

## **August 25, 1953**

# **Stenographic Transcript of Conference with the Delegations that Returned from the GDR**

### **Citation:**

"Stenographic Transcript of Conference with the Delegations that Returned from the GDR", August 25, 1953, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Translated for CWIHP by Svetlana Savranskaya. <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/120748>

### **Summary:**

Report of a Moscow delegation on their impressions of the situation in East Germany. They describe grievances at the root of the June 17 uprising and make suggestions for improvements to the GDR factory system.

### **Original Language:**

Russian

### **Contents:**

Translation - English

## Stenographic Transcript

Of Conference with the Delegations that Returned from the GDR

August 25, 1953

SUSLOV. During your visit to Germany you accumulated rich experience, a lot of new impressions, and we would like to listen to you here in Moscow so that you could share your impressions with us. As much as we hate to take your time, we decided to keep you in Moscow for one more day for this purpose.

What procedure should we establish here? Maybe we shall begin with leaders of the delegations speaking for about 10 minutes each, and then comrades who wish could exchange their opinions.

VOICES. Good.

SUSLOV. Leader of the Moscow Delegation Comrade Platonov will take the floor now.

PLATONOV. During its visit to the GDR, the Moscow delegation visited such enterprises as Karl Libknekht transformers plant, October 7th Plant, "Activist" Factory, Otto Grotevol Chemical Complex, and Max Hutte Complex. The delegation visited all these enterprises in three days. Naturally, in those three days, we did not set ourselves a task to analyze the economic activity, or to correct the work of the party or the trade union organizations - we just spoke with workers, masters, and engineers. Now I would like to share with you what we learned from our conversations with the employees of those enterprises.

A couple of words about our work. Our work began with conversations; on the last day of our visit, in the morning, we convened a meeting of activists from the administrative staff, party organization, and the trade union organization. At that meeting we told them about what we have learned, and what deficiencies we have discovered, and they asked questions. In the evening of that day, we concluded with a general conference, at which both our comrades and workers of those enterprises made comments.

What was the opinion of the Moscow delegation about the trip?

Our German comrades have borrowed the organizational forms of building party and trade union organizations from us. To some extent, although not to full extent, those forms correspond to the ones we have. However, to our regret - and we would emphasize this - those organizational forms and the structure are not supported by the substance of their work.

What did discover at those enterprises? We discovered that when we contacted workers directly, we felt amazement regarding the fact that we were speaking directly with them. This observation became clear when they stated that their leadership never does anything like this. We were surprised because one month had already passed since the XV Plenum of the Socialist United Party of Germany, and two months since the events of June 17. This shake-up, which our comrades spoke about, should have produced substantial results. We have not found anything like that - i.e. in the period when we spoke with them, we have not found anything like that. We were in a favorable situation. We made comparisons with our situation. If something happens in our country, then everything gets corrected. We have found nothing like that in Germany.

Let us take the party work, especially the most sensitive aspect of it - mass propaganda work. We have not found either slogans or appeals. We have not found any discussions during lunch breaks. We have not found any use of radio. We have not found any extensive coverage of measures of the party and the government in the regional newspapers that they have. I am not even mentioning the absence of close communication between the leaders, party and trade union functionaries, and workers.

We heard here, and it was confirmed by the workers, that they sincerely believed that the events of June 17 did produce results, that they welcome the new course, but believe that it exists only on paper. When we started to tell them that there was a Politburo decision, and a government decision to that effect, they had no idea about that decision.

SUSLOV: Is that true?

PLATONOV: They do not know anything about it. We observed it not only on the enterprises that the Moscow delegation had visited. It was also the case on other enterprises.

We came to a conclusion that the party organizations were not capable to use all the forms in their capacity in order to show the workers all the measures that the party and the government have been implementing after the Plenum.

In our conversations, the functionaries complained that they have very different circumstances. We told them that you cannot have everything at once. One has to work on it. They unanimously agreed with that, and thanked us for the help. However, if it continues as we saw it, of course they will not make any practical conclusions. These are our general comments.

Now I would consider it my duty to draw serious attention of the Central Committee to the fact that the trade unions continue to work separately from the party organizations. We could cite several examples that show that they - the trade unions - do not realize that they should work under the leadership of party organizations. They narrow down their role to fighting for the workers' interests, and as a result, they completely lose the other no less important side - how to mobilize workers for fulfilling the plans passed down by the state. In particular, let us take the issue of socialist competition. We spoke with one functionary at Max Hutte plant. He said that they had instructions to the effect that the competition was abolished altogether after June 17. I have to say that workers expressed interest - maybe not as much as would like to see - but they express substantial interest with the kind of competition that we have in the Soviet Union, like the competition for a better profession. It inspired substantial interest; maybe we should start with the forms that are of interest to workers themselves, and then gradually move toward more extensive forms of competition that we have.

The trade unions completely overlook the second part of their work also because their main objective is to solve numerous small requests from workers regarding improving their working and living conditions. If they had a close relationship between the trade unions and the administration, then all those questions could be solved very easily, and it would not require any additional investments, any special effort. We drew attention of our German comrades to that side of the issue.

First of all, we were saying that the trade unions should move closer to the party organization, because now the trade unions work in the absence of any control, and they have to make them work in this direction, and take on both sides of the question.

A couple of words regarding the German administration. To this day, despite the fact that Germany now has people's enterprises, the administration communicates with the workers only via masters. Obviously, if it is considered normal in the circumstances of a capitalist society, where a master is in direct contact with workers, and where he passes the workers' moods on to the administration - in the situation of people's enterprises it is a serious drawback. We pointed this problem to our German comrades very seriously, because in our situation, the director of the plant, head of the shop, and chief engineer go around the plant, consider it their duty to visit with workers, talk to them, find out not only about work problems, but also find out the mood of the workers. This gives us an opportunity to undertake timely measures, and to react quickly to the workers' concerns. Unfortunately, we have not found it to be the case on the German enterprises. We emphasized in our statements that leaders of people's enterprises need to communicate with workers, and to know the technological process and the organization of the production. They never attend any meetings whatsoever. They need to let the German working class feel that they are the owners of their enterprises, and that the administration is at their service. Nobody is doing it, and that is quite obvious.

Since there is no close communication, they do not attend meetings. We discovered that there is a drive toward rationalization of production, toward inventions; as we say, the ice has begun to move, workers are beginning to introduce proposals for rationalization. This involves not only the practical issues, but the political ones as well, because if the workers introduce proposals, it means that they care about improving the production. Unfortunately, there are many drawbacks in this issue as well. The proposals are kept unanswered for a long time. We found many problems in this area, to which we drew our German comrades' attention.

Promotion represents an issue no less important than rationalization. At one of the plants, we were told that there was a shifting of valuables back and forth - that initially they were promoting people, but now there was a reverse movement - just like "Trishka's coat." We found that the old masters and heads of shifts were acting hostile altogether, and they were not being replaced. And at the same time, the young people, who finished the masters courses, had been working for two and more years, without any hope to be promoted.

I think this is a very important question, especially taking into account the history of our development, having experienced the resistance on the part of old specialists. Their process of promotion to leadership positions is very weak.

We also pointed out to them that on some of the enterprises, for instance even on such a big metallurgical enterprise as Max Hutte, where there are about 2,000 women-employees, they did not pursue any work with women whatsoever. In conversations with us, women emphasized that they were passive in public life because of the mourning. We undertook a very active work with women; their women know only three "k's" - kinder, kuchen, and kirchen.

They readily engage in conversations about their jobs, but as soon as the conversation extends beyond the topic of their profession, they say that they do not engage in politics.

We have not found that there was any desire to work with women on the part of the party organizations, even though women represent a substantial force in their situation, when women play a big role. We were very sad to see that women's unions worked without any direction, or any leadership on the part of the party organizations.

Even worse - and I would like to specifically emphasize it - is the situation with the youth. Unions of Free German Youth, which exist on every enterprise, work, I would

say, simply incorrectly - they make very timid efforts in terms of cultural events, but everything is done without any direction or leadership on the part of the party organizations. I would allow myself to make the following statement - if they do not work with the youth, then somebody else will. We noticed in Berlin that the young people were going to the Western sector. Our German comrades need to devote more attention to this issue.

In our conversations with secretaries of those unions, we realized that there was not a single case where a party organization was interested in the work of those unions, as it happens in our country, where party organizations listen to Komsomol reports - what work they do, what they are engaged in - at their meetings. They do not have this practice, and the party organizations admit that it is the case.

I personally spoke extensively with trade union and party cadres, and I would like to state my opinion about the cadres. I must say that the overwhelming majority of them are young comrades, who just graduated from high school, who engage in work enthusiastically, but do not have sufficient practical experience; and the regional committees do not provide any assistance. Undoubtedly, those cadres should always be in the center of attention, there should be organized seminars, conferences, exchange of experience, so that those people were being constantly enriched with practical experience.

