Printed and published by
WORKERS' PUBLISHING HOUSE
172 Wandsworth Road,
London SW8, England

ENVER HOXHA

The Khrushchevites

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Memoirs

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The present edition of "The Khrushchevites", published by Workers' Publishing House, is a direct reprint of the English-language edition published at the "8 Nëntori" Publishing House, Tirana, 1980, by the Institute of Marxist-Leninist Studies at the Central Committee of the Party of Labour of Albania.

"The Khrushchevites" is another book in the series of the memoirs of Comrade Enver Hoxha. This work, written in 1976, comprises the author's memoirs and personal impressions of his direct meetings and other various contacts with the leaders of the CPSU and the other communist and workers' parties during the years 1953-1961.

"The Khrushchevites" is published in Albanian as well as in several foreign languages.

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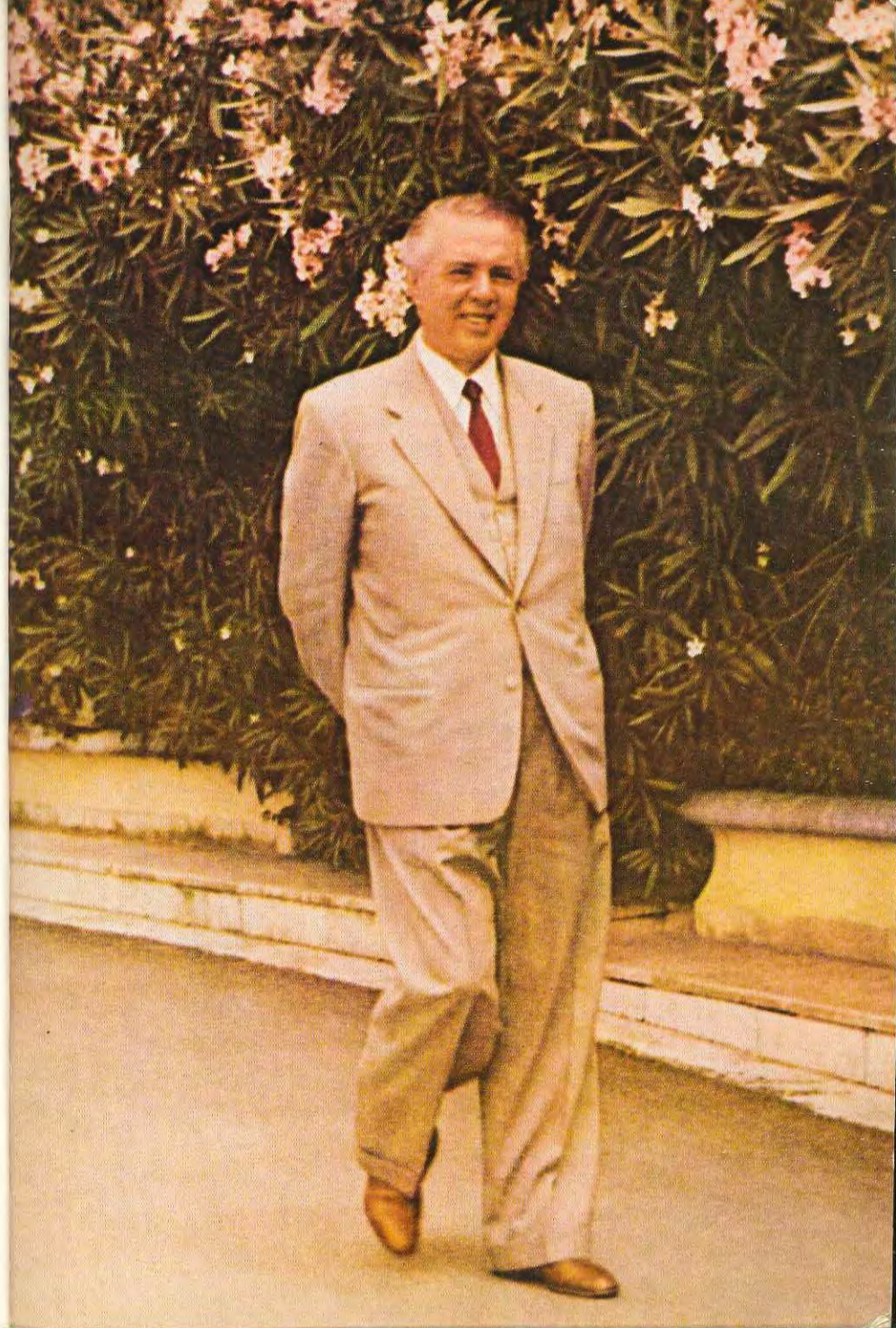

Two decades have gone by since the Meeting of 81 communist and workers' parties of the world, which has gone down in history as one of the most important events in the struggle which is being waged between Marxism-Leninism and opportunism. At this Meeting our Party opened fire on the revisionist group of Khrushchev which was ruling in the Soviet Union and struggling in every way to subjugate the entire international communist movement, all the communist and workers' parties of the world, and set them on its road of betrayal.

Our open and principled attack on Khrushchevite modern revisionism at the Meeting in November 1960 was not a surprise move. On the contrary, it was the logical continuation of the Marxist-Leninist stand which the Party of Labour of Albania had always maintained, was the transition to a new, higher stage of the struggle which our Party had long been waging for the defence and consistent application of Marxism-Leninism.

From the time the Khrushchevites took power to the moment when we came out in open confrontation with them, the relations of the Party of Labour of Albania with the Communist Party of

the Soviet Union passed through a complicated process, with zig zags, with periods of exacerbation and periods of temporary normalization. This was the process of each getting to know the other through encounters in the course of the struggle and the continual clash of views. After the Khrushchevite revisionist putschists came to power, our Party, basing itself on the events that were taking place there, on certain stands and actions, which were ill-defined at first, but which, step by step, were becoming more concrete, began to sense the great danger of this clique of renegades, which hid behind a deafening pseudo-Marxist demagogy, and to understand that this clique was becoming a great threat both to the cause of the revolution and socialism as a whole, and to our country.

We became more and more aware that the views and stands of Nikita Khrushchev on important questions of the international communist movement and the socialist camp differed from our views and stands. The 20th Congress of the CPSU, in particular, was the event which made us adopt a stand of opposition to Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites. As Marxist-Leninists and in a Marxist-Leninist way, time after time we had pointed out to the Soviet leaders our reservations and objections to their conciliatory stands towards the Yugoslav revisionists, about many aspects of their unprincipled foreign policy, about many of their wrong and completely un-Marxist stands and

actions on major international problems, etc. Although they sometimes feigned a retreat, they continued on their course, while we refused to swallow what they served up to us, but on the contrary, defended our views and implemented our internal and external policy.

With the passage of time this brought about that we became better acquainted with each other's positions, and neither side trusted the other. For our part, we continued to preserve our friendship with the Soviet Union, with its peoples, continued to build socialism according to the teachings of Lenin and Stalin, continued as before to defend the great Stalin and his work and to fight unwaveringly against Yugoslav revisionism. Our existing doubts about the Soviet revisionists increased and deepened from day to day, because day by day Khrushchev and company were acting in opposition to Marxism-Leninism.

Khrushchev was aware of our reservations about the 20th Congress, and about the policy which he followed with the Titoites, imperialism, etc., but his tactic was not to hasten to exacerbate the situation with us Albanians. He hoped to profit from the friendship which we displayed for the Soviet Union to take the Albanian fortress from within and to get us into the bag through smiles and threats, through giving us some reduced credits, as well as through pressure and blockades. Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites thought: «We

know the Albanians. However stubborn they are, however hot-tempered they are, they have nowhere else to turn to, because we have them pinned up and, if they prove difficult, if they don't obey us, then we will show our teeth, we'll cut them off and boycott them, and overthrow all those who oppose us.»

The Khrushchev group prepared this course of action, promoted and deepened it, thinking that it would achieve its aim «quietly and gently» and «without any fuss». However, the reality was convincing them that this tactic was yielding no fruit, and thus their impatience and arrogance began to emerge. The situation became tense. Then it was «eased» only to grow tense again. We understood where this course would lead Khrushchev and company, therefore we strengthened our vigilance, and while replying to manifestations of their despotism, we tried to prolong the «peace» while safeguarding our principles.

But the moment came when the cup was full to overflowing. The «peace», which had seemed to exist before, could continue no longer. Khrushchev went openly on to the attack to subjugate and force us to follow his utterly opportunist line. Then we told Khrushchev bluntly and loudly «No!», we said «Stop!» to his treacherous activity. This marked the beginning of a long and very difficult struggle in which our Party, to its glory and the glory of the people who gave birth to it

and raised it, consistently defended the interests of its socialist Homeland, persistently defended Marxism-Leninism and the genuine international communist movement.

At that time many people did not understand the stand of the Party of Labour of Albania; there were even well-wishers of our Party and country who considered this action hasty, some had not yet completely understood the Khrushchevites' betrayal, some others thought that we broke away from the Soviet Union to link up with China, etc. Today, not only the friends, but also the enemies of socialist Albania have understood the principled character of the uninterrupted struggle which our Party has waged and is waging against opportunists of every hue.

Time has fully confirmed how right the Party of Labour of Albania was to fight the Khrushchevites and refuse to follow their line. To this fight, which demanded and still demands great sacrifices, our small Homeland owes the freedom and independence it prizes so highly and its successful development on the road of socialism. Only thanks to the Marxist-Leninist line of our Party did Albania not become and never will become a protectorate of the Russians or anyone else.

Since 1961 our Party of Labour has not had any link or contact with the Khrushchevites. In the future, too, it will never establish party relations with them, and we do not have and will never

have even state relations with the Soviet social-imperialists. As up to now, our Party will consistently wage the ideological and political struggle for the exposure of these enemies of Marxism-Leninism. We acted in this way both when Khrushchev was in power and when he was brought down and replaced by the Brezhnev clique. Our Party had no illusions, but on the contrary, was quite certain that Brezhnev, Kosygin, Suslov, Mikoyan, etc., who had been Khrushchev's closest collaborators, who had jointly organized and put into practice the revisionist counter-revolution in the Soviet Union, would persist in their former line.

They eliminated Khrushchev with the aim of protecting Khrushchevism from the discredit which the master himself was bringing upon it with his endless buffoonery, eliminated the «father» with the aim of implementing the complete restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union with greater intensity and effectiveness.

In this direction Brezhnev and company have proved to be «worthy pupils» of their ill-famed teacher. Within the Soviet Union they established and strengthened the dictatorial fascist regime, while they turned the foreign policy of their state into a policy of great-state chauvinism, expansion and hegemonism. Under the leadership of the Brezhnev Khrushchevites, the Soviet Union has been turned into an imperialist world power and,

like the United States of America, aims to rule the world. Among the bitter evidence of the utterly reactionary policy of Soviet social-imperialism are the tragic events in Czechoslovakia, the strengthening of the domination of the Kremlin over the countries of the Warsaw Treaty, the deepening of their all-round dependence on Moscow and the extension of the tentacles of Soviet social-imperialism to Asia, Africa and elsewhere.

The correct assessments and forecasts of our Party about the reactionary internal and foreign policy of Brezhnev have been and are being constantly confirmed. The most recent example is Afghanistan, where the Brezhnev Khrushchevites undertook an open fascist aggression and now are trying to quell the flames of the people's war with fire and steel in order to prolong their social-imperialist occupation.

The fact that our small Homeland and people have not suffered the tragic fate of all those who are now languishing under imperialist or social-imperialist slavery is the best testimony to the correctness of the consistent, courageous and principled line which our Party of Labour has always followed.

The merit for this correct course belongs to the whole Party and, in particular, to its leadership, the Central Committee, which, imbued with and loyal to the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, our guiding theory, has always led the Party and

the people correctly. In the great tests which we have had to withstand, the unity of the Party with its leadership and the unity of the people around the Party have been brilliant and have become further tempered. This steel unity gave the Party support and strength in the difficult but glorious struggle against the Khrushchevite revisionists, too. This unity has been and is the foundation of the stability and confidence with which Albania has marched and is marching forward, withstanding the pressure and blackmail, the blandishments and demagogy of enemies of all hues.

As a communist and leader of the Party, I, too, have had to take part actively and make my contribution to all this heroic struggle of our Party. Charged by the Party and its leadership, since the liberation of Albania, and especially during the years 1950-1960, I have headed delegations of the Party and the state many times in official meetings with the Soviet leaders and with the main leaders of other communist and workers' parties. Likewise, many times we have exchanged reciprocal visits, I have taken part in consultations and international meetings of communist parties at which I have expressed and defended the correct line, decisions and instructions of the Party. In all these meetings and visits I have become closely acquainted with glorious, unforgettable leaders, like Stalin, Dimitrov, Gottwald, Bierut, Pieck and others, and likewise, I have had to enter into contact with and know the Khrushchevite traitors, who, through a long and complicated process, gradually usurped power in the Soviet Union and in the former countries of people's democracy respectively.

The relations with them and the stands maintained by our Party during this period have been reflected in the documents of the Party, in my writings which are being published by decision of the Central Committee, as well as in other documents which are found in the Central Archives of the Party. Now I am handing over these notes for publication as my reminiscences and impressions from the many contacts and clashes with the Khrushchevites, which cover the period from 1953, after the death of Stalin, to the end of 1961, when the Khrushchev group broke off diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of Albania. Taken together with other published materials and documents covering that period, these notes, too, I believe, will serve to acquaint the communists and working masses better, both with the counter-revolutionary activity of the Soviet revisionists inside and outside the Soviet Union, and with the always correct and consistent struggle of our Party in defence of Marxism-Leninism, the people and our socialist Homeland.

