

March 20, 1956
**Speech by Comrade Khrushchev at the 6th PUWP CC
Plenum, Warsaw**

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Summary:

Speech by Comrade Khrushchev at the 6th PUWP CC Plenum, 20 March 1956, Warsaw
explaining the changes since the death of Stalin and criticizing Stalin

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SPEECH BY COMRADE KHRUSHCHEV AT THE 6th PUWP CC PLENUM

20 MARCH 1956, WARSAW

Comrade Aleksander Zawadzki [in Polish]

Comrades, the [PUWP] Politburo has taken advantage of the occasion afforded by Comrade Khrushchev's visit with us, and has invited Comrade Khrushchev to meet with the Central Committee plenum. As a result we should treat this as the beginning of the plenum the actual meeting will begin in the late afternoon.

I suggest, in the name of all present, that we give Comrade Khrushchev a heartfelt greeting, at this, our plenum. (Applause.) We ask that Comrade Khrushchev take advantage of this meeting, and speak to all who are gathered, from a perspective of personal experience.

Comrade Nikita S. Khrushchev [in Russian]

My task is very difficult because I don't know which problems interest you, the Polish United Workers' Party. The problems of the 20th [CPSU] congress? All the problems of the 20th congress?

I was told that you're familiar with the report presented at the closed session of the congress. I don't know how you judged the gathering, but I rate it very highly. I think that all of our decisions correctly assessed the international situation, correctly point the way for the future development of our work. On domestic problems, on the construction of a communist society, our decisions have great meaning. It will point to the correct direction of the five-year plan and the six-year plan, thus exposing the realistic possibilities for its construction. The question now is how to use these decisions correctly. The main problem facing us before the 20th congress was the problem of peaceful co-existence, the struggle for peace. This is the main problem which we considered when we were preparing this congress and its resolutions. We are sure that the attempt succeeded. Our decisions will bring about a great attack from reactionary groups in the capitalist countries. Peace ensures the position of our supporters, and not only supporters, but even those who... who want to fight for peace. The 20th congress armed these people and showed them the enormous possibilities of the fight for peace. The problem concerns the reduction of arms I'm not talking about complete disarmament, which we would all very much like. It seems that the time has not yet come to face this problem. This problem will be solved soon and in the future, although I cannot say. In London, a conference of the UN committee on the disarmament problem opened yesterday. I don't think there are going to be any radical decisions taken, because this problem needs a lot of work. But, difficulties for American militaristic circles were created. The speech by Pinot, of which you are all familiar, already suggests that in the strictest sense, a common voice by countries which joined NATO, on the disarmament problem, does not exist. This is a great victory. I think that if you compare the positions of the United States of America, France, and the United Kingdom, all these three countries lack a single common perspective on this problem. Each has their own point of view, while France is closer to our understanding of the situation. England is less clear so as not to violate the unity of these three major countries. I think that England's interests strongly differ from those of the United States of America on this problem. We've prepared our propositions. Comrade Gromyko will outline them in the future. But, being familiar with the propositions of the Western countries, we know that ours

won't be accepted, and we, in turn, cannot accept theirs. Nevertheless, we will think a little more. We give Bulganin's trip to England great priority. Bulganin will meet with Eden during his talks and other problems will come up. I think that we'll have a chance to put forward propositions that will create a difficult situation for our opposition regarding the problem of the struggle for peace. We think that we have achieved great successes as a result of the decisions taken at the 20th congress. Now, a lot will rest on our abilities in the future. How will we be able to lead with our new position, and how will we be able to maneuver, so to speak, in this struggle?

The problem, of course, is being resolved by the correlation of forces. The situation right now is such that our adversary must take into consideration the forces of the socialist camp. Only this will force them to continue the talks on disarmament, as well as other contacts with us. What are our perspectives on this problem? We think that the perspectives are very good ones. We think that we have very good conditions for the rapid growth of our economy, including the rate of growth of our industry. In agriculture there is a temporary lull, but we have now made decisions and cleared the way for development. In this area the achievements will be great ones. We are sure that in the agricultural sector we will achieve the goals set by the five-year plan, and we will achieve it at least in three years. In 1956, 1957, 1958 at the latest, and maybe even sooner. We are paying a lot of attention, and spending a large amount of capital, including a lot of personal, so that the agricultural sector will have great reserves and potential. I'm sure that we will manage successfully.

Many speeches by capitalist statesman are recorded in the press, where they are acknowledging the strength of socialism and thus changing their opinions. Time, so to speak, works for us. These are major concessions, if the opponent is forced to make such acknowledgments. Therefore, we are ready to put forward concrete proposals about disarmament and thus continue to fight for peace. We are ready for a partial withdrawal of troops from East Germany. If our partners correctly understand our propositions, continue to agree with them, and respond in kind to our propositions, I think, maybe, we will think about other propositions, which will put our opposition in even greater difficulty. But, for this, we need a little more time.

Concerning the propositions of Mr. Eisenhower and "open skies," this proposition deserves some attention. It deserves attention so that it can be thrown into the garbage. What does it mean to fly? What do you think -- nothing else better to do... this is nonsense. It's only advantage is to avoid concrete propositions about the reduction of arms. They gave us nonsense and they are trying to confuse us.

I'm not letting you in on a secret. I said it to Eisenhower as soon as he finished his presentation, when we met at the buffet which he organized for the meeting. We had a glass of cognac and he asks me: "So?" And I told him: "In my opinion, your proposition is no good". Why? Because it does nothing good. All you are proposing is nonsense." He replied: "Well, maybe the military judge it differently. Let's ask Marshall Zhukov. What will he say?" And I said: "Ask Zhukov, let him judge. If such things were done during the war, right before the attack... Comrade Rokossowski... then you have to know where... during the war and for sometime since... then we already cannot imagine, because the enemy can always re-group his troops or use camouflage and then totally confuse us. But, what do you think, if we want to show you a factory then we can show you some kind of dummy; different lighting and you'll photograph it all, and what will you get? It will be an empty place. But, we can do it, and you can do it, so why should we do such nonsense. Someone can ask, then why did we write that this proposition deserves attention? Because this capitalist language is such that you cannot just say, to hell with it. You have to say that this problem demands deep investigation, and will be discussed... follow the rule, and it was written like this...

Nehru asked me, when we talked with him and Bulganin in Delhi: What do you think about Eisenhower's proposition? We take it for nonsense. But, you said it and

admitted it; admitted it, and said: At the last stage. But, what does it mean, last stage. God knows, I myself do not know how to respond to such a thing. This is way we will not confuse ourselves and will expose their schemes. If we abruptly refused, it would have been to Eisenhower's advantage. This is why they proposed such a thing. Then, later on, they would have said that Russian do not want to talk. Russians do not want to continue the talks. They want to conserve large armed forces. They want to be in charge of everybody, and so on. To avoid this, we had to give such an answer. But, we specifically said, let's cut the troops by 640 thousand. Now we're trying to increase this number, and it's not a bird in the bush but a real bird in the hands, and it will be the conception... for the understanding of our supporters in the struggle for peace.

I think we have very good perspectives on this matter and we will, with pleasure, conduct the discussion with Bulganin in London, with Eden, and other friends. We are placing great hopes on the arrival of Mollet and Pinot, and the delegation from the [French] Socialist Party, which shows that we have achieved so many contacts.

Of course, comrades, I have to tell you that we correctly understand our position and our responsibility. We have to smartly lead this policy and move toward disarmament. But, we should never cross the line, which would endanger the survival of our conquests. We have to do everything to strengthen defense, to strengthen the army. Without these things, nobody will talk to us. They are not hiding the fact that they have the hydrogen bomb, nuclear arms, and jet-propulsion technology. They know that we have all these things, and therefore, they have to talk to us, fight with us; but not be afraid... this is a game, in which nobody will be a winner. If Lenin would arise he would have been pleased to see his cause become so strong, that the capitalistic world admits being unable to win the war against the socialist countries.

Comrades, this is the power of Marxist-Leninist teaching. We did not work for nothing; not for nothing used the strength of this form of government. Therefore, we must continue working. Must work. Work. Work to reduce the troops and increase defense, Comrade Rokossowski. It is difficult to talk to Marshals, they're always very hot-tempered.

Right now, we have to work on the demoralization of their camp. The demoralization of NATO, Baghdad's pact, SEATO. I think we have a great opportunity to carry it out. And the trip of Comrade Mikoyan stirred up everybody, his trip to Karachi. Yesterday morning, he flew out to Pakistan.