About the political cadres. At the first glance, they seem to be sufficient, but they are very helpless; for many of them it is the first time that they are involved in party and trade union work, especially on big enterprises, and they are very timid in approaching and implementing their tasks. It can be explained by their insufficient experience.

And the last issue. I see it as my duty to speak about it. In big German cities, in the so called province centers, they have representatives of the High Commissar, meanwhile the regional centers only have commandant's offices. However, those regional centers house biggest plants, is particular such as Max Hutte plant; and I must say that the tasks carried out by those commandant's offices are substantially more extensive than the leadership realizes. We were witnesses of that when Deputy Secretary for Political Issues together with Secretary of the Regional Committee, and the Secretary of the Regional Executive Committee visited us and told us that they did not have good communications with the High Commissar, that the representative of the High Commissar does not provide any services in this respect to the leadership of the commandant's offices. I would think, taking into account all our observations and the behavior of the commandants, that it was not fully correct on the Deputy's part. I explain it by the fact that he did not clearly see his task, fulfillment of which is more difficult and important than the administration itself.

SUSLOV: They do not even give directions to their representatives in the provinces.

PLATONOV: They never bring them together either.

SHVERNIK: Did you happen to see at least one person, who was a deputy, or a top executive, promoted from workers to that status?

PLATONOV: Unfortunately, I have not met such people. The reason why I noticed it was that in conversations I found out there were masters, executives, who could be replaced, there were heads of shops, who could be moved to other positions. Everybody confirms that there were such people, but it is only in perspective. It is a very serious drawback.

SUSLOV: Maybe you can speak about the mood of the workers on your enterprises?

PLATONOV: I would like to say that the least favorable situation exists on Otto Grotevol complex, and on Leino plant. They have certain grounds and a possibility that there could be some red tape.

What is the problem there? They used to have three professional unions-coal workers', chemists', and energy technicians'. Now, since those enterprises were transferred to the German Democratic Republic, they have organized a complex. They have united all the coal workers because coal is the main raw material for the chemical industry, and because the power station burns coal to produce energy as well. We received information that the chemists were cutting themselves slack, especially those categories, who worked in analogous shops. Both chemists and coal workers used to have repair shops when they worked separately. Since they were united, they often have to do some work together - for example if there is an accident - they do the same work, but get different pay.

We visited this enterprise. They spoke a lot about this problem at this enterprise. We did not hear any direct hostility, but there were many conversations on this issue. Comrade Goroshkin said that we need to inform the management about that. Those conversations were, essentially, purely business - like, at least on those enterprises, which we visited.

Now about their attitude toward us, and about the workers' mood. Initially, they had doubts to the effect whether we were a delegation of workers. However, when our comrades, who are masters of their trade, demonstrated that they were not just good propagandists, but also good workers, that mistrust disappeared. My team and I felt that the mood was good. We had opponent there, who had been a member of the Social Democratic party for twenty five years; he constantly expressed his views, but in general, their attitude toward us was positive.

SUSLOV. What attendance did you have when you convened meetings?

PLATONOV. We had poor attendance on the transformers plant; however, on the Bollen Complex, on October 7th Enterprise there were about two thousand people at the meeting, and there were about three thousand people at the meeting on Max Hutte Complex. On the Bullen Complex, there were few workers at the meeting, but the speeches were quite exceptional in their political sharpness in assessment of the events. Our meeting there coincided with the visit of a West German delegation. However, they did not stay till the end of the meeting - they just listened to my speech and then left. Of course, to some extent, we should bear responsibility for this. Maybe we should have engaged in organization of meetings more actively. I have said that as far as attendance is concerned, two out of five of our meetings were in poor shape, two in a very good shape, and on "Activist," we had a group that organized their meeting separately, because we did not plan to have a meeting at that enterprise - but their meeting went very well.

SUSLOV. Has the German press corrected the situation, did they being to cover the delegation in the press?

PLATONOV. The press gave us extensive coverage.

VOICE FROM THE AUDIENCE. Although at times in a very primitive way.

BLINOV. The Leningrad delegation visited four plants, and then, during the weekend, was invited to "Vismut" enterprises. On the eve of the holiday, on Saturday, we had a meeting at a club, and on Sunday we were at a sports competition. Mainly, our conversations with workers were open and sincere. However, as Comrade Platonov has already said, initially, our reception was not entirely wholehearted, which points

to the western propaganda. In the beginning of our trip, there was a feeling like "those Moscow propagandists came over again," but subsequently those feelings disappeared very quickly after our workers came to the workplace and showed examples of work, which were not worse, but even better than theirs.

At those enterprises - of course you cannot take everything they said in those private conversations at face value, nonetheless, you can make some conclusions from a number of issues raised. What strikes one first of all? It is the extremely low level of educational, explanatory work at those enterprises. Moreover, that level is substantially lower than the level of Western propaganda at those enterprises, which is easily felt there. Some workers specifically pressed the issue of the economy, they said openly that the living standards are higher in the West than in the democratic part of Germany. When we tried to find out, by polling and talking to the workers, what exactly they meant by that higher level, we were not able to establish it. Unfortunately, we did not have a chance to familiarize ourselves with the prices here and there; so some workers, who took part in our discussions, helped us with that. They told us directly - do not tell us, we know that the standard of living in the West is substantially lower than here, in the democratic sector. In particular, one woman worker at Fritz Hekker plant helped us with that. She gave us concrete figures on food products: bread cost 32 pfennings here, and 72 there; potatoes cost 18 pfennings here, and 36 there; and on a number of other products. Then the most active defenders of the West said - prices in HAO are 3 to 4 times cheaper than there. One could feel that the explanatory work was at a very poor level, and was missing the point. When we tried to figure out what the picture really was, we said, let us analyze your budget. We took a pencil, selected one family, and asked - how much do you spend for the products priced at the state norm. It turned out that they spent 80-85% for products at fixed prices, and only 18-20% for products at commercial prices, which are used as the main trump in the Western propaganda. So when we showed with concrete examples, what the standard of living was here and there, then the workers who defended the Western standards were beaten. And the workers themselves, with our help discovered that those conversations were a product of active western propaganda.

The extremely poor level of the explanatory work is evident in practically all issue areas. We spoke with many workers. We got an impression that many workers were completely alienated from politics. Moreover, many workers openly state that they were not interested in high politics - they were interested in the marks, and what they could buy with those marks in the stores.

(VOICE FROM THE AUDIENCE. They say that politics comes from the stomach)

By the way, we said to the most obnoxious ones, who spoke too much about the West, that they should start thinking not only with their stomach, but with their head too.

Comrade Platonov has already said that the new course was the result of the events of June 17. We felt it was very strange that many workers did not know about the decisions of July 9 and 11. I tried to find out why it was so in detail, and it turned out that there were just one or two radio announcements, and nothing at all appeared in the press. The majority of workers in the German Democratic Republic claim that there was nothing in the press about those decisions.

We had an impression that they do not believe announcements very much; in particular, they cite many examples with norms. They were told that the new course was adopted on the 9th and the 11th, and they say, "Why are you talking about the 9th and the 11th, our payday was on the 16th, and we got 400 marks instead of 600 marks." There even was a provocative announcement at one of the enterprises, in particular at Zaksenverg enterprise in Dresden, to the effect that the higher norms,

which were introduced earlier, remained in force. It is true that ten minutes later there was an announcement to the contrary. Such provocative, hard to understand, radio statements do not help in providing correct and clear explanations.

SUSLOV. Party activists were not organized. They made the decision without even convening the Central Committee members.

BLINOV. You can see this in the following example. In Dresden, they convened a meeting of city and regional party activists to discuss the decisions of the XV Plenum. At that meeting, the party organs did not pass any decisions, limiting themselves to a communique only, saying that their meeting of the activists had taken place, and that the decision would be prepared over a long period of time after the meeting took place.

Western propaganda has an especially strong influence on the youth. Comrade Platonov said that the work with young people was simply insufficient. Western propaganda has a particularly strong influence on youth in Berlin, and they use all possible ways to lure the young people, including such attractions as cabaret.

Absence of work affects the mood of the young people. Young people with whom we were able to talk directly, were absolutely alienated from politics. They are also alienated from culture, there is no cultural growth, and they are alienated from sports as well. The only young people who are involved in sports are those who have their own motorcycles. But those are very few people, while the majority of the young people are completely alienated from all those issues.

I have to say a word about the attitude of a certain part of workers to the so-called defenders of workers' interests - the saboteurs. I will give you a concrete example. It happened at Zaksenverk plant in Dresden - those plants were the initiators of the strike in the city. It happened so that one saboteur came to the Zaksenverk plant from another plant, moved the local leaders aside - and they were confused - organized a rally, and took all of the plant out to the street, to the city, and they marched in a demonstration.