1980

1. IN-FIGHTING AMONG THE TOP SOVIET LEADERS

Stalin dies. Next day the top Soviet leadership divides up the portfolios. Khrushchev climbs the steps to power. Disillusionment from the first meeting with the «new» Soviet leaders in June 1953. Ill-intentioned criticism from Mikoyan and Bulganin. The end of Beria's short-lived reign. The meeting with Khrushchev in June 1954: «You helped in the exposure of Beria.» Khrushchev's «theoretical» lecture on the roles of the first secretary of the party and the prime minister. The revisionist mafia spins its spider's web inside and outside the Soviet Union.

The way in which the death of Stalin was announced and his funeral ceremony was organized created the impression amongst us, the Albanian communists and people, and others like us, that many members of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the

Soviet Union had been awaiting his death impatiently.

One day after Stalin's death on March 6, 1953, the Central Committee of the party, the Council of Ministers and the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR were summoned to an urgent joint meeting. On occasions of great losses, such as the death of Stalin, urgent meetings are necessary and indispensable. However, the many important changes which were announced in the press one day later, showed that this urgent meeting had been held for no other reason but... the sharing out of posts! Stalin had only just died, his body had not yet been placed in the hall where the final homage was to be paid, the program for the organization of paying homage and the funeral ceremony was still not worked out, the Soviet communists and the Soviet people were weeping over their great loss, while the top Soviet leadership found the time to share out the portfolios! Malenkov became premier, Beria became first deputy-premier and minister of internal affairs, and Bulganin, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, Molotov shared the other posts. Major changes were made in all the top organs in the party and the state within that day. The Presidium and the Bureau of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the party were merged into a single organ, new secretaries of the Central Committee of the party were elected, a number of ministries were amalgamated or united,

changes were made in the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, etc.

These actions could not fail to make profound and by no means favourable impressions on us. Disturbing questions arose automatically: how were all these major changes made so suddenly within one day, and not just any ordinary day, but on the first day of mourning?! Logic compels us to believe that everything had been prepared in advance. The lists of these changes had been worked out long before in suspicious secrecy and they were simply waiting for the occasion to proclaim them in order to satisfy this one and that one...

It is never possible to take such extremely important decisions within a few hours, even on a completely normal day.

However, if at the start these were only doubts which shocked and surprised us, later developments, the occurrences and the facts which we were to learn about subsequently, made us even more convinced that hidden hands had prepared the plot long before and waited the opportunity to commence the course of the destruction of the Bolshevik Party and socialism in the Soviet Union.

The lack of unity in the Presidium of the Central Committee was made quite obvious at Stalin's funeral, too, when there was strife among the members over who would take pride of place and who would speak first. Instead of displaying

unity at a time of misfortune before the peoples of the Soviet Union and all the communists of the world, who were deeply shocked and immensely grieved by the sudden death of Stalin, the «comrades» were competing for the limelight. Khrushchev opened the funeral ceremony, and Malenkov, Beria and Molotov spoke before Lenin Mausoleum. The conspirators behaved hypocritically over Stalin's coffin and rushed to get the funeral ceremony over as quickly as possible in order to shut themselves up in the Kremlin again to continue the process of the division and redivision of the posts.

We, and many like us, thought that Molotov, Stalin's closest collaborator, the oldest and the most mature bolshevik, with the greatest experience and best known inside and outside the Soviet Union, would be elected first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. But it did not turn out so. Malenkov was placed at the head, with Beria in second place. Behind them in those days, a little more in the shade, stood a «panther» which was preparing itself to gobble up and liquidate the former two. This was Nikita Khrushchev.

The way in which he rose was truly astonishing and suspect: he was appointed only as chairman of the central commission to organize the funeral ceremony for Stalin, and on March 7, when the division of posts was made public, he had

not been appointed to any new post, but had simply been freed from the task of first secretary of the Party Committee of Moscow, since «he was to concentrate on the work in the Central Committee of the party». Only a few days later, on March 14, 1953, Malenkov, «at his own request», was relieved of the post of secretary of the Central Committee of the party(!) and Nikita Khrushchev was listed first in the composition of the new Secretariat elected that same day.

Such actions did not please us at all, although they were not our responsibility. We were disillusioned in our opinions about the stability of the top Soviet leadership, but we explained this with our being totally uninformed about the situation developing in the party and the leadership of the Soviet Union. In the contacts which I had had with Stalin himself, with Malenkov, Molotov, Khrushchev, Beria, Mikoyan, Suslov, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, and other main leaders, I had not seen even the smallest division or discord amongst them.

Stalin had fought consistently for and was one of the decisive factors of the Marxist-Leninist unity of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. This unity in the party for which Stalin worked, was not created by means of terror, as Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites claimed later, continuing the slanders of the imperialists and the world capitalist bourgeoisie, who were striving to destroy and overthrow the dictatorship of the pro-

letariat in the Soviet Union, but was based on the triumphs of socialism, on the Marxist-Leninist line and ideology of the Bolshevik Party and on the indisputably great personality of Stalin. The trust which all had in Stalin was based on his justice and the ability with which he defended the Soviet Union and Leninism. Stalin waged the class struggle correctly, dealing merciless blows at the enemies of socialism (and he was quite right to do so). The concrete daily struggle of Stalin, the Bolshevik Party and the whole Soviet people proves this squarely, as do the political and ideological writings of Stalin, the documents and decisions of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and also the press and the mass propaganda of those times against the Trotskyites, Bukharinites, Zinovievites, the Tukhachevskies, and all other traitors. This was a stern political and ideological class struggle to defend socialism, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the party and the principles of Marxism-Leninism. For this Stalin has great merits.

Stalin proved himself to be an outstanding Marxist-Leninist with clear principles, with great courage and cool-headedness, and the maturity and foresight of a Marxist revolutionary. If we just reflect on the strength of the external and internal enemies in the Soviet Union, on the manoeuvres and unrestrained propaganda they indulged in, on the fiendish tactics they used, then we can properly

appreciate the principles and correct actions of Stalin at the head of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. If there were some excesses in the course of this just and titanic struggle, it was not Stalin who committed them, but Khrushchev, Beria and company, who for sinister hidden motives, showed themselves the most zealous for purges at the time when they were not yet so powerful. They acted in this way to gain credit as «ardent defenders» of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as «merciless with the enemies», with the aim of climbing the steps in order to usurp power later. The facts show that when Stalin discovered the hostile activity of a Yagoda or a Yezhov, the revolutionary court condemned them without hesitation. Such elements as Khrushchev, Mikoyan, Beria and their apparatchiki hid the truth from Stalin. In one way or another, they misled and deceived Stalin. He did not trust them, therefore he had told them to their faces, «...when I am gone you will sell the Soviet Union.» Khrushchev himself admitted this. And it turned out just as Stalin foresaw. As long as he was alive, even these enemies talked about unity, but after his death they encouraged the split. This process was being steadily extended.

From the visits which I made from time to time to the Soviet Union after 1953, for consultations over the problems of the political and economic situation, or over some problems of interna-

tional policy which were raised by the Soviets, who allegedly sought our opinion, too. I saw more and more clearly the sharpening of contradictions among the members of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

A few months after Stalin's death, in June 1953, I went to Moscow at the head of a party and government delegation to seek an economic and military credit.

It was the time when Malenkov seemed to be the main leader. He was chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union. Although Khrushchev had been listed first among the secretaries of the Central Committee of the party since March 1953, apparently he had not yet seized power completely, had still not prepared the putsch.

We normally made our requests in advance in writing, thus the members of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the party and government of the Soviet Union had long been aware of them and,indeed as it turned out, they had decided what they would give us and what they would not give us. They received us at the Kremlin. When we entered the room the Soviet leaders stood up and we shook hands with them. We exchanged the normal greetings.

I had met them all in the time of Stalin.

Malenkov looked just the same — a heavy-built man with a pale, hairless face. I had met him years before in Moscow, during meetings I had with Stalin, and he had made a good impression on me. He worshipped Stalin and it seemed to me that Stalin valued him, too. At the 19th Congress Malenkov delivered the report on behalf of the Central Committee of the party. He was one of the relatively new cadres who came into the leadership and who were liquidated later by the disguised revisionist Khrushchev and his associates. But now he was at the head of the table, holding the post of chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR. Beside him stood Beria, with his eyes glittering behind glasses and his hands never still. After him came Molotov, quiet, good-looking, one of the most serious and most honoured comrades for us, because he was an old bolshevik from the time of Lenin and a close comrade of Stalin's. We still thought of Molotov in this way even after Stalin's death.

Next to Molotov was Mikoyan, his dark face scowling. This merchant was holding one of those thick pencils, half red half blue (something you could see in all the offices of the Soviet Union), and was keeping the «score». Now he had taken even greater authority into his hands. On March 6, the day the posts were shared out, it was decided that the Ministry of Foreign Trade and that of Internal Trade should be combined in one, and the

Armenian wheeler-dealer grabbed the portfolio.

Finally there was the bearded Marshal Bulganin, with white hair and pale blue eyes, sitting a little bit bemused at a corner of the table.

«Let us hear what you have to say!» said Malenkov in a very grave tone. This was not at all a comradely beginning. This was to become the custom in talks with the new Soviet leaders, and no doubt this behaviour was supposed to show the pride of the great state. «Well, say what you have to say to us, we shall listen to you and pronounce our final opinion.»

I did not know Russian well, I could not speak it, but I could understand it. The talk was conducted through an interpreter.

I began to speak about the problems that were worrying us, especially about military questions and the problems of the economy. First, I gave an introduction about the internal and external political situation of our country, which was causing us some concern. It was essential to give solid reasons for our needs, to back up our requests in both the economic and military sectors. In connection with the latter, the aid which they provided for our army was always insufficient and minimal, regardless of the fact that in public we always spoke very highly of the value of that small amount of aid which they granted us. Together with the

arguments in support of our modest requests, I also portrayed the situation of our country in connection with our Yugoslav, Greek and Italian neighbours. From all around our country the enemies were carrying out intensive hostile work of diversion, espionage and sabotage from the sea, the air and the land. We were having continual clashes with armed bands of enemy agents and needed aid in military materials.

My concern was to make my exposé as concrete and concise as possible. I tried not to go on at too great a length and I had been speaking for no more than twenty minutes, when I heard Beria, with his snake's eyes, say to Malenkov, who was sitting listening to me as expressionless as a mummy:

«Can't we say what we have to say and put an end to this?»

Without changing his expression, without shifting his eyes from me (of course, he had to maintain his authority in front of his deputies!), Malenkov said to Beria:

«Wait!»

I was so annoyed I was ready to explode internally, but I preserved my aplomb and, in order to let them understand that I had heard and understood what they said, I cut down my talk and said to Malenkov:

«I have finished.»

«*Pravilno!*»* said Malenkov and gave Mikoyan the floor.

Beria, pleased that I had finished, put his hands in his pockets and tried to work out what impression their replies were making on me. Of course, I was not satisfied with what they had decided to give us in response to the very modest requests we had made. I spoke again and told them that they had made heavy reductions in the things we had asked for. Mikoyan jumped in to «explain» that the Soviet Union itself was poor, that it had gone through the war, that it had to assist other countries, too, etc.

«When we drafted these requests,» I told Mikoyan, «we took account of the reason you have just given, indeed we cut our calculations very fine, and your specialists who work in our country are witnesses to this.»

«Our specialists do not know what possibilities the Soviet Union has. We who have told you our opinions and possibilities know these things,» said Mikoyan.

Molotov was leaning on the table. He said something about Albania's relations with its neighbours, but he never raised his eyes. Malenkov and Beria seemed to be the two «cocks of the walk», while Mikoyan who was cold and bitter, did not say much, but when he did speak, it was only to

* That's right (Russian in the original).

make some vicious and venomous remark. From the way they spoke, the way they interrupted one another, the arrogant tone in which they gave «advice», the signs of discord among them were quite clear.

«Since this is what you have decided, there is no reason for me to prolong matters,» I said.

«*Pravilno!*» repeated Malenkov and asked in a loud voice: «Has anyone anything to add?»

«I have,» said Bulganin at the end of the table.

«You have the floor,» said Malenkov.

Bulganin opened a dossier and, in substance, said:

«You, Comrade Enver, have asked for aid for the army. We have agreed to give you as much as we have allocated to you, but I have a number of criticisms. The army ought to be a sound weapon of the dictatorship of the proletariat, its cadres loyal to the party and of proletarian origin, the party must have the army firmly under its leadership...»

Bulganin went on for a very long time with a «moralizing» speech, full of words of «advice». I listened carefully and waited for the criticisms, but they did not come. In the end he said this:

«Comrade Enver, we have information that many cadres of your army are the sons of beys and aghas, of dubious origin and activity. We must be certain about those into whose hands these wea-

pons, with which we shall supply you, will be put, therefore we advise you to study this problem deeply and carry out purges...»

This made my blood boil because it was a slanderous accusation and an insult to the cadres of our army. I raised my voice and asked the marshal:

«What is the source of this information which you give me with such assurance? Why do you insult our army?»

The atmosphere of the meeting became as cold as ice. They all lifted their heads and looked at me while I waited for Bulganin to reply. He found himself at a tight spot because he had not expected this cutting question, and he looked at Beria.