We had a big job last year, but I think that we used our possibilities badly. We can do more. We have to use the strength of other countries, not only the strength of the Soviet Union but the peoples' democracies have to show themselves more actively. I think great possibilities exist in contacts between Poland and France, Hungary, Rumania. We have to make more contacts, and to make such an impression, and win more supporters to our cause, so that our camp will gain stable peace and not a wobbly peace. But, we really want long existence, and this would be the victory of the socialist camp. We are certain of it. But, they say that the only way to get victory is by fighting. But, we are saying, no, we will not fight. We will not carry, so to speak, socialist regimes on the bayonets of the Soviet Army. But, in this competition we will win. I think that whoever does not believe in this is not a communist. He has to leave us. We, the communists, will gain victory. It's going to be ours, the victory of Marxist-Leninism teaching, the victory of communism. I think that real communists really understand and believe in this -- there cannot be any other opinion.

But, comrades, to talk about the five-year plan, I don't know how you judge it, but I think we are very satisfied with this one. It opens great possibilities before us. It shocked the capitalist world and communists who are watching and studying more carefully the evolution of the Soviet Union and the peoples' democracies.

I think that we correctly planned, and correctly established, the relationship between heavy industry and the public market industry. But, right now, we should pay more and more attention to the problem of the latter.

We discussed and I want to tell you my opinion about the peoples' democracies. We think that we did not waste the time after the October Revolution. And Russia, impoverished and peasant, turned out to be a powerful state, second only to the United States of America. Add the peoples' democracies, add, though it's still weakly industrialized -- China. Our force is enormous. It should be understood that our forces will grow, not only as a result of the development of heavy industry and means of armament, but our forces will be strong given existing armament, the same volume of heavy industry production; if we increase the living standard of our peoples.

Comrades, we must do it now because we have the opportunity. Therefore, we cannot go as... who was taken... and who does not know anything, who only leads ahead. Consequently, if we talked about heavy industry all the time, then now... to repeat it. It's going to be very difficult in our situation. Of course, everything should be done after hard thinking. The proportions should be chosen correctly to get such a result -- and I will say it again. We, for ourselves, for the Soviet Union, we will look at the acceleration of the industry of group A compared to group B. I would say that the people's democracies should pay even more attention to this problem. Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and others. Rumania. But, in Rumania and Bulgaria the situation is somewhat different -- these countries are still rural; weakly developed industries and agriculture is rather entrenched in Rumania. [Gheorghiu-Dej, when I spent some time there last year, five or six days, said: "You saved the corn, which means you saved Rumania. I cannot live without mamalyga [a dish made from corn]. I eat it at least three times a week, but you make it sound that if I eat mamalyga I'm backwards." This is nonsense, of course, it's all a force of habit. But, to talk about corn, who eats more or less, and if one can judge a person by the amount of corn he eats, then Americans are number one. They eat it more than others. They don't have mamalyga, but if you start counting how much corn flakes they use. We were in India, they have very British habits. We had breakfast, we would always get corn flakes and a glass of milk. And we became corn-eaters, although we are... Therefore, I say the situation is different in Rumania. I think that this year they'll have even better conditions in agriculture. They'll not only satisfy their own demand, but will be exporting agricultural products.

It should be done. Now, comrades, I want to say that yesterday during the [PUWP] Politburo meeting, I expressed my views, and want to express them to members of the Central Committee at the Central Committee plenum. We are concerned. We, meaning the leaders of the Soviet Union. After the death of Comrade Stalin, we met with all the leaders of the peoples' democracies. And at that time, we noticed that some of the advice we have given was not exactly well planned and properly thought through. And therefore, we want to correct ourselves. We did. For example, we constructed the Karakum Canal [in Turkmenia]. It needs billions and billions of rubles in investments... then people should be found who would go and agree to live there, because the living conditions are very different. This, like any other measure, requires accounting, investigation, some kind of economics... Nothing was done. Why was it so, you can see for yourselves from the decisions made at the 20th congress and the reports presented. We threw it out. But, for example, Rumanians... began construction of the canal connecting the Danube and the Black Sea. Who, just who... what kind of economists, or maybe... leadership, when we have economic... or sometimes strategic. No, altogether strategic. Why did the question of construction come up? Hitler, to get around the control of the Soviet Union on submarines and other ships through the Danube, instead of going through Ismailia, there's not any control -- they needed this canal. Hitler was crushed. In Rumania, the people took control, got the canal and built it... komsomol members go there, do big things. But, when they finish it, what's it going to give them... Because the efforts were never justified; never will it justify itself.

We called for Comrade... he was shocked, says I'm a supporter of construction, but I could not have dreamt of building it... We knew that when he began construction, he was given an idea, and we were thinking at the time, how is it Stalin can see it is needed and -- ? But, we Rumanians don't understand it, so we rushed in and started building it. Stupid, of course. Stupid. This is the exhaustion of national resources. This is a reduction of our potential, and our military potential. Therefore, it's not going to be useful to us. We should have given up the idea of building it.

We, in other countries... For example, Stalin proposed building a road, because this road might be useful some time in the future. We don't need to build it... from Amur to Sahalin. God gave us the sea, the cheapest mode of transportation. So... if it will be... road, then we'll build... ships, we can transport the cargo there and back. It will be cheaper. We rejected this road, even when considerable amounts have been spent. I think that, possibly, one day, we will build it, but not now... I would even say that now foreigners are coming, they enjoy it, and praise us, of course. But, we keep quiet and smile... agreeing. The construction of the Volga-Don. This was unwise construction. We just finished a war, the country is bankrupt and hungry, and at that time we have to throw hundreds of thousand of people and funds on... What's the purpose of it? We'll finish it, then what? Nothing. Only loss. Our present situation is difficult, we can't close it, because if we close it the whole world would say: What is it?... Boasted, named it after Lenin, and now made a fishery out of it.

Therefore, we think that it was unwisely done; unwisely... When he started, and there left the traces of his construction, he probably started, then thought, and said: "Better leave it alone." And we could have been without this canal. It has some kind of... strategic, very weak, but we can transport some submarines, if we start the navigation, then we can get far. This is imprudent. Its value is still unknown.

If to count all the funds used, they're colossal. Very colossal funds were used. We built the university; it is a very beautiful university; very beautiful, but very unwisely built. Why should a student or professor go all the way up to the 36th floor? What for? It means, there should... richer... There should be a sewer system installed, and other things. Why fly to the sky, what's wrong with the ground?

If only someone took a pencil and started to count. We, by using the same money we wasted on this university, could have built three or four universities of the same capacity. Three or four universities could have been built. But, the most important thing, the operation of it would have cost nothing. And we built this building and gave it to you. Now, it's up to you to figure it out. This is a gift; it's a very expensive gift. Comrades, why am I saying this? Look, comrades, these are colossal expenses. I was in Leningrad. Two to three floors, students running up and down the stairs, the professors do the same thing without the elevators. But, I would have built the elevators for the professors. Let them use it. But, for the students, let them exercise their lungs and cardiovascular systems. Was it wisely done? And now, every year we have to use so many people to take care of this building. Do you know how many people are employed? Almost an entire factory to serve the university! Who needed it? It was silliness. Stupidity. In America, the buildings are tall. There, Americans do it smartly and wisely. All of America is one story high. But, Americans build only in the big cities; in centers, where the land is more expensive than the construction of the high-rise. It's economically justified under capitalistic conditions; but we are located in the fields... Where, you understand, parks could be formed. We took...

Now, we are planning to build a monument of Lenin. We thought to make it a tall building. Our architects had a disagreement. I don't know what they're proposing. But, I think, what do we need such a high building for. Better to construct a palace, with meeting rooms, with clubs, then to build the high part, like the pedestal, and place there the monument of Lenin. One of the designers of the project agreed with what I was saying; Krasin, who died, was talking. I knew Krasin. This was a really

smart architect. If... they. It should be shown, so this figure would be seen from large distances. It will be better to build it and use it without elevators, and it would be cheaper in the long run.

When our people will become richer and smarter, they will refuse to use high buildings and build a building of two, three, four floors in height. And use the money from the operating cost, and use it for something more useful.

We do not accuse, neither the comrades for these actions, nor their leaders. You should not, in the case of wrong doings, point to the leader, at Bierut. No. Bierut was a wonderful Bolshevik. Wonderful. We regret the loss of such a person. But, we think that this matter should be corrected, the relationship between heavy and light industries.

We're going to discuss the heavy industry problem. We were going to meet in April, but I don't think we'll have the opportunity to do it. On the 17th, we have to be in London. But, we will try to choose a time, and talk about this problem and make decisions.