SUSLOV. There are 5 thousand workers at the plant, 1,100 of them are members of the SUPG.

BLINOV. We should clarify that 400 members of the SUPG took part in the demonstration. It was clear that the leaders of the party organization and the trade union organization were very confused. Workers were very surprised when they learned that that person was sentenced to 15 years. They asked us about it; they said that he was a good person, and that he was saying things that were true. We tried to find out, what kind of person he was, where did he work. We were not satisfied with their answers. Then we began asking direct questions - why did he happen to be at the plant on that particular day? And after a long discussion, they agreed with us that he was a saboteur, that he came to their plant from a different enterprise.

POSPELOV. In what respect was he a good man?

BLINOV. In that he listed all the issues that were pressing - about social security, the norms, about railroad travel, and a number of other issues, but he threw out the 10th point, which said - away with the government. And so that good man Brodhaus formerly was a Minister of the Saxon land; he was released, and he became a regular worker at another plant.

POSPELOV. When was he a minister? In the GDR?



BLINOV. Yes, before the reorganization. After the districts were established. In the Saxon land he was a minister of something like the agriculture. He began his speech with stating that he was a Communist, and that the party had formulated the issues one way, but the leadership turned everything around. At that meeting, he introduced himself as a Communist, and in short, he led away the entire plant.

What was their attitude towards war, if we can formulate it this way. The absolute majority of workers state that they are against war; that war, especially in Dresden, where it destroyed the entire center of the city in one night, and where many civilians died, should never happen again, that they do not want a repetition of the war. However, the way they see resolution of all major issues related to the war, is, in our view, very strange. We said that the events of June 17 could have led to war. They responded to this that we would not have allowed it to get to war. Then we began asking them - how exactly would you not allow it? - we would have protested. Then we said - give us at least one example where the imperialists would have asked the workers whether to start a war or not. There is no such case. They could not give us any examples. Then we gave them the example of Korea, where they started the war without asking the people. After long discussions that agree - yes, it was a provocation, we could have repeated the events in Korea. However, some part of workers did not say anything. When we began to say - what kind of government did you want when you were marching under the banner - "away with the government" - they said that they did not think about that issue - why did they march under that banner - their heads were hot. Young people say - it was interesting, and we began to break windows. Some people made such statements. All this characterizes the level of political mood and beliefs. Of course, it does not characterize the majority of workers, but such feelings do exist among a certain part of workers, and especially among the youth.

In our view, it is necessary to devote more attention to the work with women. Many workers openly say that their insufficient involvement in politics, and the fact that they do not join the party can be explained by the pressure from household duties, especially for wives. And to the contrary, we met some women at the branch of Kirovverg plant in Leipsig, who made the following arguments. One of them said that she would like to participate in all the political life more actively, she would like to become a party member, but she is convinced that there are such people in the plant management, who are far from the party, and who were trying to prevent her from joining the party by all means. She also cited one concrete example that she would like to improve her qualifications, but when she tried to make this request to the administration, the administrator told her that she had such a qualification that would not allow him to transfer her.

When we spoke with activists, with officials and party members, they were offended, and said that they did not have any propagandists, but when we came to the shops directly, and when we began to speak with the workers, many of them, especially former prisoners of war, turned out to be our good helpers. One person especially turned out to be a good helper - a former prisoner of war, who spent time in British prison. I cannot say that we took his words 100% at face value, but the way he expressed his opinion to the effect that they were preparing for a new war there - in this

The majority of comrades express an opinion that the management discriminate against some party members in terms of work.

Regarding criticism and self-criticism. We have raised that issue. After our conversation, the comrades told us that if we had such a conversation before June 17, then there would have been no June 17. When we asked why did they not demand to organize a discussion like the one we had in order to figure out the situation - all of them said that if the criticism was as they wanted it to be, many people's work would suffer, they management would have started discriminating against them, giving

them worse assignments, and so on; all that would have had an impact on their salaries. This is our assessment of criticism and self-criticism.

Even on the issue of norms at the plants, which we visited, the majority of workers were dissatisfied with work. And when we asked them specifically about their norms, all of them, or at least the majority of them admitted that by itself the increase of the norm of production by 10-15% was not a difficult task for them, but only if they were sure that those norms would not be increased again, and that it would not result in lowering of the wages. Working over norm is usually accompanied by this mistrust at every enterprise, which we visited. The majority of workers had 4 different levels of qualifications, and according to the new course, the wages were increased.

We talked to metallurgists - do you know about that resolution? Yes, our team master told us, but we do not believe him. Why? Because we have not received a paycheck with the new rates yet. Our payday is on the 16th; we will believe when we get the money. Unquestionably, this dissatisfaction slows decreases the productivity of labor.

Regarding the labor unions, we can say that when we asked the question - how do they conclude and monitor the implementation of union agreements - some workers said that they remembered that they had such a meeting in their shop to conclude a union agreement. However, after that meeting everybody had forgotten about it. Nobody monitors the compliance, nobody asks any questions, and consequently, there is no work that is being done.

A couple of words about economic issues at the enterprises of our stockholders' societies.

SUSLOV. Our former stockholders' societies.

BLINOV. Maybe former ones.

SUSLOV. Everything had been transferred, including Zaksenverk.

BLINOV. There is a situation where a number of economic questions grew into politics. Here is a concrete fact. They worked in an extraordinary regime to produce some equipment items, in particular, distribution panels, electrical equipment, engines, etc. They had to work overtime, and many workers were unhappy that there were so many overtime hours. And now, since April of this year, that equipment sits in the yard, and is not being shipped anywhere. When we talked to Comrade Hail - the director of the plant - he cited all kinds of management problems, and problems with distribution of re-transportation, and so on. As a result, the issue produces a lot of red tape and become a political issue.

Many other issues on economic enterprises become political issues. On this plant, there is insufficient work load in the beginning of the month, and a storm in the second half of the month. Those questions should be undoubtedly resolved.

What kind of conclusion would one make here? The absolute majority of workers are very positively inclined. They are very positive toward the idea that the peace movement's goals can be achieved together with, and with assistance from the Soviet Union; that the West, and the speaking. They believe that because we have a very large territory, we have many things, and so we should help them all the time. And when we told them that we had some difficult time, that we did not have enough bread, some of them said some really bad things, like - you, Russians, are very healthy people, you can eat less, but we, Germans, cannot eat like this. Naturally, we

rebuffed those jerks. In general, however, let me repeat, the majority of comrades believe that the peace comes with the Soviet Union, from here.

SUSLOV. How did your party meetings go?

BLINOV. In Dresden, our party meetings went poorly, and we still cannot figure out why it happened so. Maybe because the plant committee - chairman of the plant committee - is a saboteur, or maybe for other reasons. This is how it happened. Because that plant was the initiator of the strike, we decided to work one more day at that plant, and to get into a better contact with the workers. We decided to hold a party meeting. However, our general director also had some impact. At this plant, they believe that if a public organization calls a meeting during the day (we decided to convene our party meeting in between two shifts), then the director of the plant has to pay; and he categorically refused to pay. He stated directly that he was not going to pay.

SUSLOV. He has never talked to the workers as well.

Voice from the audience. That is true.

BLINOV. Approximately 600 people attended the meeting, although we expected 700 people to attend. The meeting began quite well. The Chairman of the plant committee chaired the meeting. He had a microphone on the podium. After Boikov's speech, who was the first to take the floor with a greeting from Leningrad workers, the chair got up on the podium, and asked the audience, "Who has any questions to the Soviet delegation?"

Questions were coming one after another. There were some questions like why did they not release prisoners of war, what is the living standard like, and so on. Then suddenly one worker from the audience got up and said, "I've been to Leningrad area, and I know how Leningrad lived during the war. I did not come here to ask questions of the delegation, as some gentlemen want it." He began to speak about the fact that that was the first time when a workers' delegation came to visit workers, and here these gentlemen would like to turn our meeting into a question and answer session.

Instead of inviting that person to the podium and giving him the floor, the chairman of the plant committee stood on the podium and kept saying, "Who has questions? Please ask questions."

They asked 20 questions altogether. Later, when we asked, why it was done in that fashion - moreover, they had a preliminary plan of the meeting, which they had shown to us, and there were 10 people with prepared questions, and they did raise their hands - why did they behave in such a way? He said that he was confused and instead of asking who would like to speak, he kept repeating the phrase, "Ask questions." Now the party organization is considering this issue. Obviously, that comrade will get some treatment.

This meeting did not go as warmly as the ones at Kirovverg, and especially at Fritzker, when they received the Soviet government's note. I have to say that the note was received very warmly and with excitement.