Beria began to speak, the movements of his hands and eyes revealing his embarrassment and irritation, and said that according to their information, we allegedly had unsuitable and dubious elements, not only in the army, but also in the apparatus of the state and in the economy! He even mentioned a percentage. Bulganin sighed with relief and looked around, not concealing his satisfaction, but Beria cut short his smile. He openly opposed Bulganin's «advice» about purges and stressed that the «elements with a bad past, but who have since taken the right road, must not be purged but should be pardoned.» The resentment and deep contradictions which existed between

these two were displayed quite openly. As it turned out later, the contradictions between Bulganin and Beria were not simply between these two persons, but were the reflection of deep contradictions, quarrels and opposition between the Soviet state security service and the intelligence organs of the Soviet army. But we were to learn these things later. In this concrete case we were dealing with a grave accusation raised against us. We could never accept this accusation, therefore, I stood up and said:

«Those who have given you this information have committed slander, hence they are enemies. There is no truth in what you said. The overwhelming majority of the cadres of our army have been poor peasants, shepherds, workers, artisans and revolutionary intellectuals. In our army there are no sons of beys and aghas. Or if there are perhaps ten or twenty individuals, they have abandoned their class and have shed their own blood, and by this I mean that during the war they not only took up arms against the foreign enemies, but rejected the class from which they emerged, and even their parents and relations, when they opposed the Party and the people. All the cadres of our army have fought in the war, have emerged from the war, and not only do I not accept these accusations but I am telling you that your informers are deceiving you, are concocting slanders. I assure you that the weapons that we

have received and will receive from you have been and will be in reliable hands, that the Party of Labour, and no one else, has led and still leads our People's Army. That is all I had to say!» and I sat down.

When I had finished, Malenkov began to speak to close the debate. After stressing that he agreed with what the preceding speakers had said, he issued a load of «advice and instructions» for us, and then dwelt on the debate which we had with Bulganin and Beria about the «enemies» in the ranks of our army.

«As for undertaking purges in the army, I think that the problem should not be presented in this way,» said Malenkov, opposing the «advice» which Bulganin gave me about purges. «People are not born ready-formed, and they make mistakes in life. We must not be afraid to excuse people for their past mistakes. We have people who have fought against us with weapons, but now we are bringing out special laws to pardon them for their past and in this way to give them the possibility to work in the army and even to be in the party. The term 'purge' of the army is not suitable,» repeated Malenkov and closed the discussion.

Utter confusion: one said irresponsibly, «You have enemies» and «carry out purges», the other said, «We are bringing out laws to pardon them for their past»!

However, these were their opinions. We listened to them carefully and openly expressed our opposition to those things over which we disagreed. Finally, I thanked them for receiving me and, in passing, told them that the Central Committee of our Party had decided that I should be relieved of many functions and retain only the main function of General Secretary of the Party. (At that time I was General Secretary, Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, and Minister of Foreign Affairs. These functions had remained in my hands since the time the country was liberated, when many difficulties caused by external and internal enemies had to be overcome.)

Malenkov found this decision correct and twice repeated his favourite «*pravilno*». Having nothing more to say, we shook hands and left.

My conclusion from this meeting was unpleasant. I saw that the leadership of the Soviet Union was ill-disposed towards our country. The arrogant way they behaved during the meeting, their refusal to give those few things that we sought, and their slanderous attack on the cadres of our army were not good signs.

From this meeting I observed also that there was no unity in the Presidium of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union: Malenkov and Beria were predominant, Molotov hardly spoke, Mikoyan seemed to be on the outer and spouted venom, while what Bulganin said was bullshit.

It was apparent that the in-fighting had begun among the leaders in the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. However hard they tried to avoid giving the impression outside that the «changing of the guard» was taking place in the Kremlin, they were unable to hide everything. Changes had been and were being made in the party and the government. After he kicked out Malenkov, leaving him only the post of prime minister, Khrushchev made himself first secretary of the Central Committee in September 1953. It is evident that Khrushchev and his group of close cronies hatched up the intrigue in the Presidium carefully, by setting their opponents at loggerheads and eliminating Beria and apparently «taming» the others.

There are many versions about the arrest and execution of Beria. Amongst others it was said that men from the army, headed by General Moskalenko, arrested Beria right in the meeting of the Presidium of the CC of the party. Apparently Khrushchev and his henchmen charged the army with this «special mission», because they did not trust the state security, since Beria had had it in his hands for years on end. The plan had been hatched up in advance: while the meeting of the Presidium of the CC of the party was being held, Moskalenko and his men got into a nearby room unobserved. At the given moment, Malenkov pressed the bell and within a few seconds Moska-

lenko entered the office where the meeting was being held and approached Beria to arrest him. It was said that Beria reached out to take the satchel he had nearby, but Khrushchev, who was sitting «vigilant» by his side, was «quicker» and seized the satchel first. The «bird» could not fly away, the action was crowned with success! Precisely as in a detective film, but this was no ordinary film: the actors of this one were members of the Presidium of the CC of the CPSU!

This is what, was said, took place and Khrushchev himself admitted it. Later, when a general, who I believe was called Sergatskov, came to Tirana as Soviet military adviser he also told us something about the trial of Beria. He told us that he had been called as a witness to declare in court that Beria had allegedly behaved arrogantly towards him. On this occasion Sergatskov told our comrades in confidence: «Beria defended himself very strongly in the court, accepted none of the accusations and refuted them all.»

In June 1954, a few months after Khrushchev's elevation to the post of first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, together with Comrade Hysni Kapo, we had to go to Moscow where we sought a meeting with the Soviet leaders to talk about the economic problems over the solution of which they were proving uncooperative. Khrushchev received us, together with Malenkov, who was still prime

minister, in the presence of Voroshilov, Mikoyan, Suslov and one or two others of lower rank.

I had had occasion to meet Khrushchev once or twice in the Ukraine before the death of Stalin. We had just emerged from the war and at that time it was natural that we had great trust not only in Stalin, the Soviet Union and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which was indisputable, but also in all the leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. From the first meeting Khrushchev had impressed me as a «good capable fellow, full of vigour and talk» who did not fail to speak well of our war, although it was apparent he knew nothing about it.

He gave me a rather superficial account of the Ukraine, put on a dinner for me, from which I remember a kind of soup which they called «borsch» and a bowl of yoghourt so thick that you could cut it with a knife and I was not sure whether it was yoghourt or cheese; he presented me with an embroidered Ukrainian shirt and begged my pardon because he had to go to Moscow where they had a meeting of the Bureau. This encounter was in Kiev, and all the time he was with me, Khrushchev poured out every kind of praise for Stalin. Of course, seeing only the trips by air back and forth to Moscow of leaders who were so ably guiding this great country which we loved so much and hearing all those fine words they said about Stalin, I was very pleased with them and

enthusiastic about the successes they had achieved.

But Khrushchev's unexpected and rapid rise to power did not make a good impression on us. Not because we had anything against him, but because we thought that the role and figure of Khrushchev was not so well-known either in the Soviet Union or in the world, that he could so rapidly take the place of the great Stalin as first secretary of the Central Committee of the party. Khrushchev had never appeared at any of the meetings we had had for years on end with Stalin, although nearly all the top leaders of the party and Soviet state took part in most of those meetings. However, we did not express this and never mentioned our impression about this promotion of Khrushchev so high. We considered this an internal matter of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, thought that they knew what they were doing, and wished with all our heart that things would always go well in the Soviet Union, as in the time of Stalin.

And now the day had come for us to meet Khrushchev face to face in our first official meeting.

I spoke first. I briefly presented the economic, political and organizational situation of the country, the situation in the Party and our people's state power. Knowing from the meeting a year earlier with Malenkov that the new leaders of the Soviet party and state did not like to listen

for long, I tried to be as concise as possible in my exposé and put the emphasis mainly on the economic questions about which we had sent a detailed letter to the Soviet leadership two months earlier. I remember that Khrushchev intervened only once during my speech. I was speaking of the very fine results which had been achieved in our country in the recent elections of deputies to the People's Assembly and about the powerful party-people-state unity which was manifested during the elections.

«These results should not put you to sleep,» interjected Khrushchev at that moment, drawing our attention to the very thing which we had not only always been aware of, but which I had stressed in the exposé I had given them, emphasizing particularly the work we did to consolidate unity, to build up the love of the people for the Party and the state, to strengthen vigilance, etc. However, it was his right to give as much advice as he wished and we had no reason to resent this.

Khrushchev spoke immediately after me and right from the start displayed his clownish nature in the treatment of problems:

«We are informed about your situation and problems from the materials we have studied,» he began. «The report which Comrade Enver gave us here made matters clearer to us, and I describe it as a 'joint report', yours and ours.

But,» he continued, «I am still a bad Albanian and I am not going to speak now either about the economic problems or about the political ones, which Comrade Enver raised, because, for our part, we have still not exchanged opinions and reached a common view. Therefore, I am going to speak about something else.»

And he began to give us a long talk about the importance of the role of the party.

He spoke in a loud voice with many gestures of his hands and his head, looking in all directions without concentrating on any one point, interrupted his speech here and there to ask questions, and then, often without waiting for the reply, went on with his speech, hopping from branch to branch.

«The party leads, organizes, controls,» he theorized. «It is the initiator and inspirer. But Beria wanted to liquidate the role of the party,» and after a moment of silence he asked me: «Have you received the resolution which announced the sentence we passed on Beria?»

«Yes,» I replied.

He left his discourse about the party and started to speak about the activity of Beria; he accused him of almost every crime and described him as the cause of many evils. These were the first steps towards the attack on Stalin. For the time being, Khrushchev felt that he could not rise against the

figure and work of Stalin, therefore, in order to prepare the terrain he started with Beria. At this meeting, moreover, to our astonishment, Khrushchev told us:

«When you were here last year, you assisted in the exposure and unmasking of Beria.»

I stared in amazement, wondering what he was leading up to. Khrushchev's explanation was this:

«You remember the debate which you had last year with Bulganin and Beria over the accusation they made against your army. It was Beria who had given us that information, and the strong opposition which you put up in the presence of the comrades of the Presidium, helped us by supplementing the doubts and the facts which we had about the hostile activity of Beria. A few days after your departure for Albania we condemned him.»

However, in that first meeting with us Khrushchev was not concerned simply with Beria. The «Beria» dossier had been closed. Khrushchev had settled accounts with him. Now he had to go further. He dealt at length with the importance and the role of the first secretary or general secretary of the party.

«To me it is of no importance whether he is called 'first' secretary or 'general' secretary,» he

said in substance. «What is important is that the most able, qualified person with the greatest authority in the country must be elected to that post. We have our experience,» he continued. «After the death of Stalin we had four secretaries of the Central Committee but we had no one in charge, and thus we had no one to sign the minutes of meetings!»

After going all round the question from the aspect of «principle», Khrushchev did not fail to launch a few gibes which, of course, were aimed against Malenkov, although he mentioned no names.

«Imagine what would occur,» he said in his cunning way, «if the most capable and authoritative comrade were elected chairman of the Council of Ministers. He would have everyone on his back, and thus there would be a danger that the criticism put forward through the party would not be taken into account and hence the party would take second place and be turned into an organ of the Council of Ministers.»

While he was speaking I glanced several times at Malenkov who sat motionless while his whole body seemed to be sagging, his face an ashen hue.

Voroshilov, his face flushed bright red, was watching me, waiting for Khrushchev to finish his «discourse». Then he began. He pointed out to me (as though I did not know) that the post of prime

minister was very important, too, for this or that reason, etc.

«I think,» said Voroshilov in an uncertain tone, as though he did not know with whom to side and whom to oppose, «that Comrade Khrushchev did not intend to imply that the Council of Ministers does not have its own special importance. The prime minister, likewise...»

Now Malenkov's face had become deathly pale. While wanting to soften the bad impression which Khrushchev had created, especially about Malenkov, with these words, Voroshilov brought out more clearly the tense situation which existed in the Presidium of the CC of the party. Klim Voroshilov went on with this lecture about the role and importance of the prime minister for several minutes!

Malenkov was the «scapegoat» which they displayed to me to see how I would react. In these two lectures I saw clearly that the split in the Presidium of the CC of the CPSU was growing deeper, that Malenkov and his supporters were on the way out. We were to see later where this process would lead.

At this same meeting Khrushchev told us that the other sister parties had been told of the Soviet «experience» of who should be first secretary of the party and who prime minister in the countries of people's democracy.

«We talked over these questions with the Polish comrades before the congress of their party,» Khrushchev told us. «We thrashed matters out thoroughly and thought that Comrade Bierut should remain chairman of the Council of Ministers and Comrade Ochab should be appointed first secretary of the party...»

Hence, right from the start Khrushchev was for pushing Bierut aside in the leadership of the party (and later for his elimination), since he had insisted that Ochab, «a very good Polish comrade», as he stressed to us, should be elected first secretary. Thus they were giving the green light for all the revisionist elements, who, up till yesterday, were wriggling and keeping a low profile, awaiting the opportune moments. Now these moments were being created by Khrushchev who, with his actions, stands and «new ideas», was becoming the inspirer and organizer of «changes» and «reorganizations».

However, the congress of the Polish United Workers' Party did not fulfil Khrushchev's desires. Bierut, a resolute Marxist-Leninist comrade, of whom I have very good memories, was elected first secretary of the party, while Cyrankiewicz was elected prime minister.

