be "fabricated from beginning to end". It was set up by Stalin: "he did not however have the time in which to bring it to an end". Now all have been rehabilitated.

40. "In organizing the various dirty and shameful cases, a very base rôle was played by the rabid enemy of our Party, an agent of a foreign intelligence service, Beria". How could this provocateur gain such a position? "Over an untold number of corpses". There were signs that Beria was an enemy of the Party. Kaminisky, former Commissar of Health, had denounced him in 1937. He was arrested and shot. Stalin believed in Beria and that was enough for him. "Anyone who dared to express opposition would have met the same fate as Kaminsky". Snegov (recently rehabilitated after 17 years in prison camps) has also recalled that Kartrelishveli had in 1931 refused to work with Beria. Beria was impelled to fabricate a case against him.

41. Beria's indictment contains a discussion of his crimes. However, especially since some delegates here may not have read this document, I wish to recall Beria's bestial disposition of the cases of Kedrov, Golubiev and Baturina who wished to inform the Central Committee concerning his activity. They were shot without any trial and the sentence was passed ex post facto, after the execution. [A long letter follows from Kedrov to the CC via Andreyev, then a Secretary of the CC]. Kedrov was found innocent by the Military Collegium. But he was shot at Beria's order.

42. Beria also handled cruelly the family of Ordzhonikidze. He was always an opponent of Beria and told Stalin so. But

Stalin allowed the liquidation of his brother and brought Ordzhonikidze himself to such a state he was forced to shoot himself. Such was Beria.

43. Beria was unmasked "shortly after Stalin's death". In particularly detailed legal proceedings it was established that he had committed monstrous crimes and he was shot. Why was he not unmasked during Stalin's life? "Because he utilized very skilfully Stalin's weaknesses; feeding him with suspicions, he assisted Stalin in everything and acted with his support".

44. The cult of the individual acquired such monstrous proportions because Stalin himself supported the glorification of his own person. One of the most characteristic examples is his "Short Biography" published in 1948. This book is an expression of the most dissolute flattery. We need not give here examples of the loathsome adulation filling this book. [Examples follow of praise of Stalin, added in his own hand.] Did this book properly reflect the efforts of the Party? This book speaks principally about Stalin, about his speeches. Everything without the smallest exception is tied to his name.

45. Take the matter of Stalin prizes. Not even the Tsars created prizes which they named after themselves. Stalin took a text of our national anthem which contains not a word about the Communist Party, but unprecedented praise for Stalin. The Praesidium of the CC has passed a resolution concerning a new text of the anthem. And was it without Stalin's knowledge that many of the largest enterprises and towns were named after him? that Stalin monuments were erected in the whole country?

46. At the same time Stalin gave proofs of his lack of respect for Lenin's memory. Despite a decision more than thirty years ago to build a Palace of Soviets as a monument to Lenin, the project was allowed to lapse. Despite a resolution in 1925 on "Lenin prizes" there have been no prizes to this day. All events were explained as if Lenin played a secondary rôle, even during the Revolution. Stalin loved to see the film "Unforgettable 1919" in which he was practically vanquishing the foe with his own sabre. Let Voroshilov, "our dear friend, find the courage and write the truth about Stalin; after all, he knows how Stalin had fought. It will be difficult for Comrade Voroshilov to undertake this, but it would be good if he did it". "All this has to be thoroughly revised so that history, literature, and the fine arts properly reflect Lenin's rôle and the great deeds of our Communist Party and of the Soviet people - the creative people".

47. The cult of the individual has caused the employment of faulty principles in Party work and in economic activity; it has caused covering up of shortcomings and varnishing of reality. Due to the numerous arrests many workers showed over-cautiousness, feared all which was new, feared their own shadows, began to show less initiative. Party and soviet resolutions were prepared in a routine manner. Party workers, even during the smallest sessions, read their speeches.

48. The fact that Stalin was not aware of the real state of affairs can be illustrated by his direction of agriculture. Stalin never noted the difficult situation in agriculture. We told him but he did not support us. He never travelled anywhere. He knew the country only from films, which pictured farm life with the tables bending from the weight of turkeys and geese. The last time he visited a village was in January 1928.

49. Stalin was told that the meat situation was especially bad. A commission was formed and worked out a project. We proposed to raise the prices of animal products but our project was not accepted and in February, 1953, was laid aside entirely. Moreover, when reviewing this project Stalin proposed that the taxes paid by the Kolkhozes and their members should be raised by 40,000 million rubles. Yet in 1952 they received only 26,280 million rubles for all the products which they sold to the Government. Stalin's position rested on no data of any sort whatsoever. We are currently beginning to work our way out of a difficult agricultural situation. The commitments of the new Plan will be accomplished successfully.