BORISOV. The Ukrainian delegation consisted of 15 people. It visited four enterprises: one enterprise in Berkman - construction in the Stalin Alley - two machine-building plants in Magdeburg, and one chemical plant in Lein. There are 44 thousand people altogether working at those enterprises.

I would like to speak briefly about the work that we carried out there. The enterprises are very big, excluding the construction site; therefore, we could not have covered everything in such a short period of time, but it was desirable that we should visit all the shops. When we would come to the plants, we were told that they were waiting for us for a long time already, but when we came to the shops, we discovered that only few people knew about it, and the rest did not know who we were, and what we represented.

Therefore, we did the following way: together with the plant triangle, we would visit every shop of the plant, but not just visit. Our delegation was divided into five groups. There were two representatives and a translator in each group. Each such group went to a shop, and visited there for 20-25, sometimes even 30 minutes. They approached workers and engaged in a kind of "flying" discussions. As a result, after the first day of our visit, we were quite sure that all the shops knew who it was and what kinds of questions we asked. We would agree to meet on the next day. This system of visiting shops gave us an opportunity to immediately orient ourselves in the situation - what was the character of the enterprise, who should be sent to any particular spot depending on his specialty, and so on. It was concluded with meetings. Since it was difficult to gather everybody for the meetings, and at the same time, there was a strong desire to hear what was said at the meetings, we broadcast those meetings on the radio. Obviously, the leaders wanted to make some conclusions, but we did not make those conclusions in a small circle, where they would present their greetings - we spoke with concrete criticism of the party organization, economic and trade union leadership at the general meetings. It was well received.

What plans did they have? They did not want to convene meetings at all those four enterprises. They are afraid of talking to people directly; they hoped to limit themselves to a small conference of the party activists. Besides, they have too much pomp. We told them at the outset of visit that we were workers, and we wanted to talk with workers as workers, and therefore, we should have devoted more time to discussions with workers.

I would like to address the issue of ideology without repeating what has been said before me. The alien ideology has a serious influence on the workers, and there is no political work that would rebuff its influence. I would like to give you one example, and there are many such examples there. Take for example the decision of the XV Plenum. When we came, we started asking the question - are you familiar with the Plenum's decision? They would tell us that they knew, but once we would ask substantial questions, it turned out they did not know anything about it. Here is the conclusion - they did not know the most important decision, and therefore, they could not consciously support it. That decision stated that 50% of time all management should spend at the work places. First of all, that decision is not being implemented, and in the cases where they are trying to implement it, they do it in a distorted way. One example. Secretary of the regional committee at the Vildau plant, which is a very serious enterprise, it employs 24 thousand worker, tells us how he visits the shops. He says that he would visit a shop and spend one or two hours there. That is not bad. But he would conceal the fact that he was a secretary of the party organization. He comes there as a person with no name. He would talk to the workers and leave without even mentioning who he was. Of course we were surprised by such a practice. We asked why would he do it. He answered that it was immodest to say that he was the secretary of the party organization.

This tells you how they are implementing the decision to spend 50% of their time in the shops.

I would also like to draw your attention to the following fact. After June 17, the quality of work should have improved, because the mistakes had been corrected. However, their work quality got worse after June 17.

We looked at the trade unions work in detail. The issue of socialist competition was just absolutely frozen. They all say that they have a new plan, and that they do not know what to go by, and that they did not even touch the issues of socialist competition in their essence.

I would like to draw your attention to the usefulness of the anti-Fascist schools. Those comrades, who went through the anti-Fascist schools are really helpful. The management has no authority in workers' eyes. Workers speak about it openly, especially when the executives are not present at the meetings. Why? They do not respond to the smallest questions that the workers have, do not pay any attention to the workers. Besides, there is a widely felt condescension on the part of the engineering personnel toward the workers. They disregard the working class. When we spoke about friendship between engineering personnel and the working class, when we spoke about the usefulness of such close cooperation, we saw anxious smiles on the engineers' faces. Besides, we heard comments from workers to the effect that once a comrade from the working class is promoted to a management position, that is it - this is the day that he separates himself from the workers' collective. As if the psychology of that comrade went like this: since I was promoted to masters, I left the masses behind.

After June 17, all party and trade union organizations held meetings, but only high-level comrades were sent there. In particular, they sent a comrade, who made a mistake, to the builders on Vildau. All those high-level figures took the approach of making promises. At the machine-building plant in Vildau, workers have cards with different skill categories. That comrade promised that he would resolve that issue. He left, more than a month has passed, and they never received a word from him.

Comrade Aksen from the Central Committee, visited the construction site at Stalin Alley. He also made promises to workers, but then never responded. This produces a serious feeling of indignation among the workers.

Workers say that the numbers of administrative personnel are too high. It is really so, especially taking into account the fact that there is a substantial difference in wages, which the workers notice. In particular, the pay structure for workmen who operate a number of machines simultaneously is incorrect. We familiarized ourselves with that issue. If I operate one machine, I get 100% of pay, if I operate 2 machines, I get an additional 100%. They, however, have a gradation system, and therefore, there is no stimulus for work with several machines simultaneously.

I would like to make some conclusions about the brigade masters. They do not engage in any kind of political work with the brigade masters. However, I personally believe that the brigade masters play a very important role.

It is the brigade master who spends all his time with the workers. He can have a big influence on his brigade. But nothing is done in this respect. Nobody works with masters, nobody teaches them, or guides them, and they appoint random people to those positions.

I would think that one would need to pay special attention to building organizations. They have membership littered with foreign elements, and a fast turnover of workers as well as the managerial staff. At the construction site, which we visited, the manager was most likely a saboteur. I can give you one example, where when there was a conversation about one worker joining the party, the manager said to him, - of course, join the party, but keep in mind that there is the party maximum. Nobody knew who he was. When we were there, he would go from one group to another and talk to workers. For example, he would ask them, how much money do you get? The worker would respond, I get 600 marks, and he would respond, - and I get 1800. Then they would ask him: who are you anyway? He responded - I am a commercial

employee - while he was the head of the construction organization. So he would say to this worker - you are breaking your back, and getting only 600 marks for it, I am not breaking my back - and I get 1800.

POSPELOV. Did he go from one group to another during the break?

BORISOV. When we got together - our three groups - we realized that he visited each of the groups. We reported about that.

POSPELOV. And you said the workers did not know him?

BORISOV. No, they do not. He never visits with the workers, he stays in his office.

I would like to make some conclusions. First of all, when we spoke with the management and the working class, they stress and emphasize Soviet Union's assistance in their conversations. So that assistance leads to the feelings of dependence, I would even say parasitic dependence. They are confident that they would get what they want anyway, that Russia is rich, and they only need to complain more, and they would get what they want. This came up in many conversations that we had - both with managers and workers. Besides, the workers still have not realized that power is in their hands.

SUSLOV. Therefore - give us more.

BORISOV. They believe that somebody would go, do something, give some orders, and they would carry out those orders, just like soldiers.

I would like to say once more about the influence of families. It is a very serious issue. I asked one comrade - why are you not joining the party? He answered - my wife does not allow me, she says that if you join the party, you will be persecuted.

We believe that if we send more workers delegations to Germany, they would need to be specialized. For example, we experienced certain difficulties at the chemical plant, and at the machine-building plant. Those teams should have progressive people, who would be able to make a practical demonstration.

Now there is a very pleasant enthusiasm at those enterprises. However, if they continue to work as they did before our visit, unquestionably then, they would not see any use from it. Somebody locally should pick it up and cement it with daily work.

Our party meetings were as follows: at the construction site only 50 people were absent; at the machine-building plant in Vildau, slightly over 2,000 out of 3,800 people attended the meeting; in Magdeburg, two thousand people out of eleven and a half thousand attended; in Lein, 3 thousand out of 20 were at the meeting - by the way, in Lein, they held the meeting in the shop, which was the center of all strikes. The meeting went well, without any provocations. After the meeting, it was impossible to leave the shop. They surrounded the delegation, asked. We could feel the warm feelings of the main collective of the working class.

SUSLOV. Did anybody gather you together before your departure from Berlin?

BORISOV. We met at the reception.

SUSLOV. Did you tell them everything, including your criticism?

BORISOV. Yes, we told them everything in detail. At the reception, which was organized in honor of the delegation, we met with comrades from those plants. I can give you this example. Chairmen of the plant committees from Magdeburg and Lein informed us that in those several days the triangle visited the shops several times; they told us how many suggestions they received and that those suggestions were passed on to workers. This is the right way, we have approved it.

SUSLOV. What was the attitude of the workers at your plants to the American provocation?