I don't know if I should talk about it, but I'll say it. I think the plenum will understand me correctly. It's the problem of the rise in peoples' standard of living. This is a very important problem. They say that for six years peoples' welfare had grown 26%. They say it's written. When we write what others want to hear, it's very bad. We, Bolsheviks, must write for ourselves and for the people. What we read, the people should read. If we write with the same language, but read it differently, it's very bad for the leadership. It's absolutely impossible. We'll lose our ties, and we will lose our, and the peoples', roots.

I honestly don't believe that a 26% increase occurred. Don't believe it. The exact number, I don't know, but we must know it. We have to fight for every half-percent. This is the problem.

Therefore, we think that one cannot build socialism on the enthusiasm of the workers. It's impossible to misuse-- and this is misusing-- the trust the working class to the party. It's impossible. We must take care of the working class. We must increase, from year to year, the living standard of the working class. Only then will they look upon us as the avant-garde in the struggle for communism.

I think this has been violated a little bit, not only in Poland, but also in Hungary, and in other countries. And this should change for the better as soon as possible. Not because it's some kind of threat. No. The workers understand our silly mistakes and forgive us. They forgive, but that doesn't mean that the mistake should be repeated; that the misuse of trust should happen again. And therefore, we should do it. Not because the working class might turn away from us, but so that we would be real Leninists, real who... This should be done, comrades, this should be thought through. Is it needed, in our situation, to insure the growth of heavy industry, light industry, and the defense industry? Yes, it's needed. If we don't do it, then we can't do it. Plan and consider wisely. Also, comrades, I think that Poland and the other peoples' democracies should use the situation which exists right now. So to speak, the role of the leading military country, compared to Poland and others, is presently taken by the Soviet Union. Our hydrogen bomb, our armament, our factories, everything, the utter defeat of Hitler's army, the crushing defeat of Japan, use it all. Use it, I mean, to increase the living standard of the population.

Now, we're opening the gates, so to speak, and exchanging delegations; delegations of the socialists and union activists from capitalist countries. What are they going to talk about? They are, of course, going to look for such things as the kind of

armaments we have. But, especially at housing conditions, medical services, salaries -- this is the main problem, and we can't avoid it. It should be distinguished from other problems, because our worker should not live in worse conditions than those workers in capitalist countries. Otherwise, we wouldn't be able to attract the worker to our side. (Applause.)

This is the problem. This is a very important problem, and we have to pay a lot of attention to it, and decide it correctly. Do we have the opportunities? Yes, we do. Of course, we can't do it in one year, but let's start. From year to year, and then our actions will deserve the trust of the working class.

If a worker tells us that the situation is bad, we'll give him an answer -- 6%! But, he does his own accounting, his own analysis, his own Gosplan. He knows everything, and his finances, and his budget, what you're earning, and what you can buy with this money. This isn't very complicated accounting!

I think that it could be done. Now, I think, comrades, forgive me for direct criticisms, that our Polish friends do not spend enough attention on agriculture. Poland is a country, so to speak, where you just now attached the industrial regions... the Germans. The country arose, and then you, yourselves, built it. The country changed its image, changed the relations between the rural population and urban industry -- all this is good. But, comrades, this does not give us the right to think that we're already an industrialized country, and therefore we shouldn't pay as much attention to the question of peasants. This is silly. Because in the past Poland exported bread. Now, it's importing it. Is this right? I think not. Although, the Polish comrades tell me that I'm wrong. And ... me, so to speak, educate me. But, I myself understand this, that the revolution happened, that the division of the land happened, that, if there were internal. ... separate groups of the population, then now it's leveled out. And, as a result of it, in reality, now increase the consumption norms of agricultural products, and quality, and the quantity -- this is correct. Because, would the peasants support you if during your tenure the standard of living was worse than before? So, we have to use our resources better. To increase the yield of crops and, as a result of a more correct policy, to increase the market of our economy. And, by doing this, to better use the land.

Therefore, comrades, I think we, in agriculture, we have colossal resources. We, with Comrade Bierut, when I came here on your invitation, went to the village of Jaskowice. They sent me letters... copies sent. I was sick and couldn't go. Both Comrade Bierut and I were sick, but only I shouldered the sickness and he did not. Therefore, I could not go to this village and so I sent my assistant, Comrade Shevchenko, and he talked with these peasants. I'm not ashamed, we, with Bierut, pressured them. They only wanted to plant one hectare of corn, but I insisted on ten. This year, I didn't go. But, they tell me that they planted thirteen hectares. This means they not only stopped to hear what we were talking about, but they even added, without my participation. They told me that they're short of forage for their cows. I say, if the landowner is bad, this worries him. But, the good owner always has reserves. And, as a result, the peasants of this village don't care that Spring is late, they have plenty of forage.

Why am I saying this? Because, the question of grain is the question of the fodder crops. This is the question of the quantity of milk, butter, eggs. Otherwise, you'd have to buy these things. And if you'll buy, that means we won't help raise the standard of living, because you'll have to take something away from yourself. Nobody will give you anything for free. You would have to sell coal, or metals, or machinery.

I won't talk anymore about this problem, because I talked about it yesterday during the [PUWP] Politburo meeting.

Now, comrades, I would like to talk about a very crucial question -- the question of the cult of personality.

The report of the closed session [of the 20th CPSU congress] you have read. But... with such openness we presented these questions. We didn't hide anything; said everything. Why did we introduce this question to the party congress? We had a discussion. We exchanged opinions, if such a topic should be touched. People, for decades, thought like this. And suddenly, we'll show them that it's not that clean, how we always looked at and understood this subject, that it's dirty, this subject. We discussed it a lot, argued about it, and finally decided to present this question. This is our capital, and we have to use it. Our biggest capital is that which aides in reinforcing the ranks of our party. And capital which aides in reinforcing our authority on the population is our main capital. After the death of Stalin, we freed thousands of people from jails. We reinstated thousands of people to party membership. We reinstated our friends. I talked to one of them, who spent sixteen years with... This is my friend, we worked together in the Donbass. I was in charge of orgadeldom of Stalin's regional committee, he was in charge of the... regional committee. A member of the party since 1917, joined as a young man, and spent sixteen years in jail, a completely honest man. Comrades, this is a member... till the 27th congress and a delegate to the 27th congress. They came, they wanted, you see, not only the pants from the Red Cross, but... and he would have been satisfied. But, he wants to receive moral satisfaction. How can we say it to him? And we would have been simply... if we simply... our head, and said that nothing had happened. So, thousands of people came, and people who were in the party for decades...

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The most important thing is to correctly educate... Who will decide, how can one explain the absence of the... congress for thirteen years. How can one explain? But, we have so many people who asked us this question during Stalin's tenure. They were arrested. This is already an anti-Soviet person. The party should be informed at a certain time, right before the party congress, but this is arbitrariness. The party cannot live like this. Well, we have decided to report these questions to the congress, and said... and saying... To state the question, and where were you, you were with Stalin. We said we've seen, and we're saying, you judge. Let the congress judge, if it deserves trust or not. But, the party must know everything. As the master, the congress must know about it and decide. Therefore, we came and stated it. I would say... that after we had made this report, and now we're reading this report to members of the party, then we decided to read it to Komsomol members. There are eighteen million warm-hearted young people that were brought up by us in a certain direction. If they don't know everything-- won't understand us... We decided... then we went ahead. We decided to have it read during workers' meetings. Not only to party members, but to non party members as well, so that non-party members feel that we trust them... will know. When we were told... the entire world talks, the entire diplomatic corps is making noise that Khrushchev did... exactly. The connections aren't bad. Here he gave such a report, he talked for three hours, really talked for three hours, that such questions were presented, that such questions were really presented, and that after that, they won... so to speak. To each other... there's such a situation among the diplomats, that Khrushchev flew to Warsaw, Malenkov to London, Mikoyan to Karachi, during a bad state in the [Soviet] Politburo they're not going to fly all over the world... checking themselves. Because, really, let them make some noise; make some noise and then they'll be left with nothing. But, we will only win from this, because now we have a colossal growth of party solidarity around the Central Committee, and firmness among party ranks, and it's only natural that the party receive satisfaction, that we, so to speak, the Central Committee... under the party... He made the report to the party, because... the reasons... and we're saying how to cure why this could have happen. Comrades, this is really a tragedy. A tragedy. This is... Stalin's, of course. Stalin's. Now, Lenin. Now we publish, possibly, some collections of his works; will publish Lenin. We will publish Lenin's Testament,