Khrushchev «reconciled» himself to this decision because there was nothing he could do about it. However, the revisionist mafia, which had begun to stir, was thinking about all the ways and

possibilities. It was creating its spider's web. And although Bierut was not removed from the leadership of the party in Warsaw, as Khrushchev wanted and dictated, later he was to be eliminated completely by a sudden «cold» caught in Moscow!

2. KHRUSHCHEV'S STRATEGY AND TACTICS WITHIN THE SOVIET UNION

The roots of the tragedy of the Soviet Union. The stages through which Khrushchev passes towards seizing political and ideological power. The Khrushchevite caste corrodes the sword of the revolution. What lies behind Khrushchev's «collective leadership». Khrushchev and Mikoyan — the head of the counter-revolutionary plot. The breeze of liberalism is blowing in the Soviet Union. Khrushchev and Voroshilov speak openly against Stalin. Khrushchev builds up his own cult. The enemies of the revolution are proclaimed «heroes» and «victims».

One of the main directions of Khrushchev's strategy and tactics was to seize complete political and ideological power within the Soviet Union and to put the Soviet army and the state security organs in his service.

The Khrushchev group would work to achieve

this objective step by step. At first, it would not attack Marxism-Leninism, the construction of socialism in the Soviet Union and Stalin frontally. On the contrary, this group would base itself on the successes achieved and, moreover, would exalt them to the maximum, in order to gain credit for itself and create a situation of euphoria, with the aim of destroying the socialist base and superstructure later.

First of all, this renegade group had to get control of the party, in order to eliminate the possible resistance of those cadres who had not lost their revolutionary class vigilance, to neutralize the waverers and win them over by means of persuasion or threats, as well as to promote to the key leading positions bad, anti-Marxist, careerist, opportunist elements of whom, of course, there were some in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the apparatus of the Soviet state.

After the Great Patriotic War some negative phenomena appeared in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The difficult economic situation, the devastation and destruction, the great human losses which occurred in the Soviet Union, required a total mobilization of the cadres and the masses for its consolidation and progress. However, instead of this, a falling-off in the character and morale of many cadres was noticed. On the other hand, through their conceit and boasting about the glory of the battles won, through their decorations

and privileges, with their many vices and distorted views, the power-seeking elements were overwhelming the vigilance of the party and causing it to decay from within. A caste was created in the army which extended its despotic and arrogant domination to the party, too, altering its proletarian character. The party should have been the sword of the revolution, but this caste corroded it.

I am of the opinion that even before the war, but especially after the war, signs of a deplorable apathy appeared in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. This party had a great reputation, and had achieved colossal successes in the course of its work, but at the same time it had started to lose the revolutionary spirit and was becoming infected by bureaucracy and routine. The Leninist norms, the teachings of Lenin and Stalin had been transformed by the apparatchiki into stale platitudes and hackneyed slogans devoid of operative worth. The Soviet Union was a vast country, the people worked, produced, created. It was said that industry was developing at the necessary rates and that the socialist agriculture was advancing. But this development was not at the level it should have been.

It was not the «wrong» line of Stalin which held up the progress. On the contrary, this line was correct and Marxist-Leninist, but it was frequently applied badly and even distorted and sabotaged by enemy elements. Stalin's correct line was distorted

also by the disguised enemies in the ranks of the party and in the organs of the state, by the opportunists, liberals, Trotskyites and revisionists, as the Khrushchevs, Mikoyans, Suslovs, Kosygins, etc., eventually turned out to be.

Before the death of Stalin, Khrushchev and his close collaborators in the putsch were among the main leaders who acted under cover, who made preparations and awaited the appropriate moment for open action on a broad scale. It is a fact that these traitors were hardened conspirators, with the experience of various Russian counter-revolutionaries, the experience of anarchists, Trotskyites and Bukharinites. They were also acquainted with the experience of the revolution and the Bolshevik Party, although they learned nothing of benefit from the revolution, but learned everything they needed to undermine the revolution and socialism, while escaping the blows of the revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. In short, they were counter-revolutionaries and double-dealers. On the one hand, they sang the praises of socialism, the revolution, the Bolshevik Communist Party, Lenin and Stalin, and on the other hand, they prepared the counter-revolution.

Hence, all this accumulated scum carried out sabotage with the subtlest methods, which they disguised by praising Stalin and the socialist regime. These elements disorganized the revolution while organizing the counter-revolution, displayed

«severity» against internal enemies in order to spread fear and terror in the party, the state and the people. It was they who created a situation full of euphoria which they reported to Stalin, but in reality they destroyed the base of the party, the base of the state, caused spiritual degeneration and built up the culf of Stalin to the skies in order to overthrow him more easily in the future.

This was a diabolical hostile activity which had a strangle-hold on the Soviet Union, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Stalin, who, as the historical facts showed, was surrounded by enemies. Almost none of the members of the Presidium and the Central Committee raised their voices in defence of socialism and Stalin.

If a detailed analysis is made of the political, ideological and organizational directives of Stalin in the leadership and organization of the party, the war and the work, in general, mistakes of principle will not be found, but if we bear in mind how they were distorted by the enemies and applied in practice, we will see the dangerous consequences of these distortions and it will become obvious why the party began to become bureaucratic, to be immersed in routine work and dangerous formalism which sapped its strength and strangled its revolutionary spirit and enthusiasm. The party became covered by a heavy layer of rust, by political apathy, thinking mistakenly that the head, the leadership, operates and solves everything on its

own. From such a concept, the situation was created that in every instance and about everything they would say, «this is the leadership's business», «the Central Committee does not make mistakes», «Stalin has said this, and that's all there is to it», etc. Stalin might not have said many things, but they were covered with his name.

The apparatus and the officials became «omnipotent», «infallible» and operated in bureaucratic ways under the slogans of democratic centralism and bolshevik criticism and self-criticism, which were no longer bolshevik in reality. There is no doubt that in this way the Bolshevik Party lost its former vitality. It lived on with correct slogans, but they were only slogans; it carried out orders, but did not act on its own initiative; with the methods and forms of work which were used in the leadership of the party, the opposite results were achieved.

In such conditions bureaucratic administrative measures began to predominate over revolutionary measures. Vigilance was no longer operative because it was no longer revolutionary, regardless of all the boasting about it. From a vigilance of the party and the masses, it was being turned into a vigilance of bureaucratic apparatus and transformed, in fact, if not completely from the formal viewpoint, into a vigilance of the state security organs and the courts.

It is understandable that in such conditions,

non-proletarian, non-working class feelings and views began to take root and to be cultivated in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and in the consciousness of many of the communists. Careerism, servility, charlatanism, unhealthy cronyism, anti-proletarian morality, etc., began to spread. These evils eroded the party from within, smothered the feeling of class struggle and sacrifice and encouraged seeking the «good life», with comforts, with privileges, with personal gains and the least possible work and effort. In this way the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois mentality was created, and this was expressed in such words and thoughts as: «We worked and fought for this socialist state and we triumphed, now let us enjoy the benefits from it», «we can't be touched, the past excuses us for everything.» The greatest danger was that this outlook was becoming established even in the old cadres of the party with a splendid past and proletarian origin, even in the members of the Presidium of the Central Committee, who ought to have set an example of purity to the others. There were many such people in the leadership, in the apparatus, and they made adroit use of the revolutionary words and phrases and the theoretical formulas of Lenin and Stalin, reaped the laurels of the work of others and encouraged the bad example. Thus, a worker aristocracy made up of bureaucratic cadres was being created in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Regrettably, such a process of degeneration developed under the «joyful» and «hopeful» slogans that «everything is going well, normally, within the laws and norms of the party», which in fact were being violated, that «the class struggle is still being waged», that «democratic centralism is safeguarded», «criticism and self-criticism continues as before», that «there is steel unity in the party», «there are no more factional, anti-party elements», «the time of Trotskyite and Bukharinite groups is passed», etc., etc. Generally speaking, even the revolutionary elements considered such a distorted concept of the situation to be a normal reality and, this is the essence of the drama and the fatal mistake, therefore, it was considered that there was nothing to be alarmed about, that the enemies, the thieves, the violators of morality were being condemned by the courts, that the unworthy members were being expelled from the party, and new members admitted to it, as usual, that the plans were being realized although there were some that were not being realized, that people were being criticized, condemned, praised, etc. Hence, according to them, life was proceeding normally, and thus it was reported to Stalin: «Everything is going normally.» We are convinced that if Stalin, as the great revolutionary he was, had known the reality of the situation in the party, he would have struck a crushing blow at this unhealthy spirit and the entire party and the Soviet

people would have risen to their feet to support him because, quite correctly, they had great trust in Stalin.

Not only did the apparatuses misinform Stalin, and bureaucratically deform his correct directives, but they had created such a situation among the people and in the party that even when Stalin went among the masses of the party and the people, to the extent that his age and health permitted, they did not inform him about the shortcomings and mistakes which were occurring, because the apparatus had implanted the opinion amongst the communists and the masses that «we must not worry Stalin».

The great hullabaloo the Khrushchevites made about the so-called cult of Stalin was really only a bluff. It was not Stalin, who was a modest person, who had built up this cult, but all the revisionist scum accumulated at the head of the party and the state which apart from anything else, exploited the great love of the Soviet peoples for Stalin, especially after the victory over fascism. If one reads the speeches of Khrushchev, Mikoyan and all the other members of the Presidium, one will see what unrestrained and hypocritical praises these enemies poured on Stalin as long as he was alive. It is sickening to read these things when you think that behind all this praise they were hiding their hostile work from the communists and the masses who were deceived, think-

ing that they had to do with leaders loyal to Marxism-Leninism and comrades loyal to Stalin.

Even for some time after Stalin's death, the «new» Soviet leaders, and Khrushchev above all, still did not speak badly about him, indeed they described him as a «great man», a «leader of indisputable authority», etc. Khrushchev had to speak in this way to gain credit inside and outside the Soviet Union, in order to create the idea that he was «loyal» to socialism and the revolution, a «continuer» of the work of Lenin and Stalin.

Khrushchev and Mikoyan were the bitterest enemies of Marxism-Leninism and Stalin. These two headed the plot and the putsch which they had prepared long before, together with anti-Marxist, careerist elements of the Central Committee, of the army, and leaders at the base. These putschists did not show their hand immediately after the death of Stalin, but, when it was necessary and to the extent it was necessary, continued to administer the poison along with their praises for Stalin. It is true that Mikoyan, in particular, in the many meetings I have had with him, never boosted Stalin, irrespective of the fact that in speeches and discourses the putschists heaped praises and glory on Stalin on every occasion. They fostered the cult of Stalin in order to isolate him as much as possible from the masses, and, hiding behind this cult, they prepared the catastrophe.

Khrushchev and Mikoyan worked to a plan and after the death of Stalin found an open field for their activity, also because of the fact that Malenkov, Beria, Bulganin and Voroshilov proved to be not only blind, but also ambitious, and each of them struggled for power.

They and others, old revolutionaries and honest communists, had now turned into typical representatives of that bureaucratic routine, of that bureaucratic «legality», which developed, and, when they made a feeble attempt to use this «legality» against the obvious plot of the Khrushchevites, it was already too late.

Khrushchev and Mikoyan, in complete unity, knew how to manoeuvre amongst them and to set one against the other. In a few words, they applied this tactic: split and divide in the Presidium, organize the forces of the putsch outside, continue to speak well about Stalin in order to have the millions strong masses on their side, and thus bring closer the day of the seizure of power, the liquidation of opponents, and of a whole glorious epoch of the construction of socialism, the victory of the Patriotic War, etc. All this feverish activity (and we sensed this) was aimed to create the popularity of Khrushchev inside the Soviet Union and outside it.

Under the umbrella of the victories which the Soviet Union and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had scored under the leadership of

Lenin and Stalin, Khrushchev did his utmost to make the Soviet peoples and the Soviet communists think that nothing had changed, one great leader had died, but a «greater» leader was rising, and what a leader he was! «As principled a Leninist as the former, if not more so, but liberal, popular, smiling, all humour and jokes!»

Meanwhile the revisionist viper, which was becoming active, started to pour out its poison about the figure and work of Stalin. At first this was done without attacking Stalin by name, but attacking him indirectly.

In one of the meetings which I had with Khrushchev, in June 1954, in an allegedly principled and theoretical way he began to expound to me the great importance of «collective leadership», and the great damage which comes about when this leadership is replaced by the cult of one person, and mentioned isolated excerpts from Marx and Lenin, so that I would think that what he was saying had a «Marxist-Leninist basis».

He said nothing against Stalin, but he fired off all his batteries at Beria, accusing him of real and non-existent crimes. The truth is that in this initial stage of Khrushchev's revisionist assault, Beria was the appropriate card to play to advance the secret plans. As I have written above, Beria was presented by Khrushchev as the cause of many evils: he had allegedly underrated the role of the first secretary, damaged the «collective leadership», and wanted to put the party under the control of the state security apparatus. On the pretext of the struggle against the damage caused by Beria, Khrushchev, on the one hand, established himself in the leadership of the party and state and took control of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and on the other hand, prepared public opinion for the open attack which he was to undertake later on Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin, and on the real work of the Bolshevik Communist Party of Lenin and Stalin.

Many of these surprising actions and changes made an impression on us, but it was too early to be able to grasp the true proportions of the plot which was being carried out. Nevertheless, even at that time we could not fail to notice the contradictory nature of various actions and opinions of this «new leader», who was taking over the reins in the Soviet Union. This same Khrushchev, who was now parading before us as a «disciple of collective leadership», a few days earlier in a meeting which we had with him, when he spoke to us about the role of the first secretary of the party and the prime minister, presented himself as an ardent supporter of the «role of the individual» and the «firm hand».