BORISOV. The first party meeting at the construction site was convened immediately after the publication of the Central Committee statement about the provocation in the newspaper. We did it so that there would have been no meeting in honor of the delegation. Secretary of the party committee read the decision of the Central Committee. We had meetings on that subject at the construction site and at the machine-building plant. The third and the fourth meetings were on the new course; secretaries of party committees or responsible comrades made statements. In Lein, the director made a speech. They condemned the provocation very strongly, especially on the plants in Vildau and Magdeburg, and at the construction site, where there were many sharp speeches. In Lein, we felt some kind of fear that if somebody spoke openly, tomorrow some group might discriminate against him. We had a feeling that there was some kind of powerful underground organization, which carried out some kind of work.

SHELAKHIN. The Sverdlovsk delegation visited four enterprises: power station Klingenberg, Pels plant, Espenheim complex, and Stalin metallurgic complex.

Looking at those enterprises from the perspective of our central question, we have to say that there were few statements at the Stalin metallurgic complex that judged the events of June 17th incorrectly. At the Espenheim complex, at Klingenberg, and at the Pels plant, there were many sharp discussions - we could feel that there was a certain organization at work. At all enterprises, they drafted measures directed at exposing saboteurs and enemies of the working class.

At the Stalin plant, five people from the transportation shop went to get the packages. That question became the center of the meeting. 716 workers discussed that question very sharply. We put it to the vote. 15 people abstained, 3 workers were against, and the rest of workers voted to expel those individuals from the plant. However, they were still working on the day of our departure. One more example. There is a very strong underground organization at the Klingenberg power station, which strongly welcomed the events of June 17th, and which very actively opposes any kind of measures. When we were already leaving Berlin, a delegation came to see us off, and they brought a poster to the terminal. That delegation told us about the work, which they began to do. Here, on this sheet of paper, there is a photo of a man. Below it says who he is, that he has two daughters, who work, one daughter, who is still in school, and that he himself earns 660 marks, and that still, he went to get the American aid. Next, they are going to put this issue for general discussion at the meeting. This will be a very interesting moment, when they begin to expose those people. Unfortunately there are very few of such exposures. They are beginning to expose all kinds of provocateurs, rowdies, and everyone, who is engaged in this kind of activity.

I would like to add something regarding the work of the party and trade union organizations. In very many cases, members of those organizations are scared - they do not go to the people, to the shops, to the work place, to the workers. Moreover, at our last meeting in ... we assigned two activists. But those activists refused to go to the masses. They are afraid of people.

One has to point out that those party and trade union organizations allow freedom of propaganda. They confuse the freedom of propaganda with issues of enemy propaganda, and they believe that since they have freedom of propaganda, anybody can say whatever they want. And as a result, there are active fascists at the Pels plant, who engage in active work. Some of them were arrested after the events of June 17th, but then they were released, and now they have thrown aside all restraint. And despite all this, their secretary of the regional committee believes that since they have freedom of propaganda, anybody can say whatever they want.

The next question. Erfurt is located close to the border, and we should say more about the situation there than what we said about the other meetings. Because we had several unpleasant things happening in Erfurt. The first unpleasant thing happened on Sunday, August 16. We went to Eisen, a town close to the border. We looked at the fortress. And there we saw an unpleasant thing, from our point of view, together with our officers. We walked around for several minutes, and then we were joined by about 12 senior lieutenants. We did not have an interpreter. We were walking, and we were approached by some kind of scholarly man - I do not know his name. He began to tell us something, and one of our officers said - you are lying, do not listen to him, he is a provocateur, he is such and such.

After that we were descended to the square, and we saw a senior lieutenant sitting there, drunk as a skunk, his uniform unbuttoned, his belt hanging down. And that was going on in the place full of people. There were soldiers, officers, local population; there was a good soil for enemy work - the place is very close to the border. We walked by. Then we saw two senior lieutenants, who started playing soccer on the field, where cars would pass, and people walked. And that game was accompanied with dirty swearing. And the last fact. Our last group, with comrade Khimich, stopped at the base of the fortress. They were approached by four people. Two of them, very drunk, stormed into the car. There was a German woman in the car. They demanded: take us to the city. Our interpreter approached them and said that this was the Russian delegation's car, how dared they demand anything? "We are not talking to you," they said. Fortunately, comrade Khimich came just in time, and as a Deputy of the Supreme Soviet, he told them to get out.

Such facts are not conducive to friendship.

SUSLOV. I would ask you to write about these facts separately.

SHELAKHIN. I asked who among them was their superior. I was told that they had no superiors. Of course they did. All of them were senior lieutenants. They told me, "What's the big deal? They guys had a little drink. You are making a big deal out of it."

We came back to the hotel about 8. Suddenly there was a telephone call. We had the secretary of the party organization, and the secretary of the plant committee with us. The secretary of the party organization picked up the phone. Deputy Burgomaster was on the line. He said that there were many people gathered in the park, who were waiting for the Soviet delegation. I was not sure - why such an unexpected invitation. I told the secretary of the party organization, "Hang up the phone and call them back - make sure that this is for real." He called them back and said that they were indeed waiting for us. We consulted with comrades and decided that we had to go, it would have been improper not to, especially because comrades from Vatsburg saw that there were many people when they were coming back. We got in the car. In the park, there were about 20 to 30 boys, and no public whatsoever. They really were preparing for that meeting for two days, and the plan was finalized by Secretary of the local committee comrade

It was clear to us that it was a provocation, prepared in order to provoke us. The



population of the town knew that the Soviet delegation had arrived, but nonetheless nobody said anything. The people went home believing that the Soviet delegation simply did not show up, and we were not even informed about it. It was a fact of a provocative order. By the way, when they discussed it at their bureau, we told them that we did not understand such behavior. Next day they came and apologized, but all the conversation was concluded by saying that it was all because of Shvint, who was not a smart person, who made many promises, but has not done anything. However, at the same time they were saying that it looked somewhat suspicious. We mentioned that when we reported about the results of our trip.

Overall, in V the situation was not good on a whole number of issues, not only those that I have mentioned.

The issue of party meetings. Many people, over 800, turned up for the meeting, but from our point of view it did not go well, even though the chairman of the plant committee himself had prepared that meeting. The reason was that we raised a question if it was possible to elect delegates from shops, so it would be like a conference, because you cannot hold a full meeting when the enterprise works in three shifts. We discussed this issue for a long time, and then we decided that they would elect 50% of the participants, and the other 50% will consist of trade union and party activists. We agreed with that composition. We worked on that, and the conference went very well, although the substance of the conference itself was not too good, because after the first speech, the chairman of the plant committee said - does anybody have any questions, please ask questions, who wants to speak? Nobody wanted to speak or ask any questions. Then he said quite helplessly - come on, comrades, ask questions, what else can we do? That situation developed in front of a large audience. It was all because they never prepare their meetings, but just let things go their way. They do not understand what it means to prepare a workers' meeting.

One more comment regarding the fact that we constantly heard requests to come to the Soviet Union to see how our people in similar branches of industry live and work. They repeatedly spoke about such wishes. We believe that such measure as accelerating the exchange of delegations now would be conducive to progress of the work that we had begun. It would be a mistake to say that everything has been already done. We have just started the work, and this work has to be continued.

GOROSHKIN. I would like to touch on a number of issues. First of all, I would like to speak about the following issue - the revanchist and I would even say racist attitudes are still alive and well in the minds of many workers in the German Democratic Republic. What allows me to make such a conclusion? In those discussions that I led - and I think that it was the most successful form of our work because it gave us an opportunity to consider all the issues openly and in detail - they asked such questions as how far exactly will the German border be moved, and also regarding Oder and Neice. Some people openly said that the border was too close to Berlin, and that a pilot could turn off his engine at the border, and still be able to land at a Berlin airfield. There were a lot of discussions to the effect that it would be nice to combine the German culture with the Russian economy. By this, they emphasized the superiority of the Germans, that the German race was the premium race, and therefore, it would be good if we gave it our economy. In the minds of German workers, there are lots of things that have been already mentioned here today, and therefore, it is not surprising that their reaction to the events of June 17th is very diverse. Some of them, however, express the absolutely correct judgment that that was a pure provocation arranged by America and West German imperialists aimed at weakening the democratic Germany, and that that provocation did not help the course of peace. A significant group of workers approaches the issue in very simplistic terms, and simply says that we are blowing the issue out of proportion, that nothing terrible happened, that everything was quite logical. There is also a group of people, who openly said that the events of June 17th were correct, and that they were the

necessary and unavoidable measure to put pressure on the government. They speak about it directly and openly - that if it was not for those events, nothing would have happened, there would have been no new course whatsoever. I am summarizing. This is the summary of the statements that we heard from the workers.

What should be the focus of attention here? We believe that the enemy's work now did not subside at all, to the contrary, it has been only intensified. How can you explain it? Those conversations that mistrust toward the measures developed by the government of the German Democratic Republic cannot be explained by anything other than the enemy's work. It is clear that the enemy is sowing the seeds of mistrust to all the measures that were implemented, and says that the new course will exist only on paper. All this enjoys wide circulation among the workers. They also try to paint black everything positive that had been already done. They do not want to notice anything positive that had been done. Conversations are being cultivated among large groups of workers to the effect that the new course is a result of the events of June 17th. Those conversations have not been stopped even now. I attended the Plenum of the Central Executive Committee. They received demands from several collectives: raise the pay, or face a strike.