50. If we criticize the cult of the individual, many may ask: How could it be? Under Stalin we gained many victories. Can we deny this? "In my opinion the question can be asked in this manner only by those who are blinded and hopelessly hypnotized by the cult of the individual, only by those who do not understand the essence of the revolution and the Socialist state, only by those who do not understand in a Leninist manner the rôle of the Party and the nation in the development of Soviet society". The revolution was attained by the working class and the poor peasantry, by the people under the leadership of the Bolshevik party. Our victories are the result of the great drive and activity of the nation and of the Party as a whole, not of the leadership of Stalin. The practices in the last years of Stalin's life became a serious obstacle in the path of Soviet social development.

51. Stalin often failed for months to take up some unusually important problems. "Our peaceful relations with other nations were often threatened because one-man decisions could cause, and often did cause, great complications." In recent years, everyone has seen how activity grew before their very eyes, how favourably our measures acted on the development of the economy and culture.

52. "Some comrades may ask us: "Where were the members of the Politbureau of the Central Committee? Why did they not assert themselves?" First we have to consider that the members of the Politbureau "viewed these matters in a different way at different times. Initially many of them backed Stalin actively because Stalin was one of the strongest Marxists". Stalin, especially in the first years, actively fought against the enemies of Leninist theory. The Party started industrialization, collectivization and the cultural revolution. Stalin gained great popularity, sympathy and support. Later, Stalin abused his power more and more. In that situation I often talked with Bulganin. Once he said "It has happened sometimes that a man goes to Stalin on his invitation as a friend. But when he sits with Stalin he does not know where he will be sent next, home or to jail." Such conditions "put every member of the Politbureau in a very difficult situation".

53. Also, in the last years plenary sessions of the CC were not convened and the Politbureau met "only occasionally, from time to time". Thus it was difficult for any member of the Politbureau to take a stand. "Many decisions were taken either by one person or in a roundabout way, without collective discussions". The sad fate of Voznesensky was never discussed. The importance of the Politbureau was reduced and its work disorganized by the creation of various commissions - quintets, sextets, etc. Voroshilov was actually forbidden to attend Politbureau meetings and to receive documents. Stalin toyed with the ridiculous suspicion that he was an English agent. A special tapping device



was installed in his home. By unilateral decision Andreyev was also separated from the work of the Politbureau. "This was one of the most unbridled acts of wilfulness". After the 19th Party Congress Stalin suggested that Molotov and Mikoyan were guilty of some baseless charges. "It is not excluded that had Stalin remained at the helm for another several months, [they] would probably not have delivered any speeches at this Congress. Stalin evidently had plans to finish off the old members of the Politbureau".

54. Stalin was excessively extolled, yet "he doubtless performed great services to the Party, the working class and the international workers' movement". The question is complicated because "Stalin was convinced that this (which we have just discussed) was necessary for the defence of the interests of the working classes against the plottings of the enemies and the attack of the imperialist camp." He saw things in terms of the interest of the working class. "We cannot say that these were the deeds of a giddy despot .... In this lies the whole tragedy".

55. Many of us participated in the action of assigning our names to various towns, factories, etc. We must correct this, but calmly and slowly, so that people will not think some of us have met a bad fate and been arrested.

56. "We cannot let this matter get out of the Party, especially not to the press .... We should know the limits, not give ammunition to the enemy, not wash our dirty linen before their eyes".

57. We must abolish the cult of the individual decisively, once and for all. For this purpose it is necessary:

First to eradicate the cult as alien to Marxism-Leninism. To practise in our ideological work the theses about the people as the creator of history. To correct .... erroneous views in history, philosophy, economy, etc.

Secondly, to continue the work of the Central Committee in recent years, work characterized by the principle of collective leadership, by observation of the norms of Party life, by wide practice of criticism and self-criticism.

Thirdly, to restore Leninist principles of Soviet Socialist democracy. To fight violations of Socialist legality.

58. The 20th Party Congress has demonstrated the unshakable unity of our Party, its cohesiveness around the Central Committee, its will to accomplish its task. The fact that we present the basic problems of overcoming the cult of the individual is "an evidence of the great moral and political strength of our Party". We are certain that our Party will go on to new victories. "Long live the victorious banner of our Party-Leninism".