After Stalin's death, it seemed that an allegedly collective leadership was established by these «adherents to principle». The collective leadership was publicized to show that «Stalin had violated

the principle of collective leadership», that he «had degraded this important norm for Leninist leadership», and that the «leadership of the party and the state had been transformed from collective leadership into individual leadership». This was a big lie, publicized by the Khrushchevites to prepare the ground for themselves. If the collective leadership principle had been violated, the blame for this must be laid, not on the correct ideas which Stalin expressed on different problems, but on the hypocritical flattery of those others and on the arbitrary decisions which they themselves took, distorting the line in the various sectors which they led. How could all the activity of these anti-party elements who worked around Stalin be checked upon, when they themselves spread the idea that *«Tse-Ka znayet vsyo»*?!* In this way they wanted to convince the party and the people that «Stalin knows everything that is going on», and «he approves everything». In other words, in the name of Stalin, and by means of their apparatchiki, they suppressed criticism and tried to turn the Bolshevik Party into a lifeless party, into an organization without will and energy, which would vegetate from day to day, approving everything that the bureaucracy decided, concocted and distorted.

* «The Central Committee knows everything» (Russian in the original).

In the campaign allegedly for the establishment of the collective leadership Khrushchev was trying to perform a slight-of-hand trick, under cover of a deafening clamour about the struggle against the cult of the individual. There were no more photographs of Khrushchev on the daily press, no more big headlines boosting him, but another stale tactic was used: all the newspapers were filled with his public speeches, his discourses, reports about his meetings with foreign ambassadors, his nightly attendances at diplomatic receptions, his meetings with delegations of communist parties, his meetings with American journalists, businessmen and senators and Western millionaires, who were friends of Khrushchev. The aim of this whole tactic was to make a contrast with Stalin's method of «working behind closed doors», of «his sectarian work», which, according to the Khrushchevites, had allegedly been so harmful to the opening of the Soviet Union to the world.

The purpose of this Khrushchevite propaganda was to show the Soviet people that now they had found the «genuine Leninist leader who knows everything, who settles everything correctly, who has extraordinary vigour, who is giving the proper reply to everyone», whose irresistible activity «is putting everything right in the Soviet Union, cleaning up the crimes of the past, and assuring progress».

I was in Moscow on the occasion of a meeting of the parties of all the socialist countries. I think it was January 1956, when a consultative meeting was held about the problems of economic development of the member countries of Comecon. It was the time when Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites were advancing in their hostile activity. We were together with Khrushchev and Voroshilov in a villa outside Moscow, where all the representatives of the sister parties were to have lunch. The others had not yet arrived. I had never heard the Soviet leaders openly speak ill of Stalin, and I, for my part, continued as before to speak with affection and deep respect for the great Stalin. Apparently these words of mine did not sound sweet in Khrushchev's ears. While waiting for the other comrades to come, Khrushchev and Voroshilov said to me:

«Shall we take some air in the park?»

We went out and strolled around the paths of the park. Khrushchev said to Klim Voroshilov:

«Do tell Enver something about Stalin's mistakes.»

I pricked up my ears, although I had long suspected that they were crooks. And Voroshilov began to tell me that «Stalin made mistakes in the line of the party, he was brutal, and so savage that you could not discuss anything with him.»

Voroshilov went on, «He even allowed crimes to be committed, and he must bear responsibility

for this. He made mistakes also in the field of the development of the economy, therefore it is not right to describe him as the 'architect of the construction of socialism'. Stalin did not have correct relations with the other parties...»

Voroshilov went on and on pouring out such things against Stalin. Some I understood and some I didn't, because, as I have written above, I did not understand Russian well, but nevertheless I understood the essence of the conversation and the aim of these two and I was revolted. Khrushchev was walking ahead of us, carrying a stick with which he hit the cabbages that they had planted in the park. (Khrushchev had planted vegetables even in the parks in order to pose as an expert in agriculture.)

As soon as Voroshilov ended his slanderous tale I asked him:

«How is it possible that Stalin could make such mistakes?»

Khrushchev turned to me, his face flushed, and replied,

«It is possible, it is possible Comrade Enver, Stalin did these things.»

«You have seen these things when Stalin was alive. But how is it that you did not help him to avoid these mistakes, which you say he made?» I asked Khrushchev.

«It is natural that you ask this question,

Comrade Enver, but you see this *kapusta** here? Stalin would have cut off your head just as easily as the gardener will cut this *kapusta,*»* and Khrushchev hit the cabbage with his stick.

«Everything is clear!» I said to Khrushchev and said no more.

We went inside. The other comrades had arrived. I was seething with anger. That night they were to serve up to us smiles and promises for a «greater» and «more rapid development» of socialism, for «more aid» and for «more extensive» and «all-round collaboration». It was the time when the notorious 20th Congress was being prepared, the time when Khrushchev was advancing more rapidly towards the seizure of power. He was creating the figure of a «popular» moujik leader, who was opening the prisons and concentration camps, who not only did not fear the reactionaries and the condemned enemies in the prisons in the Soviet Union, but by releasing them, wanted to show they had been condemned even when they were «innocent».

Everyone knows what Trotskyites, conspirators and counter-revolutionaries Zinoviev, Kameniev, Rykov, and Pyatakov were, what traitors Tukhachevsky and the other generals, agents of the Intelligence Service or the Germans, were. But to Khrushchev and Mikoyan they were all

* cabbage (Russian in the original).

fine people and a little later, in February 1956, they were to present them as innocent victims of the «Stalinist terror». This was being built up slowly, public opinion was being carefully prepared. The «new» leaders, who were the same as in the past, with the exception of Stalin, were posing as liberals in order to say to the people: «Breathe freely, you are free, you are in genuine democracy because the tyrant and the tyranny have been eliminated. Now everything is proceeding on Lenin's road. Plenty has been created. The markets will be so full that we won't know what to do with all the products.»

Khrushchev, this disgusting, loud-mouthed individual, concealed his wiles and manoeuvres under a torrent of empty words. Nevertheless, in this way, he created a situation favourable to his group. Khrushchev let no day go by without indulging in unrestrained demagogy about the development of agriculture, transferring people and changing methods of work and making himself the only «competent boss» of agriculture, the one who undertook such personal «reforms».

Khrushchev had even «inaugurated» his elevation to the post of the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union with a long report on the problems of agriculture, which he delivered at a plenum of the Central Committee in September 1953. This report, which was described as «very

important», contained those Khrushchevite ideas and reforms which, in fact, damaged Soviet agriculture so severely that their catastrophic consequences are being felt to this day. All the boastful clamour about the «virgin lands» was empty advertising. The Soviet Union has bought and is still buying millions of tons of grain from the United States of America.

However, the «collective leadership» and non-publication of Khrushchev's photographs in the newspapers did not last long. The cult of Khrushchev was being built up by the tricksters, the liberals, the careerists, the lick-spittles and the flatterers. The great authority of Stalin, based on his immortal work, was undermined inside and outside the Soviet Union. His place and authority was usurped by that charlatan, clown and blackmailer.

3. NOT MARXIST-LENINISTS BUT HUCKSTERS

Mikoyan, a cosmopolitan huckster and inveterate anti-Albanian. Difficult talks in June 1953 on economic matters — the Soviet leaders are bargaining over aid for Albania. Khrushchev's «advice» one year later: «You don't need heavy industry», «We shall supply you with oil and metals», «Don't worry about bread grain, we'll supply you with all you want.» Quarrels with Mikoyan. Discontent in Comecon from the revisionist chiefs. Ochab, Dej, Ulbricht. The June 1956 Comecon consultation in Moscow — Khrushchev: «... we must do what Hitler did.» Talks with Khrushchev again. His «advice»: «Albania should advance with cotton, sheep, fish and citrus fruit.»

We were determined to carry on and develop even further the practice, which was begun at the time when Stalin was alive, of exchanging opinions with and seeking the aid of the Soviet leadership over our economic problems. In the first 8-9

years of the people's power, we had achieved a series of successes in the economic development of the country, we had taken the first steps in the fields of industrialization and the collectivization of agriculture, had created a certain base in this direction and gained a certain experience, which would serve us to carry our socialist economy steadily ahead. But we had not become conceited over what we had achieved and neither did we conceal the problems, weaknesses and great difficulties which we had. Therefore we felt the need for continual consultation with our friends, and first of all, with the leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union; likewise we felt the need for some material aid and credits from them. These we never considered as charity and never sought them as such.

However, in this field of our relations and contacts with the post-Stalin Soviet leadership, too, we very soon saw the first signs that things were no longer going as before. There was something wrong, there was no longer that former atmosphere, when we would go to Stalin and open our hearts to him without hesitation and he would listen and speak to us just as frankly from his heart, the heart of an internationalist communist. More and more each day, in his successors, instead of communists, we saw hucksters.

Mikoyan, in particular, was the most negative, the most dubious element and the greatest

intriguer among the members of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. This huckster, who was constantly grinding and clicking his false teeth, was also ruminating on diabolical anti-Marxist, conspiratorial, putschist plans, as was proved later. This individual, with an unpleasant face and a black heart, behaved in a very menacing way, especially towards us Albanians. Our relations with this tight-fisted dealer and money-changer were economic and commercial. Everything in connection with Albania, both in according credits, and in commercial exchanges, this individual looked at simply from the angle of a trader. The friendly, internationalist socialist feelings had been wiped out as far as he was concerned.

To Mikoyan, Albania was a «geographical notion», a country with a people of no value. I never heard him say one word about our war, our people, or the efforts we made in the struggle with the great difficulties for the revival of the country and our economy ruined by the war. He who had visited nearly every country, never once said that he would like to come to Albania. It seemed that the Soviet leadership based itself on the «great economic experience» of this cosmopolitan huckster, who, as history showed, plotted with Nikita Khrushchev against Stalin, whom they had decided to murder. He admitted this with his own nouth to Mehmet and me in February 1960. After

the putsch they linked up with American imperialism, and set about the destruction to its foundations of the great work of Lenin and Stalin, socialism in the Soviet Union. It was Mikoyan who decided what aid the Soviet Union would provide for Albania, as for the other countries.

In relations with us Mikoyan was not only the most miserly but also the most insulting. This anti-Albanian line of his was permanent, even when Stalin was alive. In my memoirs «With Stalin» I have written of an occasion when Stalin, speaking to me about the internationalist aid which the Soviets would give us, smiled and asked me:

«But the Albanians themselves, are they going to work?!»

I immediately sensed why Stalin asked me this. Two or three days earlier we had had a long debate with Mikoyan in connection with our economic situation and the request for aid which our side presented to the Soviet leadership. Mikoyan had said insulting things about our situation and affairs, going so far as to say to us: «You are basing your development on foreign aid alone!»

«No,» I retorted. «It's not so. We are working day and night, we hardly sleep, but these are the conditions and the difficulties we have.» And I went on to speak about the tireless and self-sacrificing work which the workers, the working peas-

antry, the youth, the women and the whole population, young and old, in Albania were doing.

«But,» said the huckster, making a retreat, «you want to set up industry. Industry is difficult for you and there is nowhere for you to find it, except by seeking it from abroad, from us. Employ the forces in agriculture, improve the life of the countryside, and don't expect to achieve development through industry alone.»

We continued to argue with the Armenian trader for a long time, and as usual, he closed the discussion by saying to us: «Very well, I shall put this before the leadership.» In fact, Stalin approved all our requests, and neither on this nor on any other occasion did he make criticisms of us like those of Mikoyan. However, he had poured out his poison against us to Stalin, too.

With all our economic delegations Mikoyan behaved like the hard-faced trader he was.

«We haven't got it to give you. You are asking for big credits. We cannot help you to build the rice husking factory, cement factory, etc.,» he told us, although our requests for credits had been pared to the bone.

The modesty of our requests and our hesitation in making them were typical of the poor who know what suffering, sweat and toil, are, and showed that we knew the colossal needs of the Soviet Union devastated by the war and its international obligations. As to the majority of the

factories and other projects, which they accorded us on credits and which we were building, the way to supplying them had been paved when Stalin was alive. In vain we explained to Mikoyan the deplorable situation of our war-devastated country, which did not inherit even the smallest factory from the bourgeoisie, and which had not a tractor to work with, so that it was not fair to treat us on the same footing as East Germany, Czechoslovakia, etc. Once I had a real quarrel with Mikoyan, because he saw fit to scold me over the fact that our cows gave 500 to 600 litres of milk a year.

«Why do you keep them?» he said. «Slaughter them!»

I said angrily:

«Our road will never be to slaughter our animals, but to feed them better and improve their breed. You ought to know that our people are still short of food, let alone the animals.»

«In our country one cow gives...,» he boasted, mentioning so many thousand litres of milk.

«Excuse me,» I said, «you are an old cadre of the Soviet state and ought to know: immediately after the October Revolution, say in 1920 or 1924, did your cows give as much milk as they give today?»

«No,» he said. «Things were different then.»

«And this is the case with our country now,» I said. «We cannot reach your level within 4 or 5

years of liberation. The main thing is that we have set to work and we are eager for development and progress. We lack neither the desire nor the will. But we have to assess matters correctly.»