In our view, it is the result of the enemy's work. Comrades have already said how we were received. I would like to speak about the fact that on a number of plants they were told that the Moscow agitators had arrived - they are not workers, they were selected in order to confuse your minds. There were cases where the workers saw us like that, but then, when our comrades operated their machines, and showed their skills, everything turned to 180 degrees. Undoubtedly, somebody was sowing mistrust there. This is not just an accident. We did not see it at one plant only. We were surprised by the kind of olympic quiescence of the administration. They all agree with the need for an extensive explanatory work regarding the new course; they all understand this need, but beyond that understanding, they have not done anything concrete at their plants. We stayed there for almost a full month - they did nothing at the plants; no serious explanatory work had been done; they were trying to find all kinds of possible objective reasons for that. For example, they gave us a reason that all of their experienced trade union members were summoned to the central territorial districts.

Our delegation is of the opinion that they are simply looking for objective reasons instead of really engaging in the work with masses to expose the provocateurs. Their high-level leaders, even if they come to the plant, just make a speech and disappear through another door, and never speak to anybody.

Such officials as secretaries of regional committees, and secretary of party committees still act like this. I will allow myself to give you two examples. They are very characteristic of a large group of the GDR workers. In Vildau, I spoke with a secretary of a party committee. A large group of German comrades was present during our conversation. We talked about workers' meetings. He told us - we are not even thinking about calling a meeting. I asked - why? He answered - I cannot guarantee, there could be provocations. I asked him - what do you mean by provocation - are they going to throw iron bars at us? He says - no. Then I told him - if you are afraid that they would attack us with questions - we will be able to respond. That shows you what kind of communications exist between the party committee and the collective. I have to tell you that the meeting there went exceptionally well, it was business like and sharp.

Or let us take the plant in Lein. It is one of the biggest complexes. It employs 28 thousand workers. The first secretary of the regional committee raised the question - what should be done with provocateurs. This question was raised in the presence of a large number of German comrades. I responded - first of all, you need to know those provocateurs, I do not think that they would come out and openly say - let us do away with the democratic rights, sometimes they are smarter than this. In particular, I can

give you an example. They sent a very good-natured old man to our comrades. He asked them some questions, for example - you are saying that there are no prisoners of war in the Soviet Union, but my son is a prisoner of war, and I send him letters and packages. Our comrades had an answer immediately, they said - your son is obviously a war criminal, he was convicted, and is now serving his term. The secretary of the regional committee got to the point where he is afraid to speak with workers, and does not identify himself. You can make your own judgment - he would come, he would speak, nobody knows that he is the secretary of the regional committee, and so that does not put him under any responsibility. Here is again the communications between the party leadership and the workers' collective. And this is what is most interesting. We see a connection here with the fact that a number of leaders, especially union leaders, have a very peculiar attitude to the events of June 17. They still do not realize that it was a very serious political event. How can I prove it? I can prove it by what they are saying about the qualitative changes in the working class. I must say that these qualitative changes have indeed occurred. Now the most conscientious workers, party members have been promoted to leadership positions within the party along with many former officials of the National-Socialists. However, this qualitative change requires that we strengthen our attention and alertness at the plant. For example, we were told that at some plants, 3 thousand workers out of 8 thousand were fascists. Same situation in Expenheim, and also in Lein. Leaders of those enterprises say: give us an easier treatment - we have fascists working here. That attitude is to be found not only among secretaries of party organizations, such feelings are being cultivated among leaders and officials of the central council of trade unions, and in the party organs.

Now as far as meetings are concerned. At many plants, we were not satisfied by the meetings. Here we should also bear some responsibility for that. We were not able to organize them. We gave them some advice, but they took it incorrectly. They gave us some representatives. They were not bad, they took care of our accommodations in the hotel, made sure we were well fed, but they did not send any people of authority, such as representatives of the Central Committee, or a prominent party figure from the Central Committee, in order to organize that meeting properly. Because that was the most important political action. I could explain it by the fact that we might have exaggerated the importance of the June 17 events. We came to think that maybe we were incorrect, although in our view, our judgment corresponded with reality.

Why would they not organize a necessary rebuff to that subversive escapade? We believe that there exists a very easy treatment of party and trade union officials at the plants on the part of the higher leadership. I can give you an example where they did not listen to the healthy criticism coming from the plants. I told this story at the conference in Berlin. Secretary of the party organization at the transformer plant in the past was a member of the Communist Party, currently he is a member of the United party. He spent 13 years in a concentration camp. They raise the issue of norms. It is hard to even imagine a more irresponsible attitude. The workers took a pledge to increase the norm by 15%. Several days later, the Ministry sends them directives to increase the norms by additional 17%. I spoke with that secretary of party organization. "You are a party leader after all, you should have gone to the district party committee with such an issue." And he tells me, "I went to the district party committee, and they told me - implement the directives, or we will expel you from the party. There were the Central Committee representatives there, they also pressured me. It is not a Bolshevik party here - you will not get to the Central Committee." It is a fact that they do not listen to healthy signals.

Now the second question from Lein. We did not think that their secretary was a dishonest person. He is just a young, beginning worker. They have changed three secretaries in one year. Judging by his actions, when he was sent to the plant, he jumped in the water, although he did not know how to swim, and nobody was helping him, nobody would give him advice in practical matters. What have they done to him? On the second day after our departure, they removed him from the position of the

secretary of regional committee. We simply told them how to, in our opinion, do things better, and they just removed him from his position. Such an attitude to people is harmful, and it is not conducive to any progress. On the 15th, we had a reception; there was a representative of that plant committee. He said, "Look, you came to visit, and the secretary of the regional committee is gone."

And the last comment to the delegation. I think that our delegation worked in concord and with an understanding of our responsibility. Undoubtedly, we saw many ideas in terms of a sharper position toward the events, which are taking place in the German Democratic Republic in the minds of the workers, with whom our comrades spoke. But the main result is that they will never forget that the Soviet people have crushed the myth about the German superior qualities, which they had beaten in their heads over the last 12-13 years. Our visit will not pass without trace in the minds of some workers. There were many opinions to the effect that the Germans are superior to others, that they know technology better than anybody. I must say that our comrades have shown the German workers that not only we are good agitators, we also know our trades very well. As the leader of the delegation, I would like to thank our comrades very much for their work.

BLAZHENOV. Comrades! What is my personal conclusion after the visit to Germany? First of all, we state with confidence that the majority of the GDR workers do not want war, and want friendship with the Soviet Union. During our private conversations, we would always have a group of workers approach us, and the conversation would turn to the issue of war. All of them would respond unanimously - no, no. We do not want any war in any circumstances. Then we would ask them - why did you then allow the provocation, which took place on June 17th? And then they would be trying to get out of replying. In particular, they were trying to dodge the question of what each of them was doing during that provocation. They would begin saying things like one comrade was supposed to work the second shift, but the public transport stopped working, and so he was unable to get to the plant, another one had a day off, another worker went home. When we asked an old lady - what was she doing on June 17th - she said she took her bike and rode home. Then we asked her - and how old are you? She said she was 62. Thus it looked like everyone went home, and nobody was involved in the events. Some of them said - yes we took part in the event of June 17, we took part in the strike - although they would say that that escapade was not directed against the Soviet Union, but against their own government. There were a lot of such statements, especially at Berlin enterprises. In the periphery, we visited the chemical complex and Max Hutte plant, it was not as clearly obvious there, but at enterprises in Berlin, as a rule, there were similar statements - if the government made a mistake, that government should be removed. We tried to persuade them that that government was their government, that it represented their interests. When we formulated the question in a direct and straightforward manner - you should correct your government, and if you do not want to have your own workers' government, then why did you fail to correct the Hitler government, which eventually led to the national catastrophe. Then they would start to move away, to try to get out of replying.

I can cite several concrete statements, in particular, statements of some of the workers. At the October 7th plant, milling-machine operator Dreier stated that for him it did not matter what kind of government there was, as long as he could earn more. We convened a meeting at the October 7th plant. Many workers came to the meeting, and Dreier himself came also, and sat in the first row. He obviously was interested how our delegation would react when somebody expressed their ideas so openly that he did not care what kind of government they had. And when Comrade Platonov said at the meeting that we did not agree with such a statement by Comrade Dreier, he felt that the issue was now in workers' hands, and Dreier himself started to shift uneasily in his chair.

SUSLOV. He was not happy that he sat in the first row.

POSPELOV. This is the essence of reformism.