before his death, where Lenin, I don't know if you're familiar with it, it's been sometime, I think we were giving it to you... We published this Testament and gave it to all the congress delegates, to see what Lenin, how he saw them. See, he said that Stalin's a treacherous man. Stalin's capable of misusing power, that Stalin could not be left... that if he'll be left... he can't work... with comrades, and... he should be moved, so to speak, and another person should be nominated, who has all the positive characteristics, which Stalin has. But, he wouldn't be rude, and he wouldn't be able to misuse power. Everything started from this. Now, the tragedy, comrades, is that if you ask: How do we judge Stalin? Who is Stalin? What is Stalin: enemy of the party, enemy of the working class? No? The tragedy is that he was not only a cruel man. And all the cruelty and unfairness, and the misuse of power... Everything was done, I'm sure, in the interest of the party. In the interests of the working class. In the interests of Marxist-Leninist teaching. About this, comrades, we have no doubts. The tragedy is that he sincerely told us, when he was feeling weak, that... kittens. You're blind kittens. You're not able to see the enemy. I'll die and the State will die, because of you... The enemy, the enemy is very crafty. You don't have this craftiness; he considered them to be willy. And I'm saying this frankly, he was totally convinced, sure of this. You, comrades, really have to simply be a fair person. We're now criticizing Stalin, but we don't criticize those successes which we achieved under Stalin's leadership. The questions... questions of socialism... the questions of the victory... Comrades, great work has been done under the leadership of the party. It was done under the leadership of Stalin. It was done in the interests of the working class. It was done, so to speak, in the interests of our party; and we were taught it too. Here's the tragedy, because we, with Stalin, struggled together. With Stalin, together we carried on the work, so to say, on the reconstruction of our society. With Stalin, together we achieved the successes, and this we accept. And this, so to speak, our, with Stalin, conquest, which we will, so to speak, protect and defend. But, Stalin had, Stalin was a man with special characteristics, especially under conditions which made him consider the opinion of others, he didn't consider them. The sittings were... the sittings of the Central Committee plenum, congresses, were summoned, and then when Stalin began to make himself stronger, when he already didn't feel himself to be responsible to the Central Committee, then he stopped summoning the Politburo. The Politburo already didn't confer. When he was bored, then he would say no sitting. But, before, there was a schedule and a strict schedule --on such a day, at such a time, for so long, the Politburo will take part in the conference, such an order, this person may attend, that may not, that's what's stated in the party according to the regulations. After some time, and all this was lost. But, why he already, then, I don't know it. Who knows? Now, to explain the death of people... For example, you read. I'm simply repeating, for example, the death of... .It's the oldest party member, the member from the Donbass. They said that he's [Rudzutak] Pi sudski's commander in Ukraine, yes. Yes, comrades, and Stalin believed them. And he was shot, this person. We... know, I... substituted in Ukraine, we, he was let go of his responsibilities as Central Committee secretary in 1938. I took over the responsibilities from him. He was then made the chief of the CCC. It seems there was such a Central Control Committee... It was... reinstated... From 1903 or 1905 a Bolshevik, worker... served throughout the Civil War, then in the Far East, was destroyed as an enemy of the people. We now rehabilitated him, he was not any kind of enemy ... This was a wonderful Latvian, party member since 1903 or 1905, I don't remember now, it's mentioned in the report... Comrades, at the time of Lenin... occupied... certain position and trusted chief of the Central Control Commission... He was made an agent provocateur, then an enemy, and he was shot. This is nonsense. And now we opened his files, and we see that there's not any foundation for it. This is an honest, and not only honest, faithful, man. This is a Bolshevik. This is a revolutionary. Why do we see it now, and why didn't we see it before? I'll tell you. Before, we didn't see it. I myself read the materials... Imagine to yourselves, arresting... For example... when arrested... some time passed. You see, we... thought, he's a Bolshevik. But, when the so-called prosecutor summoned him, and began to interrogate. What did you do... But, he says, listen, to whom are you talking to? You're talking to me like a party member, but I'm not a party member. I've never been in the party. I'm above the party. I joined the party just because I had to. You see, Comrades, why it's like this after the murder of Kirov. And this murder is very mysterious, because why was Kirov

killed and the man who protected Kirov, who was brought for cross-examination, killed during a car accident. a very crude way, which is used by all intelligence services. After this, law was made on the basis that everyone was or could be an enemy. We, before the congress, called the investigative judge who cross-examined... The prosecutor presented him the investigation and said he has to be convicted. We exchanged opinions. I said let's call him. This is the only witness left alive, who can tell us something. He cross-examined... He interrogated Chubar. He examined Postashev. And therefore he can say which information he used, and that they're enemies of the people. We called him... First of all, himself, a nobody. So why was it necessary to allow this nobody to decide party questions; because, it's a question of a member of the Politburo. Chubar, was being investigated... Postashev and also... was interrogated. And we asked him, what kind of information do you have to judge your people, whom you cross-examined, that they're enemies of the people. And you wrote this in the protocol... He says, I didn't have any. So why did you write this. We were told that, he says, when they were arrested, for example Chubar, and told they were enemies of the people, party. And so, my business as a prosecutor, make him admit to it, and to write it in his own handwriting. But, and how did you achieve this. Well, he says, we beat him until he couldn't confess. Therefore, you see, an innocent person. Now, we're all very upset about it. I don't know, maybe the judge will convict him. Maybe he'll be shot, if it gets to that point. Strictly, legally -- it's correct. But, comrades, if you take a look from a different angle, that he didn't bring these people to their graves. But, imagine a simple person, with a limited range of knowledge, who arrests an important person. They get him to examine right away, and tell him this is an enemy of the people. You should try to make sure that he confesses. And he tries. He doesn't have the brains. Therefore, he's trying to do with his muscles. If you take a look at these two people, then you'll see the gorilla and the chimpanzee. Because Chubar's the big man, and the other is small. As are Yezhov and Beria. He writes to Stalin like so, that I'm sending, for example, the testimonies for example of Chubar. Every page of the deposition is signed by Chubar, in his own hand, and on every page he himself composed what he was doing that was detrimental to our party. If I had sent you this, Comrades. After reading this, you'd probably be indignant, and probably say, this is really an enemy of the people. (Voice from the audience [in Russian] No, No?) Comrades, comrades, you're saying no. I'm not upset with you. Yes, Comrades. But, you're saying this in 1956, after my presentation. Now. And the fool can be smart. But, you have to make the decision when the question is being discussed. Here, before you, sits your wonderful fellow-countryman, and our friend, Rokossowski. He spent two years in jail. (Question from the audience:...) There is. Yes, there is. Here, in my report, I was talking about Berezhev. Berezhev, I don't know if he sat for two years or not, but not for a long time. But, now he's a complete invalid. He was interrogated by Rodos. This big man was interrogated by Rodos. They had very smart techniques. The doctor's case. I was sick, before my trip to Warsaw. The professor, Vinogradov came, who was one of the saboteurs and sat in jail. And then he was freed. I ask: "So, what do you think, Vladimir Nikitovich, can I fly to Warsaw?" He says: "You can. Breathe carefully, through the nose. In the open air, don't make speeches. Hat, do not take off the hat." A doctor says that to a person who's not yet completely well. He was in jail. After jail he examined us. But, I read his testimony myself, that he was a German spy. It so happened that this doctor, Vinogradov, attended to me, and was at my place practically a day before his arrest. After my presentation to the 19th congress, I fell ill. And I was lying in bed, for three days. And he was taking care of me, and I was already reading the protocols on his statements. The other doctors were saying this... What could I do? What could I do, when a doctor who works with him says: I say such-and-such, I did such-and-such things, I poisoned this one, I strangled that one. I had the help of such-and-such. What could I say to myself. I'll go and say to Stalin that this isn't true. But, he'll say: "What are you doing, these people are admitting it." I wouldn't be allowed. The investigator should have been called, then the doctors, and questioned. But these conditions weren't available. These conditions -- this is the cult of personality.

This is power, concentrated in one hand. What does it mean, alienation of a group from the leadership. This is the tragedy, that's why we stand against the cult of personality. I, for example, even then, didn't believe that Vinogradov was an enemy.