After the death of Stalin the anti-Albanian nuances in the attitude of the wheeler-dealer minister of the Soviet Union became a permanent line. However, now he was no longer on his own. His pencil, which always tended rather to mark crosses and write «no»-s to our modest requests, now found backing and support among the others. I have spoken above about the meeting in June 1953 with Malenkov, Beria, Mikoyan, and others in Moscow. Apart from other things, from the way they behaved towards us and how they handled the economic problems which we raised, I felt that now it was not only the body of the unforgettable Stalin that was missing in the Kremlin, but also his generous humane spirit, his attentive, friendly behaviour and his outstanding Marxist-Leninist thought.

I hadn't spoken for more than a few minutes about the socio-economic situation in Albania, and the unprecedented mobilization of the working masses, the communists and cadres in work, when Malenkov interrupted me:

«*Nu, tovarish Enver,*»* he said, «you are presenting the situation in Albania to us as good, but

* Well, Comrade Enver (Russian in the original).

the facts are not so. Therefore listen to our observations.»

And they delivered a cart-load of criticism about our situation and work. We do not know from what source they had obtained these «data», but the fact is that things were exaggerated and inflated to an astonishing degree. Two of their «criticisms», in particular, have stuck in my mind.

The first was about our state apparatus.

«Your apparatus,» the Soviet leadership had allegedly observed, «is so extended and inflated that not even Rockefeller and Morgan would dare to maintain it!»

And immediately after dubbing us Rockefellers and Morgans, in the next criticism they went to the other extreme:

«Your peasants are short of food, have no oxen, have no flocks, have not even a chicken (only they know how they had counted the chickens in Albania!), let alone other things of prime necessity.»

Rockefellers on the one hand, and poverty-stricken on the other! How was I to understand this logic?!

But the voice of Mikoyan did not allow me to ponder longer... As the man of figures he was, Mikoyan was speaking with percentages, numbers, comparisons and graphs. And he went on:

«Your economic situation is bad, your agri-

culture is in a miserable state, you have less livestock than before the war, you import 20 per cent of your bread grain, the collectivization is proceeding slowly, the peasantry is not convinced about the collectivization. You are exploiting the peasants. Financial matters are going badly with you. You do not know how to conduct trade,» the Armenian prattled.

Despite the respect which I had for the Soviet leaders, I could not remain silent.

«We are not feasting and dancing,» I replied. «We are toiling and sweating, but everything can't be put right immediately. You have gone through this phase, too, don't forget.»

«No,» he said, «we don't forget, but we ourselves worked.»

«And we, too, are ourselves working,» I continued, «because there are no serfs in our country. We are not begging, but we are asking you for internationalist aid.»

My sharp replies made him soften his tone a little. Nevertheless he continued:

«Your plans are always unfulfilled. Let us take building. You are doing a colossal amount of building within your country. But these buildings are not being completed, in the first place, because you are short of labour power, and have not created suitable conditions, and second, because you are engaged in building many factories which are not necessary. You are doing all this building

without taking account of the real conditions of Albania. You are building a hydro-power station in Mat. We ask you: where are you going to use the electric power? We do not see where you will use it. You have no need for so much electric power.»

His reasoning seemed very astonishing to me, and I objected:

«When it is finished, the hydro-power station on the Mat River will provide about 25,000 kW. Does this seem a large and unnecessary amount to you?! Bear in mind, Comrade Mikoyan, not only that we need electric power just now, but also that the planned development of our economy in the future cannot be guaranteed without taking timely measures to ensure the necessary supply of electric power.»

«You are not exact in your planning. The hydro-power station is costing you an enormous amount and you won't know what to do with the current,» he persisted. «Likewise you have planned to build unnecessary factories, like those for steel, timber-processing, paper, glass, linseed, bread, etc. Does Albania need all these factories? Why are you building the refinery?[1] Have you enough oil or will you build this refinery to have it lie idle? Have a good look at these things and remove what is unnecessary. The question of agriculture is very

1 This refers to the oil refinery which was going up in Cërrik at that time.

critical, therefore reduce your investments in industry and strengthen agriculture!»

I listened to him saying this and for a moment it seemed to me that I was facing not a member of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet deputy prime minister, but Kidric, Tito's envoy, who with his associates, seven to eight years earlier, had done everything possible to convince us to abandon industry and not set up any industrial project. «Agriculture, agriculture,» insisted the men of Belgrade. «Agriculture, only agriculture,» I was hearing them advise me now, in Moscow in 1953...

This whole meeting, which set out to examine our economic problems, continued in this spirit to the end.

A few days later, we sat down again with Mikoyan and one or two other Soviet officials and again «thrashed out» the economic problems. Seeing the unhelpful predisposition of the friends, we ourselves cancelled many of our requests. We restricted ourselves to the most essential things and, regardless of their «advice», I dug my toes in and managed to secure a small credit for industry, especially for the oil industry and the mines.

I shall never forget the moment when we met Malenkov and Mikoyan for the final talk.

«Acting on your advice,» I said, «I talked things over with my comrades and we decided that

the paper mill, as well as the glass, steel and bread factories, from our former requests, should be postponed until the coming five-year plan.»

«*Pravilno!*» said Malenkov, while Mikoyan hastened to put a cross on the list with his big pencil.

«We'll postpone the building of the hydropower station in Mat until 1957!»

«*Pravilno!*» repeated Malenkov and Mikoyan quickly crossed that out, too.

«We'll remove the construction of the railway and the bitumen plant...»

«*Pravilno, pravilno...*»

And so this meeting came to an end.

«Come back again!» they told us when we were leaving. «Consider matters well and write to us!»

We thanked our friends for those things they had given us, and returned to Albania.

Although the least that could be said about our impressions from this trip to the Soviet Union is that they were not good, still we continued to preserve our feelings of friendship with and love for the great land of the Soviets, for the Homeland of Lenin and Stalin. Those things in their actions and gestures which had an unpleasant sound to us we kept strictly to ourselves, discussed them anxiously with one another, but in our hearts we did not want things there to take a wrong direction. We said to one another that the Soviet com-

rades themselves had great economic difficulties in their own country, the loss of Stalin had undoubtedly confused them a little, it was not so easy for them to take over the work of leadership completely, and we ardently hoped that these would be transient manifestations that would be put right in time.

A few months later, however, we again experienced something unpleasant and not correct on their part.

On December 22, 1953, we sent the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union a long letter in which, after speaking about the measures we had taken for the strengthening of the people's power, our economic development, the improvement of life in the village and the progress of agriculture, we also presented a series of problems for consultation and some modest requests for aid and credits for our coming five-year plan. We had drafted this letter according to their instructions, based on an extensive study we had carried out over several months and our opinion was that its requests were very well founded and accurate.

The Soviet specialists and advisers who had come to our country in the framework of the aid and collaboration between our two countries were of the same opinion.

No more than five to six days after we sent our letter to Moscow, the reply of the Central

Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union arrived in Tirana. The whole letter consisted of 15 or 20 lines. «You have not presented the situation well», «you have viewed the situation hastily», «you have not gone into things deeply», «you have not taken the necessary measures», «prepare the plan better and write to us again». This was the entire content of those few lines signed by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The disdainful and insulting tone of the new Soviet leadership could not fail to hurt us. We could not fail to ask in astonishment: «How can those people in Moscow know whether we have presented our problems rightly or wrongly, when it is we who live and work in Albania and not they?!»

However, the earlier meetings, especially with Mikoyan, had already taught us what should be done to make our letter pleasing to the Soviets: we cut out many of the requests we had presented, removed from the draft of the future plan some of the things we had envisaged and proposed, especially in the field of industry, and sent a second «edited», or more accurately, mutilated letter. We were not mistaken: they informed us they were awaiting us in Moscow to «consult with and help us».

We held the first meeting with the Soviet leaders on June 8, 1954. It was precisely that meeting at which Khrushchev did not want to speak

about our economic problems, since he was still «a bad Albanian», as he told us, but gave us a lecture about the role of the first secretary of the party and the prime minister.

Nevertheless, at the end of his lecture, Khrushchev also spoke about economic problems, in general, allegedly in the form of orientation and advice, especially about the line we should follow in our economic policy.

«In the development of your economy,» he said, «you must be careful with your calculations. Let us take oil, for example. Is it in your interest to invest so much for oil?!» he asked.

I understood immediately what he was getting at. Despite the «instructions» that they had given us previously, that we should give up prospecting for and extraction of oil in Albania, in the second letter which we sent them, we persisted in our opinions and asked them to assist us in this sector. Now, since he raised the matter, I took the opportunity to put forward our opinion once again.

«As you know from the letter which we sent you,» I said, «the government and the Central Committee of our Party, faced with a major economic and political problem, came to the conclusion that we must continue the extraction of and prospecting for oil at all costs, although this is a heavy burden and will continue to be a heavy burden on our economy for some time yet, if the flow of oil is not increased. We must continue to prospect for

and extract oil,» I continued, «because this is a substance of great strategic and economic importance for our country and our camp. However, the existing wells bored for prospecting and exploitation are utterly inadequate. The output of the existing wells is steadily falling off, and this not only causes considerable deficits in production and burdens our economy, but causes major fluctuations in the balance of our exports.»

«Are you certain that you have oil deposits?» asked Khrushchev.

«Allow me to tell you that the expedition of the geological studies for oil, led by Soviet specialists, which has been working since 1950, is optimistic about the presence of oil in many parts of our country, apart from the existing fields. However, the assessment of new reserves in both the existing fields and the new fields requires investments. We have made large expenditure in this sector, are building the refinery, have the most militant part of the working class there and have trained oil-worker cadres. In all this process,» I continued, «we cannot but honestly acknowledge many shortcomings and weaknesses on our part in the organization of the work. But we are struggling with all our might to eliminate them. However, here we are still in the dark about the reserves of oil. The reserves known up to now are minimal and they could run out within a period of 2 or 3 years if we do not intensify our prospecting.»

«That should not worry you,» interjected Khrushchev, «we have plenty of oil, we will supply you.»

«Yes,» I replied, «during the years 1948-1953 we were compelled to import refined oil and lubricating oils which cost millions of rubles. But you understand that this was and still is a very heavy burden for us and just think what funds will be freed if we find and use the oil which lies underground in our country.

«Apart from these very cogent reasons,» I went on, «there is another major reason for the necessity of the work with oil: in case of a threat to our country, if it is impossible in practice for our friends to supply us with fuel, we shall find ourselves without a drop of oil, and everything in our country will come to a standstill.

«Bearing in mind all these circumstances,» I said to Khrushchev, «we decided that we must continue the work for the extraction of and prospecting for oil. However, we need your aid for this. On the basis of the data from Soviet and Albanian experts, if we continue to extract oil and carry on our prospecting with the means we have at present, and in those places where we have those small reserves, we cannot go on for more than two or three years. After this period, we will again be facing very grave difficulties.

«Therefore, on the basis of this situation, we ask the Soviet government to study our request

about granting us a credit for the oil sector for the next three years. I would like to add that the machinery we have and will receive will be used by our own cadres, as well as a very small number of Soviet engineers.»

«Very well, very well,» said Khrushchev, «but the thing is that calculations must be made well, in detail and you must see whether it is worthwhile. I know that your oil is not in demand, it contains many impurities, especially bitumen and a high percentage of sulphur, and processing it makes it even less profitable. Let us give you an example of what has occurred to us with our oil at Baku. We have invested billions of rubles there. Beria always sought sums for investment for the development of oil in Baku from Joseph Vissarionovich, since Stalin, having worked in Baku in the past, knew that there was oil there. However, from the discoveries we have made today in other places of our homeland and from the analyses we have made, it turns out that the exploitation of the oil at Baku is not profitable.»

After giving me a good lecture with figures about the «profitability» and «non-profitability» of the extraction of oil, with the aim that I «should not make mistakes» like Stalin(!), Khrushchev came round to the point:

«Hence we must make our reckoning on economic questions very carefully, both in our country and in yours, and if you have profitable

sources of oil, fine, we give you credits. However, reckoning things this way, it turns out that it is more profitable for us to supply you from our oil...

«We must have regard for profitability in everything,» continued Khrushchev. «Let us take industry. I am of the same opinion as you that Albania should have its own industry. But what sort of industry? I think that you ought to develop the food industry, such as preserving and processing fish, fruit, vegetable oil, etc. You want to develop heavy industry, too. This should be looked at carefully,» he said and after mentioning that we could set up some engineering plant for repair work and spare parts, he added:

«As for the mineral-processing industry, for the production of metals, this is unprofitable for you. We have metals and we can supply you with what you want. If we give you one day's production from our industry, your needs will be fulfilled for the whole year.»

«Likewise in agriculture. In your country,» he continued, «you should plant those crops which grow best and are more profitable. In this direction, too, we have made mistakes, as in Georgia, for example. We had taken the decision to plant bread grain there, to plant cotton in the Ukraine, etc. But calculations show that in Georgia we should grow citrus fruit, grapes, and other fruit, and should grow grain in the Ukraine. Now we

have taken other decisions and have eliminated those crops which don't grow well, both in Georgia and other places. Thus, in Albania, too, those crops which do best and yield the greatest production, such as cotton, citrus fruit, olives, etc., should be developed. In this way Albania will become a beautiful garden and we will fulfil each other's needs.»

«One of the main directions of the development of agriculture in our country,» I said, «is that of increasing bread grain production. Bread has always been and still is a great problem for us.»