BLAZHENOV. Many workers stated that there would never be another provocation like that one, and that Germany would never see another June 17.

I would like to dwell on the following question. Maybe I am making premature conclusions, but it seems to me that the work for unity and purity of the membership of the United Party of Germany is not as thorough as it should be. In particular, in our conversations, workers spoke about it, and cited examples; they asked us how did our party fight for the purity of its ranks, citing the example of Beria. They were saying that it was done differently in their party. For example, here is a party member, but who was he in the past, what was he doing - nobody knows. He incurred a party penalty, and then you see him being promoted to a position of authority.

Here is a conversation with machine-operator Paul Geine. He was promoted and graduated from Ulbricht Academy; now he works as head of a section. He said that his work was very difficult.

There was a party member, former lieutenant of the fascist army, who used to head a regional committee. During the events of June 17 he behaved well, and then did the following thing - he went to Berlin and received 7 American gifts. They started to look into his case, to expel him from the party. While they were at it, he ran to Western Germany. Geine said that he informed the district party committee about him before, but there were certain people in the district party committee, who support such individuals and do not take any appropriate measures.

This allows one to make a conclusion that the struggle for purity is insufficient. And workers also stated that during the events, not all party members took firm positions.

The second very important question is the question of salaries. This issue could be illustrated by examples from the Bolen chemical complex, where turners work literally side by side. When they experience shortage to turners in the mechanical shops, they take them from the coal plant, and so they work side by side, but their wages do not change. The workers, with whom we spoke, stated, "We are in favor of the new course, but it is incorrect that there is such a system of wages."

Let me go back to the conversation with engine-driver Geine. He said: "On the big enterprises, engine-drivers of narrow railways receive such high salaries that now engine-drivers from wide railways are leaving and going to enterprises of coal industry. As a result, we have a shortage of drivers." The issue of wages is very important. They need to look into this issue with great care.

In conclusion, I would like to talk about sending delegations. Undoubtedly, this practice of sending delegations should continue, but delegations should be organized by profession. Of course, because I understand the work of railway workers much better, I did not have as many impressions from visiting the machine-building and metallurgical plants.

MOKRUSHIN. I would like to dwell of the issue of the use of engineering and technical personnel. Heads of shops and engineers have now taken waiting positions; however, the party and trade union organizations are not doing anything in order to move them from those waiting positions. I think that if they tried to involve some of the engineering and technical personnel who enjoy the trust of the administration at the enterprises in party work, that would have a substantial effect. I can give you an example of holding the meeting at the Max Hutte plant.

There, we suggested to our comrade, who accompanied us, that he should talk to the director, to summon all heads of shops and masters to help organize and conduct the meeting. That had the anticipated effect. The administration will have an influence on the masses, but it needs to be kept under control.

I would like to draw your attention once again to the work with youth. The issue of work with youth is one of the main burning topics of the day. Heads of the delegations who spoke before me have already mentioned this issue, but I would still like to give this concrete example. At the transformer plant we met one locksmith. During our conversation, we discovered that he was a student at a machine-building trade school in Ilmenau. Here is how he reacted to the events of June 17th, and the characteristic example that he gave us. He said that at his school, those events affected everyone, and students reacted to them with interest. In particular, he was very disturbed by the behavior of students in Lena, who threw their textbooks out of the windows. He meant books by Marx and Engels. He asked us how we felt about those books, whether we consider them sacred. We explained to him that the teaching of Marxism-Leninism was indeed sacred for us.

I would also like to touch upon the issue of the press. Comrades spoke about it at the previous meetings, but nobody mentioned it today for some reason. I must say that there is a clear mistrust toward the press; moreover, that mistrust exists not only because the press publishes all kinds of fables, but also because, for example, at the Max Hutte plant, one worker said that they had written to the newspaper with a request as far back as March 26, and they still did not get an answer. He asked us - what is the practice in the Soviet Union? We responded that if an article is not published in the paper, a written response is sent to the author. If there are certain reasons why the article cannot be published, the editorial board informs the author about it.

One more issue that I would like to draw your attention to is the relationship between party and trade union organizations. My opinion might be mistaken, but I had an impression that at the Max Butte enterprises, the trade union and the party organizations work absolutely separately from each other, one cannot feel any firm control of the party organization. Here is one example. Because the Max Butte plant did not participate in the demonstration of June 17th, the chairman of the plant committee was awarded 200 marks. They have a strong party organization there. What does it mean - strong? They have a very knowledgeable person at the helm. So they summoned him and suggested that he should return the money. He created a certain opinion around it, even convened a Plenum of the plant committee with the purpose that everybody expressed their wish to demand that he gets that money. I have an impression that after the events of June 17th, at a whole number of enterprises, the party and the trade union organizations did not strengthen their work, but the contrary, were kind of frightened, and started to follow the tail of the most reactionary part of workers, maybe even the clearly provocateur part. I have this example. Here is a statement by Sheffer - a party functionary: "After the events of June 17th, the party organization started to give in to workers on many issues. "Many people believe that if there was no strike at their plant, it should mean that everything was OK at their enterprise.

ISAEV. In the last days before our departure, we were invited to one scientific organization. It was a voluntary scientific society. Comrade Ivashchenko and I spoke with people there for a long time, and I would like to point out the following. Their knowledge of organizational forms is very weak, and they have very little literature. They were asking us to help with literature on forms of organization, on how our scientific societies work, what kind of organization they have, and most importantly, to help with technical literature.

Second issue. I was very surprised by how poor the educational work inside the party was. I spoke with deputy secretary of the Karl Libknecht plant when we were on the

steamboat. It is a transformer plant. The secretary is in charge of propaganda. I spoke with him, and asked him, "How did party members hold up on June 17?" He said that out of 250 people, approximately 90 people remained on the plant, together with the non-affiliated. I asked him, what he thought about it. He said, "Why do you say that - our party is not a Bolshevik party - what can you demand from it?" He was trying to somehow justify the fact that their party members were not well prepared. I inquired about the system of party education. "You are in charge of propaganda. How do you structure your work?" He was unable to answer.

I observed the same situation at another plant, in Lein. The same problem everywhere - the educational work among party members is carried out very poorly. And when workers both in Lein and Vildau say that had somebody worked with them, those events would have never happened, it means that the party members feel their own weakness. In addition to that, both in Lein and in Vildau, one can feel the alienation between the party member and the non-affiliated workers. Party members are afraid to go to speak with the non-affiliated. We are used to speak about advance propaganda. There, they do not even have defense propaganda, let alone advance one. They are simply avoiding workers. That is why at every plant, they told us, "Be careful, there might be a provocation there." They were surprised that we would go to a plant without knowing it, and that we were ready to answer any questions. When they saw our methods and the strength of our answers, the provocations seized. I really wanted to admonish one of them in front of the people to teach him how to respond to questions, in order to expose him. However, as soon as they feel the strength of the answer, they leave, and the conversation continues with workers.

The general impression is positive. Their working class is strong and skilled.

I would like to mention one more thing. Our comrade Seminsky demonstrated his skills on all the plants; we should say he did it well, the demonstrations were very successful; many people came to watch them. Who was most interested in his work? The youth. When we asked the leadership of the party and trade union organizations, why was mainly youth who were interested, they said that their working class was conservative; old workers were used to working slowly, and it is difficult for them to understand the new things. Then we told them - work with the young people, let the old workers live on, and work as they want, and you should focus on the youth. We also held discussions at educational complexes. Those educational complexes were large - 1500 and 1000 people each. Good young people, and well-organized educational process. They have wonderful workshops. They also have good mentors. The young people welcome new methods. We came to one plant and saw a machine-tool with a wreath on top of it. I noticed it and asked - what is the wreath doing here? A manager came to me and said that they received a request for that machine-tool, and they were told that the request was urgent. The workers worked day and night, and had built it very fast, and now it sits where it was. Our guys made the wreath and wrote on it: "Sleep in peace," took a picture of it, and sent it to the newspaper. I said - this is a good method, this is our method.

I believe that the main emphasis should be made on the youth. They welcome the progressive method, listens to the words of the best workers; if you work with the youth, it would be easier for you to introduce the new methods.

ISAEV. Cinema and theater represent the best means to educate the masses. But how do they use cinema and theater in the German Democratic Republic. To tell the truth, I did not go to the theater, although I have been to the movies once. Before the feature presentation, they had a man, who told funny stories. He spoke for a very long time, about 40 minutes. There were many people in the movie theater, they were constantly clapped their hands and applauded. My interpreter translated the essence of that comedian's jokes. It was all vulgarity, no ideological or educational meaning in his stories.

Now about the clubs. In the club, various artists demonstrated their skills, and there was an acrobatic performance. Vulgarly was all they showed in their performances. One can make a conclusion that there is no educational work being done in the GDR. They show old movies that were made before Hitler, which have no educational meaning. They show those movies, whereas they could show better movies. There is a whole number of wonderful movies made in our countries of people's democracy. For example, our Soviet movies that educate the working masses.