And it wasn't a coincidence that, right after Stalin's death, we freed the doctors. The case against them was false. We don't believe, even though we read the protocols, we don't believe in it. We don't believe -- and we freed them. And not only freed them, but we rehabilitated them. They came back to their previous posts and again to their work in the government clinic. What was it? Was Stalin such a bad person? Again, to come back to this. Was he more stupid than we are? No. He's smarter than we are. To speak as Marxists -- he is stronger than we are. This, Comrades, you know. He should be given his due. And we give him his due. But, Stalin was sick. Stalin misused power. Stalin allowed such things to happen, which were absolutely unacceptable. Well, you have read everything in the report. This is, so to say, fresh news. The situation in the agricultural field is difficult. Once I said to Stalin: "Comrade Stalin, we have a crisis in agriculture." He says: "What do you mean, crisis?" I reply: "A crisis: no milk... meat, no milk. What's happening?" "This is not correct," he says, and immediately became defensive because of this word. "Stalin's age," "Stalin's leadership," and here is a crisis... Only enemies say this word. Malenkov was asked: "Do we procure more meat now or less?" "More." I said: "I'm saying more too." "More milk?" "More." "Well, the population has increase too." Wages have risen. The purchasing ability has increased too. Then, if that's so, talk like this. We couldn't tell him these things. Well, what kind of socialism is it when a person can't drink an extra cup of milk. I, at the time of capitalism, drank as much milk as I wanted, being a miner during capitalism. And now, I have to, I should be thankful, that now, I can buy a cup of milk for my child. But, such is the situation. This means that this is our fault; we're discrediting socialism. The workers and employees, and all the people -- a socialist system, capitalist system, he doesn't choose by himself. But, he chooses a system which will provide a better lifestyle for him. This system for him, the socialist system, this is a social system where the tools of production are located in the hands of society. Therefore, the society itself, in its own interests, will use these tools of production. So, you have to provide uninterrupted growth in the standard of living of the population. Stalin said that a committee should be formed to study this matter. I was nominated as the chairman of that committee. I knew what it meant. I'm not going to do anything to cause problems. I'll get nothing. I can't do anything. I know this. I say: "Comrade Stalin, why me, maybe Malenkov is better?" Why did I nominate Malenkov, for that I had grounds. Malenkov was entrusted with leadership for agriculture. I said, why. I'm the secretary of the Moscow committee. I have so many things of my own to be done. Let Malenkov do it. "Let it be." So, what can I do, you can't argue with Stalin. He says, Mikoyan should be in the committee, and others, let them work. Well, I know that if I had the opportunity to solve this question, I'd give a suggestion. But, I wouldn't be allowed to solve this matter. And they would make me an enemy. Because, whatever I'd have suggested, Stalin would say that it's all harmful. Only enemies can suggest this. We spent a lot of time sitting and arguing. But, do you know, comrades, how many ass-tickers are there? There was this Koslov, an agriculture manager, we kicked him out from the Central Committee, but this big lowlife remained in the party. I beg your pardon for such harsh words, but he should have been expelled from the party. All the time he presented documents to the Central Committee on how everything is moving, agriculture is developing, that we have nothing, but agriculture is growing. We sat, corrected the material a little bit. I'll tell you exactly how it was. Corrected the materials, and went to Comrade Stalin: The materials are ready. Spent a lot of time, not because we couldn't figure it out, but because we didn't know how to suggest it, how to put it. Therefore, we had to disguise it so that no one would be the wiser, and there was some benefit from it. Stalin read it. So, he says, many billions should be given. Something like six or seven billion. This is child's play, only enemies look at this question from this angle. They don't understand how the peasant lives... Stalin says. With one hen, he says, the peasants sells and pays duties with all of one hen. How can he say that, when Stalin didn't see a live peasant for probably thirty years. Stalin's more aloof than his dacha -- he can't see anything from his dacha, because it's surrounded by woods, and with guards. And with field-glasses you wouldn't see a living person, except the guard. How can he think like that? But, a man who knows the village, who sees the peasants, he can't agree with him. Instead of accepting our suggestion, Stalin says -- no. I suggested my own ideas. Together, with this proposition, we looked at this question and raised the duties on peasants some 40 billion rubles. My God, here I left. I told

Mikoyan, the only salvation is if the peasants rebel. Because there's no other way out. Because they sell all the produce to pay duties, their duties. Already, they don't have this money. From where can they get it? And, well, we researched. And we researched. But, what's there to research. And then I saw that the situation was like this. I knew, and I said: "Comrade Stalin, this is a very big problem you gave us. It's difficult to decide by such a committee. We need more people." He said: "What do you want?" I said: "Malenkov, Beria, Bulganin, Kaganovich" -- named all the members of the Politburo, so that everybody will be involved. "What are you doing. What for?" I said: "It's a big question." "Big question? Well, include Malenkov and Beria." "Very well." At least now it's easier. I had to involve Beria, that lowlife, because if he proposed what Mikoyan proposed, then he would have to sign the document. You see what kind of complicated conditions existed. And then we all got together. "Well, I said, comrades, how are we going to solve this?" Well, Beria probably understood. He said this is all nonsense. Where can we get the money from? From where? Let's look for money. The matter ended with the death of Stalin. So the document was burned. But, just before the death, a document existed. But, if he had not died, I myself don't know how all this would have ended. I think that it would have ended with the arrests of extra people. Because, Stalin told us -- there are enemies. These kind of difficult conditions. If you look at it this way, Stalin died, we made way for an increase in agriculture. It means we understand. It means we can find the necessary solution. Why didn't we find it at the time, because of one person who was stopping it. And we couldn't do anything. Absolutely couldn't do anything. That's why, now, we have fuel. And that's why we're shouting: "Down with the cult of personality!" Just like the Komsomol. Why, because if we get rid of the cult, then we will always collectively find the correct solution. Stalin was telling us that the capitalist world will fool us, that we're like blind kittens. But, if Stalin came back now, we would show him what we've done after him, and how we've cleaned up the atmosphere. I think that Stalin couldn't have done it, and in ten years. And if he had lived a little bit longer, then he probably would have started another war. This means we can sort out international problems and questions. If, we can sort it out collectively. Comrades, the gods didn't build everything. Simple people, they only have to obtain experiences and qualifications. One does this, another does that -- collectively decided. Not bad. I think we reported this, and without bragging. I think that this is our glory, now that we've received this inheritance, which was allowed to rot. In the international situation, the Soviet Union was isolated. And now, Bukmanovich tells me: "Listen, what have you done. You have isolated the United States of America, and you're not isolated. Look at what Pinot's saying. He says: I don't agree with the policy of the Soviet Union? This is not being said by a representative of Poland, but of France." This, Comrades, is a great victory. Our victory. On the question of internal policy, I think we're on the right road, and on a fast one, and we will overcome all these shortcomings, which we still have, because they can't be overcome immediately. But, we're still solving them. Now. Comrades, what's to say about it-- 33 million hectares of virgin soil upturned for 2 years. Listen, the Czars, for decades, thought about mastering these lands, and couldn't solve the problem. But we solved it in two years. They called us daydreamers. Us... But, now, capitalist writers say -- It's a fact. God willing, you understand, we'll have an average crop of 30 million. This is bread! This is bread! This is bread! Comrades, Stalin, on these questions, violated all kinds of party norms. And he gave incorrect lessons. Listen! When Stalin died, 109 people were killed. 109 people died because everyone moved like a mob, and strangled them. This is just such a psychosis. Some people, when they were in the hall near the casket, started crying -- What are we going to do now? Comrades, common people is one thing, but how many party members and komsomol members thought when Stalin died, what will happen after him? Is it proper? Is it appropriate to imagine a hero, and relate everything and everyone to him? Comrades, do we then need the party? What is it? It means not believing in human judgment, not believing in the force of democracy, not believing in collective leadership. Comrades, then let's choose a king. The monarchists say their system is better, because all your elections depend on your voters, and they get used to it, but our monarch, he was given the power to rule by God. We think that this is very wrong. And now, we're trying to break this myth of power and infallibility. Some say, what would you have done during the war, if you didn't have Stalin? Defeated the Germans. Defeated them- and defeat them sooner,

with less victims. I'm very sure of it. And maybe we could have avoided the war. Maybe, if politics were more smartly directed, maybe, we could have avoided the war. Nobody knows. That is how we look at these things.