«Don't worry about growing bread grain,» interjected Khrushchev immediately. «We shall supply you with all the wheat you want, because even one day's overfulfilment of the plan in the Soviet Union is sufficient for Albania to live on for three years. We are advancing rapidly in agriculture,» he continued. «Let me read you some of the statistics about the fulfilment of the plan of the spring sowing in our country: the planting has been fulfilled... per cent, ... hectares of land more than last year have been planted, ... million hectares above the plan...,» and he went on to stuff us with figures, which he rattled off, one after the other, to give us the impression that we were dealing not with any sort of leader, but with one that had the situation at his fingertips.

As for his figures, we had no reason to doubt

their accuracy, therefore we were pleased and wished the Soviet Union the greatest possible progress. As to the opinions and «directions» which he gave us for the development of our economy, however, we could not agree with Khrushchev at all. I do not want to say that as early as this first official meeting with him, in June 1954, we managed to realize that we were facing the future chief of modern revisionism. No, we were to realize this later, but at this meeting we noticed that his ideas, both about oil and the orientation of industry and agriculture in our country, were not correct, did not respond to the needs of our country, and were not compatible with the basic principles of the construction of socialism in a country or with the teachings and experience of Lenin and Stalin. Therefore, we decided to oppose his ideas and defend our own views.

At this meeting, however, Khrushchev left no room for debate.

«I expressed these opinions so that you will bear them in mind,» he said in conclusion. «As to the discussion of the concrete questions you raised here in connection with the development of your economy, for our part, we have appointed a group of comrades headed by Mikoyan. Finally, we shall meet again and make the decision jointly.»

For several days on end we battled with Mikoyan, who now set to work with his pruning

shears. In order to reject our requests for the development of industry, which were modest enough, but on which we insisted, he and his comrades, as usual, repeated the same old refrain:

«Why do you need industry?! Don't you see the state of your countryside?»

Naturally we knew the situation in our countryside much better than they, knew the backwardness of our agriculture inherited from the past, and precisely because we knew these things well, we had always devoted special attention to the progress of agriculture and to the raising of the standard of living in the countryside. We had made and were making very big investments for our possibilities in land improvement, irrigation, opening up new land, etc.; we were supplying the peasantry with selected seeds and farming machinery, had set up a number of state farms, had progressed well in the collectivization, had continually taken measures to facilitate and encourage the increase of agricultural production and the raising of the standard of living in the village, etc. But you can't achieve everything overnight. Moreover, we were well aware of the Marxist-Leninist truth, and we felt it in our daily practice, that agriculture could never advance without the development of industry, without the creation and strengthening of those basic branches which would favour the harmonious development of the whole of our people's economy. Therefore, in these meet-

ings with the Soviet leaders we stuck to our opinions and persisted in our requests.

«Despite all the progress it has made,» we told them among other things, «today our industry produces only a limited range of products and is quite unable to fulfil the needs of the working people. In many cases, too, securing our products depends on the delivery of many goods from abroad, such as fuel, steel, rolled steel, tyres, chemicals, chemical fertilizers, spare parts, instruments, and many other things.

«Hence, our country is heavily dependent on imports. Our industry still produces very little, and being remote from friendly countries, frequently production is suspended in whole branches of industry because of the lack of some raw material, supplementary material or instrument. Our state has never possessed even the smallest reserve in any kind of material — from bread to pencils. It is necessary for us to import not only the main goods, like grain, fuel, etc., but also every kind of machinery and equipment, instruments, spare parts, textiles, footwear, thread, needles, nails, glass, rope, string, sacks, pencils, paper, razor blades, matches, medicaments, etc.

«Such a grave situation, comrades,» we went on, «does not make us pessimistic, but this is the reality. We have to strive might and main to overcome the difficulties in order to improve the situation. But how to achieve this?

«The Central Committee of the Party and our Government think that the existing situation cannot be altered, except by developing industry along with agriculture, the industry which, step by step, will relieve us of that great burden of imports, which we are obliged to cope with at present,» we told them.

In the end Mikoyan and his group gave way.

«All right,» he said, «we shall refer those things on which we have not reached agreement to the leadership and decide on them jointly at the final meeting.»

At the final meeting of this visit, which was held two or three days before we left for Albania, Khrushchev's behaviour was more friendly and more open. After our insistence on those things we were seeking (undoubtedly Mikoyan had informed him of the debates we had had), Khrushchev showed himself «more generous», repeated several times, «We will assist little Albania», and agreed that some of our requests for credits and aid would be fulfilled.

At this meeting he spoke well about our Party, the Central Committee and me, and, as usual, was unsparing in his «boastful promises». We were soon to understand why he acted like that: it was still the beginning of the elevation of him and his group, and for this he needed popularity, good opinion, the idea within the Soviet Union and abroad that we had to do with a jolly good fellow,

a warm-hearted, skilful and wise leader, who knows how to put up opposition, but can also back down, who is not tight-fisted, but prudent and a consummate accountant.

Thus, it was the time when Khrushchev was «making investments» in favour of his secret action, and to this end, according to the occasion, he had to appear «generous», «friendly» and «humane». However, behind this fine, «friendly» façade, the guard of the Mikoyans and other functionaries of commerce was extremely active, and both with us and with others, they behaved like real hucksters in the talks over economic problems. They were Khrushchev's men who, with his knowledge and on his instructions, employed all kinds of pressure and trickery during «working meetings» and «the concrete examination of matters» to prune our requests and to «smooth» matters over in such a way that when we finally met Khrushchev, all that remained for him to do was to smile, flatter and propose toasts.

Once we had a bitter wrangle with Mikoyan in connection with granting us a credit for mass consumer goods. There is no need here to dwell on what a grave situation we had during those years for such goods, or on the urgent needs which our country had in this direction. The Soviet leadership was aware of the situation, but, in support of our request for the credit I mentioned, we had written it a letter in which we gave a brief outline

of how we fulfilled the needs of the population. However, before beginning the examination of our request, Mikoyan levelled the following charge against us:

«You are using up the credits we have granted you for the development of the economy in other sectors. You buy mass consumer goods with them.»

I replied: «We have had and still have very great needs for consumer goods, but I am not aware of what you charge us with. We have never permitted the credits for the development of industry or agriculture to be used to purchase commodities.»

«Yes, you have!» repeated Mikoyan. «You have used up... million rubles,» and he mentioned a figure which I don't remember precisely, but which amounted to more than ten million.

«I'm hearing this for the first time,» I said, «nevertheless, we shall look into the matter.»

«I shall convince you!» said Mikoyan in a stern and angry tone and ordered one of the nearby functionaries to bring in the documents.

A little later he came in, looking pale, and laid the accounts before Mikoyan.

«There is no violation,» he said. «The Albanian side has bought the goods you mentioned with the credit which our side accorded it precisely for consumer goods.»

Mikoyan, in a tight spot, muttered something

between his teeth, and then, in connection with our request for a new credit for the purchase of consumer goods, he replied:

«We can no longer give you such credits, because we make deals over these things: you give us something, we give you something in return.»

«I am sorry that you present the question in this way, when you are well aware that our country is in difficulties and when the Italian, Yugoslav and Greek enemies have us encircled and are plotting against us,» I replied. «What else do you want us to give you? We supply you and the countries of people's democracy with the chrome, oil and copper we extract. Do you expect us to give you the bread from the mouths of our people, who still have insufficient food? I do not consider your reasoning in order,» I told the Armenian, «and I ask you to re-examine the matter.»

They did re-examine it, but they accepted our requests after making big cuts. They gave us some limited credits, but they gave us arrogant criticism wholesale with lashings of «advice».

All these stands, and others like these, in our relations with them, continued up to the time of the Meeting of the 81 parties, which was held in Moscow in November 1960.

During this time we had many bilateral meetings with the Soviet leaders, at which we discussed economic problems with them and sought some aid and credits, and we also had many con-

tacts with them in the meetings, talks and consultations which were organized in the framework of the Council of Mutual Economic Aid.

The way in which these meetings were organized and our friends behaved towards us, towards the problems we raised and the difficulties we had, more and more impelled us to ask ourselves: are we dealing with Marxist-Leninists or hucksters? Ulbricht, Novotny, Ochab, Dej, Kadar, Gomulka, Cyrankiewicz, Zhivkov, and the others, were at one another's throats; each of them complained that he was in dire straits; they all called for «more aid» from their friends, because they had «pressure from below»; they tried to elbow one another out, presented all kinds of «arguments» and figures; they tried to dodge their obligations and to grab as much as possible at the expense of others. Meanwhile Khrushchev or his envoys would get up, deliver lectures on the «socialist division of labour», support one or the other, according to their own interests in a given situation, and demand «unity» and «understanding» in the «socialist family». And in all this wrangling Albania went almost unmentioned, as if it did not exist for them.

The talks and consultations went on for two, three or four days on end, whole dossiers were filled with speeches, requests, decisions, balances, but socialist Albania was treated with disdain by the others as if we were a nuisance. We were well

aware of the situation in our country, were conscious that our economic potential was nowhere near that of the other countries; we knew also that these countries had their own big problems and difficulties, but these should never have served as a reason for them to underrate and ignore us. With great efforts, after many meetings and talks, we managed occasionally to squeeze some aid or credit out of them. We thanked them whole-heartedly for what they gave us, thanked the fraternal peoples, first of all, and for our part, not only did we fully repay the credits on time, but with what we had, we honestly fulfilled every other obligation of ours towards our friends. It was precisely sincerity, the genuine internationalist spirit, that was lacking amongst them. When it came to practical fulfilment of their commitments to provide aid for our country, each of them would make excuses:

«We have shortages and needs ourselves,» said Ulbricht, «we have pressure from Federal Germany, therefore we are unable to help Albania.»

«The counter-revolution caused us damage,» was Kadar's justification. «We cannot fulfil our commitment about aid.»

All of them, one after the other, acted in this way. And in the end the «solution» was found:

«The Council of Mutual Economic Aid recommends to the Albanian comrades that the prob-

lems raised by them here should be solved with the Soviet government through bilateral meetings.»

Among many such meetings of the Comecon countries, the one that was held in Moscow in June 1956 has stuck in my mind. Now Khrushchev was going headlong down his road of betrayal, but the others, too, were galloping after him. The 20th Congress of the CPSU, about which I shall speak later, was having its effect. Lack of unity, division and contradictions are the natural outcome and concomitants of revisionism.

This was apparent at this meeting, 3 or 4 months after the 20th Congress.

Ochab, who had become first secretary of the Polish United Workers' Party, got up and declared:

«We have not fulfilled the obligations with which we have been charged for coal and are not going to do so. We cannot fulfil the plan, its targets are set too high and must be reduced. The coal workers live badly, they work to exhaustion.»

As soon as he finished, Gerö, Ulbricht and Dej got up, one after the other, and levelled every kind of charge against the Poles. The atmosphere was very heated.

«If you want coking coal, invest in Poland,» replied Ochab. «We must improve the standard of living. Things have reached such a state that the

Polish workers are about to go on strike and abandon the mines...»

«Where should we invest first?!» replied the others. «In the steel plants of the Soviet Union or in your coal mines?!»

«We must examine these things,» said Khrushchev, trying to cool the tempers. «As for the question of workers, if you Poles have insufficient, or those you have walk out, we can bring workers from other countries.»

At this Ochab jumped up.

«It is not fair,» he shouted. «You must help us. We are not going back to Poland without settling this matter. Either reduce the plan or increase the investments...»

«Once taken, the decisions must be carried out,» interposed Dej.

«The decisions are not being carried out,» said Gerö, adding fuel to the flames. «We have several factories in which we have been told to produce arms and special equipment, but no one is buying the products from us.»

«They don't take them from us, either,» said Ochab, jumping up again. «What are we to do with them?!»

«Let us not speak here like factory managers,» said Khrushchev to Ochab. «Things can't be discussed in this way. You must look at the profitability. We, too, have changed direction in many plants. For example,» continued Khrushchev,

«we have turned some arms plants into plants producing water pumps. I have some suggestions about these problems,» continued Khrushchev, and he began to bring out those «gems» which he had on the tip of his tongue:

«In regard to a number of special products of industry,» he said among other things, «we must do as Hitler did. At that time Germany was alone and he produced all those things. We must study this experience and we, too, must set up joint enterprises for special products, for example, weapons.»

We could not believe our ears! Could it be true that the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union wanted to learn from the experience of Hitler and even recommended it to others?! But this is what things were coming to. The others listened and nodded approval.

«You must provide us with designs,» said Ochab.

«You don't deserve to get them,» shouted Khrushchev angrily, «because the West steals them from you. We gave you the patent of an aircraft and the capitalists stole it from you.»

«That occurred,» admitted Ochab, and pulled in his horns a little.

«We gave you the secret report of the 20th Congress and you printed it and sold it at 20 zloty a copy. You don't know how to keep secrets.»

«Right!» whispered Ochab, and drew in his horns even further.

«We have given you another four top secret documents and they have flown from you,» added Bulganin, numbering them off one by one to his face.

«Yes,» said Ochab, and now his voice could hardly be heard. «Someone stole them from us and fled to the West.»

«The situation in Poland is not good,» continued Khrushchev. «You are following an opportunist policy towards the Soviet Union and the countries of people's democracy, let alone within your own country.»

«In the context of collaboration,» interjected Ulbricht, «we must collaborate with all, especially with the social-democrats.»

For a moment Khrushchev was at a loss for words. «Collaboration with all», rehabilitations, a gentle policy towards enemies, were his ideas, the continuation of his opportunist and pacifist policy, the very policy which he was following in the Soviet Union. The others were not lagging behind, indeed, some of them were trying to outstrip him.