I consulted with my interpreter. She is the wife of Deputy Education Minister. I wanted to go to the circus, but she told me, "Why would you go? You would not get anything other than disappointment. Our circus is different from your Soviet circus." She lived in Leningrad, knows our theater and circus. Not only they have meaningless numbers there, they are straight harmful for a Soviet man.

Nothing has been said here about the pioneers. We visited the pioneer camp of the Stalin plan, and the Dzerzhinsky pioneer camp. There were 500 pioneers in the camps. We had a very good impression. First of all, the pioneers gave us a very warm welcome, and when we passed the greetings from our Soviet pioneers, they erupted into an ovation. You can see that the pioneers - children of workers, and of engineering and technical workers - are very positive about the Soviet Union. However, at the same time, they do not engage in the kind of work with the pioneers as we do in the Soviet Union. Pioneers' dreams are limited to very modest demands. I asked one girl, who just graduated from school, what would she want to do. She said, "I want to be a nurse in a hospital." "Why not a doctor," I asked her. I talked with another pioneer, and asked him - what do you want to be? "I want to be a locksmith." - "Why not an engineer? Our boys and girls want to be engineers, astronomers, professors." "No, we simply do not know that you could study to be an engineer, or a doctor." In this aspect, they do not do any work with the children.

Next, on sharing of experience. At the last banquet that we had with the Germans, they complained that we had the Stakhanov movement, we had new work methods, and they are not informed about those methods, they have no literature, nobody speaks about it. Later I found out from other people that they do have literature about the Stakhanov methods of work, but neither the technical, nor the party, nor trade union leaders use that literature to teach workers about new Soviet methods of work.

At the power station in Berlin, the workers also wanted to learn from the Soviet workers how to bum powdered fuel in the ovens. The workers asked to share that experience with them.

ROMANENKO. When we spoke with workers, they mainly explained the events of June 17 by the fact that the norms had been reconsidered mistakenly. I did not study the technical details of that issue, but as a technologist with experience, I can say that their intensity of labor is extremely low, and even if those 30% had been implemented, they would still be unable to raise the intensity of labor to the level of our well-organized enterprise. Their entire trouble and mistake was in the way they have done it - the reconsideration was done without any preparation. Reconsideration itself was not as much of a mistake as the fact that they did not prepare that campaign, did not do it the way we do such things in the Soviet Union.

SUSLOV. They made the decision on May 8 that all the production norms would be reconsidered throughout the country beginning on June 1, but workers found out about it only on June 16, when they received their paychecks.

ROMANENKO. Moreover, there were certain excesses, which have already been mentioned here, and I am not going to repeat it.



Now regarding ideology. The reality is such that for a regular German speaking about Fascism means speaking about war, and they are really fed up with war, they are scared of war, and they do not want any war. This is the overwhelming majority of people. However, there are many Social Democrats among them, especially among the old continuous workers. And they are not trying to conceal the fact that they were Social Democrats; they would say: I have been working at this plant for 30 years, and I have been a Social Democrat for 27 or 30 years. I spoke with one team leader. A large group of workers gathered around us as he was saying - why did they invented the United Party, when we used to the Social Democratic party, and it still functions. We need to get in touch with the West and unite the German people. By the way, he spoke deliberately, and one could see that that was not the first time he was saying such things. Then we said that the Social Democratic party was an anti-Lenin, anti-Marxist, reformist, and petty-bourgeois party, and that the socialist parties could not have anything in common with the Social Democratic party, and that just to the contrary, they were two antipodes. When I explained it all in very easy to understand terms, he simply ran away. And the workers were very interested in those issues.

I must say that they are experiencing a significant bias toward the issues of the day both in the party organizations and in the Central Committee. This bias toward the current issues like the norms, the new course, has completely torn them away from the main issues of political work. Let us take for example the issue of work with the party activists. It is a very serious drawback, and it has to be corrected without any delays. In addition, this kind of work should be carried out in popular forms, because in our conversations with the party activists we became convinced that there is a lot of interest to those issues among the activists - they ask questions, and express there interest - but they apparently do not have time to read the thick volumes, and they are not used to doing that as well. Therefore, they should have some popular literature on those issues, at least on such subject as the reformist movement, and how it differs from the socialist parties.

Let me continue. There is a great desire to see the Soviet Union among the long-time workers, and especially among the young people. When we showed them our photographs of the high-rise buildings, the university, the building on the Smolenskaya Square, some of them were very skeptical - they tried to look closely to see whether those were real buildings or simply pictures of models. Nonetheless, we had an impression that we should send people to visit Moscow, but not the young people who are not very popular there - the average age of workers is between 50 and 55.

Among the former prisoners of war, there are people who helped us a lot, but there are also some of them who lived in the god-forsaken comers of the Soviet Union, and themselves doubted whether the Soviet Union could have such buildings.

I would like to make the following proposal. There was a decision to release the prisoners of war. It would be good to drive them around Moscow. We are releasing them in order that they did not get to the Western zone. Therefore, it is important to drive them around Moscow, to show our buildings to them, let them touch the buildings with their own hands, and then send them to the plants.

PODVEZKO. When we came to Magdeburg, we went straight to the Supreme Commissar. They immediately told us about the public mood, how many fascists there were, how many SS members, who was the enemy, and so on. The General offered to give us a full company of disguised officers, who would accompany us to the plants. We had an impression that he was thinking how to save our lives.

However, I have to say, that we have won a great deal of trust at that plant; and we were saying good byes with tears in our eyes. It appears to me that our comrades,

who are sitting there, live only by dispatches, and they inform you accordingly. There are people among the working class who can be relied upon, but they need to be touch with them. On one of the plants, we were passing through a casting shop three times, and we noticed that there were some women, who looked at us from under the brows, and did not want to talk. We asked them, "Tell us, do your husbands object to you working here?" they responded that they had no husbands, that they were killed under Rzhev. "And why did they go to Rzhev?" "To defend the Motherland." It has been 8 years since the war, and there still the opinion that persists in the German people that they went to Russia to defend their Motherland. We need to pay more serious attention to this issue.

It tells you that some kind of Hitler or some other kind of ideology is still alive there.

I would also like to mention the fact that their Central Committee and the trade union organizations treat their functionaries very softly. Comrade Ulbricht said that they needed criticism at party meetings, but I had an impression that we simply need to attack them - they are so alienated from the workers, they do not engage in any work at all.

SUSLOV. What can I say? Our comrades made interesting and comprehensive observations and generalizations; it would be fair to say that they did a good work. Our opinion is to thank you for this work. Of course, none of us, and none of you really thought that it would be possible to turn everything around there. It is hard to imagine. But we are deeply convinced, and you are convinced too that the visit of the delegation left a certain trace. You cannot do everything for the Germans. Now it is up to the German comrades. I mean, first of all, to their leaders. It is up to their party organization, their trade union organization to solidify the results of our trip. But it is out of doubt that our delegates carried out substantial work; that they worked well, conscientiously, with a feeling of great responsibility. I spoke about it with Germans both here and there, and with our Soviet officials Semenov, Yudin, and others. They all give very high marks to the results of the delegation's work.

We need to continue our work for exchange of delegations. Now we should invite the Germans to come here.

VOICES FROM THE AUDIENCE. That is right, workers only.

SUSLOV. We should invite several workers' delegations, probably miners, especially from Vismut. We should also invite chemists, machine-builders, electricians - to bring in several delegations over the period of several months. We should invite them to the celebration of the October Anniversary. Comrade Shvernik says that they are preparing such a proposal.

Since the delegations have accumulated very interesting impressions and deep observations about their trip, we would ask the delegations to write down a summary of main conclusions regarding the political mood among the German workers, the weaknesses in the political work there, and the work that you have done. I do not think that it is necessary for all members of delegations to stay in Moscow until the memoranda are ready, I think you should not do that. I would ask you to entrust it to the heads of the delegations, but in the following manner so that you all meet in delegations today or tomorrow to develop a draft, to listen to each other's comments, to share impressions once more. And then you can entrust your leaders to write memoranda according to the plans. If anybody wishes to stay in Moscow for a couple of days, though, I think, you would allow them.

SHVERNIK. Of course.

SUSLOV. We could even get tickets to attend the session for the comrades who would like to stay. All this can be done.

Now let me wish you success in your work on our Soviet land.

VOICE FROM THE AUDIENCE. What should we do back home? Should we make statements?

SUSLOV. It would not be bad. It would be good if you said that you did this great work, and that it received such and such marks.

We will take all your generalizations into account. Of course, you did not issue any orders, and we will neither, but we will find ways to do it. So far we have been able to find such ways to pass the information. So be it.