Listen, such absurdity. When Lenin died, no busts. Stalin died, there wasn't a single town or city where his bust was not placed. We, when he died, we couldn't imagine what to name after him, to immortalize him the day he died, because everything that we didn't name would have been worse than what he had named during his lifetime. Is this correct? Is this a correct lesson? There was no modesty, although he talked a lot about modesty. There were many, many shortcomings, which, unfortunately, we could not... We ourselves suffered from it. I vacationed with him one year. I told my friends and they understood it. But, they said that if you're still alive after this vacation, say "Thank God." Why? Because I had to dine with him every day. It means I had to be drunk every day. I beg your pardon, I'm saying it very frankly, yes? (Voices from the audience [in Russian]: You're talking about the truth. Say it. Say it.) You can't do this, can't. We had foreigners arriving and coming over sometimes. We were ashamed when we came for dinner, because there was a table full of alcohol. There's a limit to everything... It was like this, comrades. It was. But, if don't drink. and eat with him, your his enemy. You're his enemy. This kind of absurdity, why did it happen? If he was not protected by the cult of personality, he would have been kicked out, and told: Listen, dear, drinking so heavily isn't allowed. You have to work. We're responsible for the work done. He himself once told us: "Once, Lenin calls me up and tells me: You, dear, drink too heavily. You're buying champagne by the case, getting people drunk. And he wanted to have an investigation." He told us this... We couldn't tell him that it would have been for the best if Lenin had done it... What benefit would it be to the revolution? None... Czechs, Poles, Germans, or other nations. Is this correct? I have a lot of friends, among them, Poles. And I was turned into a Pole. Stalin asked me: "What's your last name?" I said: "Khrushchev." "Your last name ends like a Polish one -- ski." I said: "Who knows. I lived for long time as Khrushchev, and now its--- ski." Comrades, I was standing near Yezhov, and Stalin said: "Yezhov said it." Yezhov replied: "I didn't." "How is it you didn't say it. When you were drunk, you said it to Malenkov." Malenkov passes by. Stalin says: "Did Yezhov tell you that Khrushchev's Polish?" He says: "No." You see, they'll say, why is Khrushchev protesting. First of all, I'm a Russian. I can't protest. Second, what kind of crime is it if I had been Polish? What kind of crime? It's an error. We just rehabilitated, rehabilitated post factum. They say you're making the argument, why not before? Of course, comrades, "why" could mean a lot... I have a little grandson, and when I tell him something, he always answers back with dozens of "whys." But, now, we can follow it. Why did it happened? Why weren't you told "why" to this question, which you're asking today? The conditions were-- they couldn't be ignored. If we're going to ignore them, then we'll incorrectly judge and incorrectly decide the questions. Therefore, we thought it was necessary when Comrade Bierut raised this question. He insisted; concerned about rehabilitating killed party members and, as a result, the Communist Party of Poland was disbanded. Stalin's fault. I'm saying this frankly. Not because I want to blame the dead, but because we have a lot of information, and we talked about it at the congress. Look, comrades, when Stalin died, Beria took his post. And he was the most influential man among us. Beria and Malenkov. He took the post of internal affairs minister, comrades. Beria. But, what kind of counter-revolution did we have in 1953? None. We have a good, friendly, lively society in the Soviet Union. What did he needed it for? So that he could stand above the party. What does it mean to stand above the party? It means to bring about his own cult of personality. What Stalin was, Beria would be. He'd have destroyed the party. The party would be like a formality, because he'd be in command. So, then, we rebelled and arrested Beria for raising his hand against the party. We told him this. We didn't arrest him like Stalin arrested Kossior. Instead, we arrested him during the meeting. All members of the Presidium were present. We told him: "We accuse you of such and such actions. You encroach on the rights of the party." This, he says, I did because of this and that. We then said, arrest him. When the prosecutor interrogated him, Beria said: "On what grounds do you arrest me?" He replied: "You're asking me on what grounds? The entire Presidium and Council of Ministers were there when you were arrested. Not only them, but the entire government apparatus!"

Comrades, the cult of personality is here. We want to return order, which was created during Lenin's time, and we won't step back from it. We, and in the party, now understand this matter very well. The congress unanimously accepted the resolution approving this course. At this time, everywhere, meetings are taking place. Not a single voice of criticism, or doubt, about the correctness of the decisions of the 20th congress, and of the line which is now taken, and raised by the Central Committee. I think we'll receive the same approval from the workers and employees, from the intelligentsia. At this time our enemies are pleased. But, I think, in the near future they'll be very upset. Because, as a result of this work, comrade, I'm very sure and bet my life on it, we'll get unbelievable solidarity from the ranks of our party, and solidarity from the people for our party. Of this, I'm very sure. Equally as sure is every member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

III

The representatives of communist parties from capitalist countries were there; Comrade Thorez, Comrade Togliatti, and others. We talked with them. They, too... share and understand, of course, the difficulties. Comrades... and you have the same difficulties, there were difficulties in France and in Italy. Comrades, these difficulties should be overcome. Take the correct direction and exit from all these difficulties even more stronger. Therefore, comrades... Taking the path... It's not our way. Not ours. We're going in the path marked by Lenin. And it's the communist way. We've come across this obstacle on that path, and we must eliminate it.

Well, comrades, I think that we can now stop, because there's a lot of illustrations that could be used. But, I think that if you want to read, to think -- we'll gladly answer these questions. We're not afraid of any questions. Not any, because, comrades, if... he wants to ask a question; it's better if he asks us a question than suffer with doubts. Therefore, we will try to answer them. And if he does not agree with our answer, I'd rather have... I'd rather have such opposition, with which I'll fight. I won't refuse it. We aren't that kind of person... Not so submissive. No, we're Bolsheviks. Leaders. We'll talk, and prove these decisions. And we'll fight with those who won't support these decisions.

It's a correct decision from my perspective. I think, it's a correct one because we can't allow it so that... Who prefers that we're now... done with the cult of personality ... Now, everyone is equal. All?... This, of course, is absurd. People aren't equal; different development, different knowledge. Therefore... people will always be different, so to speak... One or the other will be stronger. Therefore, those people who are stronger, always those who... seize the workers' brigades, or they don't, and even the brigades... of youth. Which of these... is more respected. Of course, here, in the party ... same thing. There will always be people, those who'll be leaders or even those who won't be leaders, who must have authority. And we have to preserve their authority, because there's no authority, here, comrades... people. So, I think, it could be understood differently, this... understanding. This, as... power by one person, who puts pressure on others. This is intolerable. We have to solve these questions. There's a Politburo. There's a Central Committee; it has to decide. I think that others will think, so to speak... .Special efforts made to prove that I think this question is clear; there could be separate nuances. We have to explain the absolutely correct understanding and rightness of some decisions.

With these words, allow me to finish my presentation. (Applause.)

IV

Chairman [Comrade Zawadzki in Polish]

In accordance with our mutual agreement, those among the comrades with a question, please ask them, and those among the comrades who want to express themselves -- also feel free to express yourself.

Comrade Kazimierz Witaszewski [in Polish]

I want to engage, namely with the following problem. Comrade Khrushchev spoke of Comrade Stalin as the strongest, the best type of Marxist-Leninist. On the other hand, we read Comrade Khrushchev's speech. And what Comrade Khrushchev said here, it's all about what Stalin did on his own, in spite of the collective, without coming to an understanding with a person. I can't understand, how to explain this, that a Marxist, the party leader, who, on the one hand talks about what kind of person a party member ought to be -- a communist, modest, ought to listen to the voice of the masses -- and, on the other hand, this same party leader does not recognize the collective, the Central Committee, the Politburo, works on his own, shoots at people, old Bolsheviks, without cause. Here, for me, a question emerges, how is it possible to reconcile one with the other, that Stalin was a good Marxist?

Comrade Khrushchev [in Russian]

... Because Stalin was like this, we're now glorifying Lenin. Why? Because Lenin was Lenin. Indeed, he was a Marxist who did everything in that direction. We, as they say, study and examine. But, Stalin, he thought of himself as being a Lenin, Marx. And, I'm telling you, he didn't only count himself as such, but thought of himself as a devoted man. And the evil he was doing was for the affirmation of Marxism, for the affirmation of Leninism. Whether he was doing it correctly is another matter. Here's my point of view: I think, of course, incorrectly. And, therefore, we, here, at the congress, said that you can't do this. It must be discussed, so it won't be repeated. Here, I repeat my point of view once more, and the point of view of the congress, and the CPSU CC leadership on this question.

A question from the audience in Russian

Comrade Khrushchev, I have the following question: Could Stalin be called a Marxist or not, and can you help us familiarize ourselves with the document?

Comrade Khrushchev [in Russian]

You see, here's how it was, I'll read... [from the secret speech].

Comrade Roman Nowak [in Polish]

Comrade Khrushchev says, and it's apparent from these materials, that Comrade Lenin characterized Comrade Stalin before the 13th [CPSU] congress. Certainly power and so on. It's enough that before this congress, Stalin did not yet have such power in

the party, like it appeared later in the process. Why, in spite of this, that Lenin warned the party against Stalin, the congress still accepted Stalin as General Secretary?

Voice from the hall [in Polish]

I have one example... [in Russian] You know that the Communist Party of Poland was dissolved in 1938. Was this a coincidence or is there something deeper to it? Why in 1938, right before the second imperialist war?

Question from the hall [in Polish]

When reading Comrade Khrushchev's speech to the closed session, and familiarizing oneself with this material; to put it differently -- harm committed by Stalin to the party, to the party cadres. And later, in the end, there's the fact, as if some interpretation, and yet Stalin performed, after all, a great role in the struggle for collectivization, industrialization. And today, Comrade Khrushchev says the same thing. It would concern the following thing. Was it really like this, that at the time only Stalin played a prominent role? After all, at the time the party played a great role. Because, after all, at the time Stalin in fact included himself with this collective, and we'll underline this, that as long as Stalin included himself with this collective, later these weren't relations that were so unbearable. And therefore it's about this, that we explained it in this manner, that over there, there's service to Stalin we also put down to, as if in reality, over there it wasn't the party that performed that role, but it was performed by Stalin. Was that party really so powerless? That's how the question presents itself. And I want to say, yesterday I read this material at the meeting of the executive. The comrades from the executive say that it somewhat jars this justification.

Comrade Maria Kaminska [in Russian]

I have two questions. The first question is this. I read the report by Comrade Khrushchev at the close session. The situation during the war was mentioned. Reference was made, if I'm not mistaken, that after the beginning of the war Stalin suffered something like depression. He didn't believe in the possibility of victory, and withdrew from the leadership, from work. More or less everybody read that. It was then said that members of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) turned to Stalin and practically forced him to take the controls into his hands, and start working. My question is the following: If Comrade Stalin, for some reason, really withdrew from the leadership, was it not possible to take advantage of it, to create certain conditions, let us say, to leave it that way... ?

The second question concerns the international workers' movement. Do the leading members of the CPSU not think that now is the time to create some kind of opportunity for an international exchange of experiences in the workers' movement, to exchange opinions in the workers' movement. I think that it is necessary right at this moment. Recently, we had an occurrence such as the article by Comrade Ulbricht, with certain statements about Comrade Stalin, and we know that the truth of certain positions in this article is not substantial. One of the members of our Politburo, in response to a question, if there's an existing opinion which commits us, answered, I think answered correctly, that Comrade Ulbricht has such an opinion, but this matter could be approached differently. I think that the answer by our comrade was correct. But, it seems to me that the situation isn't normal, if one of the leading comrades in the same party has one point of view, and the other, let's say, gives another

definition. We remember the times when plenums were called, and when comrades argued, and said lots of wrong things, but a common point of view crystallized from all this. It seems to me that in the current, objective... international workers' movement... this is necessary. That's why I asked this question.

Comrade Apelagia Lewinska [in Polish]

Explaining the events, as they are espoused at this moment-- through the psychology of one person, Comrade Stalin -- for us this explanation is not enough. It's not enough because this entire epoch is tied with a particular system of party leadership and government. A leadership, which is called -- we now call it -- steered, controlled. During the period, still before the war... in the CPP we considered this situation, created by the uniquely reinforced figure of Stalin. We were not satisfied by this and, at the time, we explained to ourselves that this is a necessity of the historic epoch, demanding one leader of this kind and... And this is how we explained it at the time. In one of Stalin's speeches it was said that at the moment when war approaches it's possible to militarize the party. There's even this designation, in fact, literally-- militarization. Limiting the principles of internal party democracy. It's about this, today, how do comrades, the CPSU leadership, see this side of the situation, arising precisely from the method, from the system. Was this system not connected with the necessity of bringing together the nation, and precisely the militaristic, in some sense, method of control... during the anti-fascist war. It would appear to us that today we are not in a position to clarify the matter of one person, the matter of the psychology of one person. After all, it's not like this. In the development of a situation there are objective agents and... And, after all, the masses also, in some sense, produced this cult of the individual. It's about this, if from this perspective, what kind of perspectives are there for study... I'm aware that to the end ... it's not possible to determine, that the meaning of the historic epoch can't be changed, but surely comrades are thinking about this and maybe they'd want to tell us, how they look at it from this perspective, precisely from the perspective of the method of the system of leadership.

Comrade Khrushchev [in Russian]

Here's the military comrade who asked and then repeated the question: How is it possible to combine this? I repeat that it can be combined quite well, because where would you place Stalin? Would you say he's a Marxist? Yes, Stalin, who occupied such a prominent position in the party, and possessed indisputable, colossal influence, and revolutionary abilities, and led the party in which direction? In the direction of building a socialist society. This is a fact. Could Stalin have lead in a different direction? He could have. Could he have brought it to some other result? I think that he couldn't, because the party would have resisted. But, Stalin himself was a staunch Marxist, and he was convinced that society in particular must become a communist society, and he served this society with his body and soul. Of this, I have no doubt. The question of the means and of the course taken, this is a completely different question. It's difficult to combine, but it's a fact. This fact already took place. How you want to combine it, and think it through, this depends, so to speak, on your abilities. But, it's a fact. We can't say that by using such and such methods to kill people, he killed them in order to destroy the socialist regime, so that he could turn the Soviet Union towards a capitalist way of living. It would be a silly thing to say. It would be a lie. Who would have believed it? No, that's wrong. Here's the whole tragedy. Who doubted that somebody isn't an enemy? Stalin, of course. But, if we look at this from the position of the liberals, then, of course, this isn't right. But, Stalin was a revolutionary. And therefore, to affirm the new, we should fight with the old. And in this struggle, comrades, we never denied harsh methods and extreme actions. We didn't deny it in the past, and we don't deny it now. Therefore, on this, Stalin was a Marxist, and he served, and used all the methods available. He used them so that in this struggle to affirm the new, he destroyed his own people. His own people were

destroyed. Of course it's possible. This was in every party. There were always cases where someone was under the suspicion of being an agent provocateur. Sometimes investigations and courts were used, but it later turned out that they had been honest people. Were there cases like these? Of course there were. And it was the same in the Polish party. It was everywhere. If there's an underground, if there's a struggle, then it's always possible. And the fact that the enemy sends its agents is known to everybody, comrades. We have the question of intelligence, methods, and abilities. Stalin had such views, he understood it well, and tried to protect us. And in protecting the revolution, he got to the point where, as they say, the artillery fired on its own army.

Well, I can't say anything else. I would be lying if, after his death, everything was blamed on him. That wouldn't be very smart. We would then not have been Marxists, or we would not have understood it and explained it. Stalin in particular was a Marxist. A Marxist. We think so. The question of his mistakes on the questions of theory, and in other instances, is not being discussed right now, comrades. This was a man who devoted his body and soul to the working class. There isn't a single doubt about it.

Here, people talked about Lenin's will at the 13th congress. You see, when Lenin's will was read during the congress, Stalin then asked to be released. Stalin would write to Lenin. Lenin wrote... Let's select the Secretariat. No. Comrades, we can't discuss the 13th congress right now, on the 20th, in 1956. (Voices from the audience: Correct.) These are different questions, comrades. Back then the Trotskyists attacked the party. Stalin occupied the leading position. He was the leader. He was the sword of the party, with which he destroyed the enemies of the party. And then we let Stalin upstairs. Back then we thought that Lenin may be ill. He could be under some kind of influence. Back then we concluded that we're a collective body. We will advise and Stalin will be our leader. And, comrades, he was that leader. We defeated the foreign intervention, and defeated the right-wing extremists. Who defeated them? The party did? A comrade said that the party did it. No, comrades, the party did it, but with Stalin. And Stalin, with this party, and not only as an ordinary member, but also as leader of the party. So, I think, comrades, that his due should be given. His fair share, then we will have our feet firmly planted on the ground. If we start explaining things that happened thirty years ago, we'll confuse ourselves. Well, you know how memoirs are written by old Bolsheviks sometimes, and they describe events that happened forty years ago. But, and ... always, so to say, humans are fallible. Something unpleasant is omitted, something pleasant is exaggerated. So these kind of memories are not accepted as a valid source of history. I don't want to insult our elders, I myself am not young, but I know that sometimes... forty to fifty years ago, everyone says different things. The disbanding of the Polish party, I didn't really understand the question: Coincides with 1938? (Voices from the audience: Yes.) Comrades, I forgot to tell you that I don't have very good knowledge about the history of the Communist Party of Poland... I didn't pay any special attention to the fact that the Communist Party of Poland was disbanded in 1938. But, I think it's a coincidence. But, here... that the war was coming closer, therefore the pursuit of spies, naturally, and, of course, the purge of party members, the purge of Comintern, and the fight against enemies of the revolution and supporters of capitalist countries... Stalin valued every revolutionary. It had to be seen. We saw it. We're now talking about the negative side of history. But, Stalin, comrades, if I could talk about the good times, the attention and care of the person. This was a revolutionary. He lived life, but he had a mania about somebody pursuing him... And, because of it, he would never stop... He, even his own relatives... He shot them. Executed them by having them shot. Because, he thought that the brother of his first wife-- a Georgian woman, she died a long time ago. (From the audience: Alliluyeva. No, Alliluyeva's the last wife.) Svanidze. Svanidze. Her brother. This was a friend of Stalin's. This was already an old man. He was a Menshevik, then he joined the party, and was often seen with Stalin. And, evidently, Beria suggested that this Svanidze was an agent, that he was an enemy, and that he had a directive to kill Stalin. Stalin, of course, said listen, he sleeps over at my place, he dines with me, he's often with me. So, why is he not doing what he's

supposed to? He could have poisoned me a long time ago. But, Beria tells him: "No. You know there are different agents. Some get the assignment immediately. Some agents are supposed to be around you, behave normally, then the time comes when he'll get the signal, and then he'll do it!" Stalin believed him. Svanidze was arrested. He was interrogated by different methods. He was sentenced to execution by shooting. Stalin lived with Svanidze for so many years, so he still had doubts. Then, he asks Beria the following: When Svanidze is about to be shot, tell him that if he admits his guilt -- Stalin was already sure that Svanidze was an enemy -- and asks for forgiveness, we will forgive him. Before Svanidze was shot, he was told Stalin's words, and he replied: "Exactly what is my crime? Why should I ask for forgiveness. I'm not a criminal. I'm a member of the party. I'm an honest person. I didn't commit any crimes before Stalin, and before the party and country. I won't ask." And he was shot. That's what was happening. So, why did Stalin destroy? He destroyed for nothing... He believed it's an enemy. We have to put more work on our brains to explain things that are not so easy. But, complicate this question a little bit. Only then will you understand correctly, and correctly give an explanation. This is a complicated question.

The role of Stalin. I think we already talked about it, that now this cannot... You've see in my presentation, his positive side is explained, so to speak, expanded upon. And the negative side is illustrated there. Why was it done like this? Because, we were doing positive work with Stalin and, as a result of which, today we have a socialist society and country. And in this, Stalin laid the foundation. I don't know who can deny it. I can't. But, we wanted to show the negative side, some of the things that were not needed, and the results of these actions, so that it wouldn't be repeated. Therefore, we constructed a sequence for the presentation at the congress. But, we want it to be understood correctly, his role and his shortcomings. The beginning of the war and Stalin. Comrades, here, it was said that maybe we could have use it to our advantage, when he turned out to be... This was impossible, comrades. The war began... the enemy approaches, and we, at that time, announced that we dismissed Stalin from the leadership. Comrades, a better present to Hitler could not be imagined... (Voice from the audience: Correct, had to direct the people.) Exactly, had to direct. Comrades, all this is being explained simply, right here at this meeting, and after Stalin's death, and you have to have the right conditions. The war was going on, and the name of Stalin played big part, and suddenly we're announcing we dismissed Stalin. Comrades, this is defeatist. This would mean the death of the country. I, comrades, don't want to distort your question. I understood it like this, and think that at that time the Politburo reacted absolutely correctly, and did the right thing, that Stalin had to be reinstated. He simply got frightened and lost his head. He had to be reinstated. I don't know where, in which motion picture it was shown, but I really liked the following scene: the battle is on, the commanding officer led his army in attack and was killed. This commanding officer was very heroic and knew how to lead an army. Then, his adjutant, he had been an actor sometime before, put on make-up and doubled as the commanding officer, got on a horse, and led the army toward the enemy. The army followed him and destroyed the enemy lines. The officer was killed. But it wasn't the officer. It was the double. Did he do the right thing? I think so. Everything was used to destroy the enemy. How could we start such a mess without Stalin? It would have been absolutely unthinkable. It was not done and could not have been done. I admit, comrades, that I did not read the article written by Comrade Ulbricht. I was sick at that time... I didn't read it, but was told that in the article there's a very badly formulated concept, which should not have been done. I think that you will decide for yourselves. I'm not trying to avoid the question, just saying that I didn't not read the article... Stalin must be criticized, and we already criticizing him so much. But, comrades... even if you smear the person more and more; more smear that he deserves and he's not going to be. We can smear his reputation. But, after us, there are going to be people, we know, like restorers, who go to churches and cathedrals and start restoring things that were already touched here and there by different painters. But, a good restorer takes it, cleans everything, washes everything off, and says: "This is, in reality, the work of such and such. And everything that was done before were merely appended." Here's the whole matter, comrades. Stalin, comrades, is such figure that it'll take more than just one historian

to break his own teeth trying to learn this history. Therefore, we can't, now that we're in power. He's dead. To append these things so that it's like we're doing our part, it would be silly. No? Stalin is Stalin. He's a very complex figure. He had a lot of good and a lot of bad. Now, we're trying to smooth out the bad so that we can enforce our party's correct path of action. But, Stalin will, in any case, from us, and after us, and from our grandchildren and children, receive what he deserved. He played his part and played in such a way that God left it to others, who worked with him, to make it known. I'm saying it directly, because it's a question of the struggle... Stalin had his own methods. He said that in order for the working class to succeed, in order to take power, many thousands and millions of workers had to die. Maybe it was a mistake. At such a moment during the revolutionary struggle, it's possible that there are innocent victims. But, he says, history will forgive me. Is it possible? Perhaps. The question concerns the dosage of these mistakes. A question of methods. Because his doses were incorrect, because an incorrect method of leadership was used. And we want to avoid this. Comrades, we ourselves aren't guaranteeing that mistakes won't be made. We also can't allow; we also arrested people, and will probably make arrests in the future. I think that you'll be doing it. But, if you now become liberals, and look at everybody and pat everybody on the back, then these enemies will bite your hands off. We have such enemies and you have them. You probably have more enemies, because you're younger than we are, and we destroyed more, and you're closer to them. So, I think that even in the future we'll make mistakes. I can't say, right now, that we promise that not even a single hair will fall from the head of any person. No, Comrades, this is very complicated. Comrades, the enemy is really insidious, the enemy really is, has been all the while, and we'll fight with these enemies wherever we recognize them and, maybe, wherever we won't recognize them. I, for example, know that when I worked in Ukraine, we destroyed not one, but many of our enemies by using the hands of our enemies. We knew... these ones... we forged some documents. We would place them surreptitiously everywhere... they arrested them, torture them, and hung them. But, you'll say that this is cruel. But, comrades, we're fighting with the enemy. Is this method with enemies is allowed? I think it's allowed. Will we give it up, now? I, for example, won't refuse to use it, if it's used to destroy the enemy... If we're going to have cold feet, we're going to be cowards. So there, dear comrades.

In one word, comrades, this question we have to... I was talking about it... .. another time the fairness is... is fairness...

In one word, comrades, we have to explain this question from the revolutionary position, from the position of the masses... not from a philanthropic position. If don't not explain this position to ourselves, and others, we'll not find the correct explanation. And we must explain this occurrence from the position of the class struggle, acute class struggle.

When we find a correct understanding, we'll explain... Lenin is not... an enemy of working class. But, Lenin's a man... He knew how to make use of the proletariat's sword, and he knew when to lower it on the heads... And he selected... He used Dzierzinski. Stalin used... And I would say... and if I were used, I probably would have become just as... because... he was virtually a useless person. I knew Yezhov, personally. He was a... wonderful comrade. I'm telling you, I knew him. He was a worker from Petrograd. And if you take Yezhov as a human being ... and encourage him to such deeds, when the more he... then the more he was a hero. I think that during the last years of his life, of course, he already wasn't Yezhov, but was half-crazy. That's the problem.

But, if... he was a Bolshevik too. And Beria was in a party. But, Beria, he was an adventurer. He was never a party member. He was an adventurer. I knew Yezhov when he worked in the Central Committee, and how he studied at the industrial academy... and I met with him often, and solved the questions...

Well, comrades, you asked me questions and I don't know if I answered all of them.

They, me... but they have smart questions. I understand you, comrades, and therefore you'll leave and these questions will be taken from others, that's the law. But, comrades, keep it in mind, I, probably on all the questions which you meet, I... but you'll have to display wisdom and communist-courage, and the correct answer, so that after these questions, our ranks don't weaken. But, on the contrary, become even more stronger, so that our influence doesn't weaken, and if we'll become better from these positions... we have to find, accordingly... This does not mean that... with a clean conscience, but the ability to use this conscience, to direct this conscience, not to follow it. I think that we'll find the correct answer, and correct solution. Correct understanding... Together. (Applause.) (Stormy Applause).

Chairman, Comrade Zawadzki [in Polish]

I think that we can again sincerely thank Comrade Khrushchev for the meeting with us, with the Central Committee. And we can ensure him that he presented many very interesting and important matters, which will help us in our work. The Central Committee plenum at 6:00pm.