«Agreed, collaboration,» shouted Khrushchev, «but not to rise against the Soviet Union and our camp. This is what is happening in Poland.» He turned to Ochab and Cyrankiewicz, who during the whole time had sat smoking French

Gauloises, without saying a single word. «You must improve the situation. You must build up the people's trust in you.»

«We have released all the imprisoned social-democrats,» said Ochab.

«You should have kept some of them,» said Saburov ironically. «To whom are we going to drink the toast today, to the social-democrats?!»

Khrushchev provided the answer:

«Let us drink to collaboration!»

It was quite obvious that things in the camp were taking the wrong road. The «demons» which Khrushchev released from the bottle were stirring and poking out their tongues even at their liberator. He tried to manoeuvre, to get them on side, to set the others on to one (this time Ochab was in the dock), and then, when he saw that the quarrel was not dying down, he poured out threats and warnings to all. And as the inveterate trickster he was, he knew how to find the best means of pressure. This time he used the weapon of bread. One of the Soviet *chinovniki** of Comecon reported briefly on the state of agriculture in the camp and sounded the alarm about the deficits in bread grain.

Khrushchev got up at once and exploited the opportunity:

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* bureaucratic functionaries of Czarist Russia (Russian in the original).

«Bread is a vital problem,» he said in a grave tone, in which both the pressure and the threat were clear. «We have given you what we had to give. Now we have no more to give you. Therefore, think well about bread, there is no other way...»

After continuing for several minutes to wave the whip of bread, suddenly his face brightened and he hopped with great pleasure to his favourite theme — maize! I cannot remember any of the meetings I have had with him, even those purely for political and ideological problems, in which Khrushchev did not eulogize the plant so dear to his heart.

«In recent years,» he said, «we have given importance to maize and have achieved marvellous results. With maize,» he continued, «we solved the problem of meat, milk and butter.»

«Without meat, milk and butter there is no socialism,» put in Mikoyan to sweeten up his «chief».

«No, there is not!» replied Khrushchev and continued, «Every leader must give importance to maize! Look, I took my native village under my patronage, and allow me to report to you the results: I found 60 pigs in the first year, increased them to 250 two years ago, and now there are 600 of them.»

And after this «colossal» report, imagine how befitting this was in the mouth of the number one

leader of the Soviet Union, he hurled criticism at all of them — Ulbricht, Hegedüs, Cyrankiewicz in turn.

«As to Albania,» he added, «I have nothing to say because I do not know it.»

I seized the opportunity and interjected:

«Come for a visit and get to know it.»

«I can't give you an answer now, we shall meet separately,» he said, and pressed on with his lecture, afraid that the inspiration might escape him.

He spun out the problem at great length, brought up examples, made criticisms, and finally added:

«In regard to Bulgaria and Albania, which are countries with a large peasantry, but especially about Albania, we must think somewhat more deeply and help them.»

As usual, the Council decided that we should solve the problems we raised there with the Soviets. A few days later we met Khrushchev and talked for about an hour.

«First of all,» I said, «we would like you to visit Albania. Your visit will have great importance for enhancing the authority and prestige of our country.»

«I, too, would like to come,» he told me, «but there are certain difficulties. How far is Albania from Moscow?»

He deserved to be told, «Just another twenty

minutes beyond Belgrade,» since he had become accustomed to that line long ago, but I bit my tongue. I told him that on a TU-104 the flight from Moscow to Tirana would take about 3 hours, and added:

«Let us establish this line.»

«But the TU-104 has many seats. Would there be enough passengers to fill it?!» he asked me, quick to catch at the «profitability».

«Our comrades and yours are always travelling from Moscow to Tirana and back and there is no reason for the aircraft to travel empty,» I said.

«I would like to come,» he repeated to excuse himself. «Indeed I told Tito that I wanted to visit Albania, but first I must take a holiday.»

«You can have your holiday in our country,» I said. «We have very fine beaches, as well as mountains.»

«Oh, if I come I won't be able to rest!» he said to close this question.

There was no reason for me to persist any further.

«As you wish,» I said, and went on into economic matters. I gave him a brief outline of the situation and presented some of the problems, which were causing us most concern.

«The problem is,» said Khrushchev, «that from now on we must think how to find sources of income so that Albania can advance. This is how the friends, also, should look at this prob-

lem. The question of Albania has great importance,» he continued, «because by means of your country, we want to attract the attention of Turkey, Greece and Italy, that is, to have them take you as an example. Now this matter must be well thought out and we must find the proper ways.»

He was silent for a moment, apparently in order to find one of these roads, and I thought that he would come up with maize. But I was wrong.

«Do you grow cotton?» he asked me. «What area do you employ for this crop? What yield do you get?»

I replied to his questions.

«That is nothing,» he said to me, and went on: «We think that you should develop the cotton crop, and in such a way that it will become a great asset, because it brings in a handsome income for you and our friends, for the countries of people's democracy which do not have cotton. Hence, you have great possibilities to profit from cotton. This is the first thing,» he said, and raised one finger.

«Secondly,» he continued, «the question of sheep raising is a problem for you,» and he asked me about the number of sheep, the yield of wool, milk, meat, etc. After my replies he continued:

«Sheep must become another great asset for you. You must breed fine-woolled sheep. You have pastures and the sheep can be developed. Therefore you must find the most suitable breed,

commence artificial insemination on a broad scale, and increase them.»

After giving us his «second road» of development, Khrushchev began on the «third road» that would lead us to salvation. This had to do with fish.

«Fish,» he said, «is another great asset for you. In the Scandinavian countries, in Norway, for example, they have created such a great wealth with fish, that not only do the people eat plenty of it, but they also export large quantities. They catch fish not only in their territorial waters, but also in the open seas. This is what you must do, too,» instructed Khrushchev, «so that fish becomes a great asset for Albania. You must do these things without fail, and we shall help you, and send you specialists, a fishing fleet, etc.»

Since the first three «roads» were leaving my mind boggling, all curiosity I awaited a «fourth road» and he did not fail to make this clear to me also.

«The question of citrus fruit is important for you,» he said. «They, too, should become a great asset for you, because lemons, grape fruit, oranges, etc., are in great demand.»

These were his instructions for the «construction of socialism» in Albania! Finally he added:

«Thought must be given to other assets, too, for instance, to minerals, but the main ones are those I mentioned.

«We will assist you to develop cotton, fishing, citrus fruit and sheep. Both you and we must study these things,» he concluded, «and we are convinced that in this way Albania will quickly become an example for Greece, Turkey and Italy.»

It was useless to enter into discussion about the «gems» of wisdom he presented to us. I thanked him for his «advice» and we parted.

Now everything was becoming more clear. The Council of Mutual Economic Aid recommends that we solve the economic problems with Khrushchev. Khrushchev recommends that we solve them with cotton, sheep and with... «the miracle of fish».

All these stands and actions, seen in the complexity of political, ideological, military and other problems, were making us more than ever convinced that in our camp, first of all in the Soviet Union, things were on the decline. Other events were to follow and we, living through them intensively, would learn and would prepare ourselves more for the coming battles.

4. THE TOUCH-STONE

Khrushchev has his eyes on Yugoslavia. The first sign of the flirtation: the Soviet letter of June 1954; Khrushchev blames the Information Bureau for the Yugoslav leadership's betrayal. Intense exchange of cordial correspondence between Krushchev and Tito. Khrushchev decides to rehabilitate the renegades. Our clear-cut opposition: the letters of May and June 1955. Talk with Ambassador Levichkin: «How can such decisions be taken so lightly and in a unilateral way?» Insistent invitation to go to the Soviet Union «on holiday»! Meeting with Suslov. Mikoyan telephones at midnight: «Meet Tempo, iron out your disagreements.» The meeting with S. V. Tempo.

All these things which occurred in the Soviet Union after the death of Stalin worried our Party and its leadership. Of course, at that period, especially before the 20th Congress, our suspicions were based on isolated facts, which the Soviet

leaders covered up with torrents of demagogy. Nevertheless, the stands they maintained in their meetings with us, their actions at home and abroad made us wary. Khrushchev's flirtations with Tito were particularly unpleasant for us. We, for our part, continued to fight Titoite Yugoslav revisionism with the greatest severity and defended the correct Marxist-Leninist stands of Stalin and the Information Bureau towards the Yugoslav revisionist leaders. We did this not only while Stalin was alive, but also in the transitional period that the Soviet Union went through after Stalin's death, when Khrushchev triumphed with his putsch and made the law there, as well as after Khrushchev fell. And this is the stand we shall always maintain towards Yugoslav revisionism, until it is completely destroyed ideologically and politically.

We watched every action of Khrushchev's with great vigilance and attention. On the one hand, we saw that in general nothing was being said against Stalin, that there was talk of the unity of the socialist camp headed by the Soviet Union, that Khrushchev spoke against American imperialism in «strong» terms and made some superficial criticism of Titoism, while on the other hand, he waved the white flag of reconciliation and submission to them. In this situation we followed the course of friendship with the Soviet Union, struggled to safeguard and strengthen this friendship

and this was not a tactic, but a matter of principle for us. Nevertheless, we did not allow wrong actions and deviations in line to go uncriticized when they appeared.

For us, the struggle against American imperialism and Yugoslav Titoism was a touch-stone to assess the stands of Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites with the Marxist eye. In fact Khrushchev prattled against capitalism and American imperialism, but we did not like those half-dozen daily meetings and *priyoms** with all kinds of American senators, multi-millionaires and businessmen. Khrushchev became a clown who performed all day and every day, lowering the dignity of the Soviet Union.

«We have our foot on the neck of the foreign enemy, he daren't move, we can turn him to ashes with atomic bombs,» he boasted in discourses from morning till late into the night. His tactic was to create euphoria within the country, to build up the prestige of his clique in the countries of people's democracy, and irrespective of his bombastic words, to imply to the Americans and world reaction: «We are no longer for the world proletarian revolution, want to collaborate closely with you, we need you and you must understand that we are changing colour, and making a major change of direction. We will have difficulties in making

* receptions (Russian in the original).

this change, therefore, you must help us in one way or another.»

On the Yugoslav question, which was clear to us, and that is why we did not shift from our stand, the Khrushchevites chopped and changed, and ebbed and flowed like the tide. The Khrushchevites sometimes abused and sometimes kissed the Yugoslav leaders. When they were abusing the Titoites, the Soviet revisionists said we were right, when they were kissing them, they tried to make us soften our stand towards the Titoite revisionists.

Khrushchev had his eyes fixed on the leadership of Yugoslavia and wanted at all costs, if not to subjugate it, to line it up on his side. Of course, in Tito he was seeking both an ideological ally and a leader whom he could take under his wings as the «big brother» he was. In other words, Tito was very dear to Khrushchev, because he was the first to attack Stalin and reject Marxism-Leninism. In this direction they were in complete accord, but while the Belgrade chief operated openly, Khrushchev wanted to retain his disguise. In the international arena, Tito had become the «communist» dear to American imperialism and world capitalism, which lavished credits and aid on him, so that he would howl against the Soviet regime and the Soviet state and at the same time sell Yugoslavia to foreign capital.

Khrushchev wanted to manoeuvre Tito in his

favour, so that this American agent in Belgrade would lower his tone a bit against the Soviet regime and reduce the great ardour he was showing to undermine the Soviet influence in the countries of people's democracy, to spread the influence of his Khrushchevite revisionist ideas in Yugoslavia and to restrain the Belgrade leadership in its orientation towards the Western way of life and American capital.

Tito, for his part, had long dreamed of shifting the epicentre of the leadership of this alleged communism from Moscow to Belgrade, and that Belgrade should replace Moscow in Eastern and South-eastern Europe. Tito's scheme had made no progress from the time he fell out with Stalin, who detected and sternly attacked the diabolical work of this renegade. Having the assistance of the Americans, Tito brought out this plan again when he saw that Nikita Khrushchev and his group were smashing the work of Lenin and Stalin.

Between these two chiefs of modern revisionism, Khrushchev and Tito, a long and complex confrontation was to develop, sometimes gentle, sometimes harsh, sometimes with attacks and abuse, and sometimes with flattery and smiles. But, regardless of the allegedly Marxist words and slogans, regardless of Khrushchev's vows that he was fighting to restore Tito to the positions of Marxism-Leninism, both when they were quar-

relling and when they were embracing, neither side acted on the basis or in the interests of Marxism-Leninism. Anti-communism remained the foundation of their relations; each of these two brothers in revisionism was to do his utmost to subjugate the other in his own interests, from the positions of anti-communism.

Our Party was to follow this process, step by step, with the greatest vigilance. As this process developed, our Party was to become even more convinced of what Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites were, and what they represented in the Soviet Union and in the international communist and workers' movement.

We received the first warning signal that the new Soviet leadership was changing the former course in the direction of Yugoslav revisionism in June 1954.

During the days of our stay in Moscow, the Soviet leadership handed us a long letter, signed by Khrushchev, addressed to the central committees of the sister parties, in which they informed us about the conclusions which the Soviet leadership had reached on the Yugoslav question. Although the letter was dated June 4, and we had been in Moscow for several days, and indeed on June 8 had concluded the official talks with the main Soviet leaders, they had not even mentioned to us the very important problem which they

raised in this letter. Apparently, Khrushchev, who was well aware of our resolute and unwavering stand towards the Belgrade traitors, wanted to act cautiously and gradually in regard to us.

Distorting the historical truth, Khrushchev and company had reached the conclusion that Yugoslavia's breaking away from the socialist camp and the «isolation of the Yugoslav working class from the ranks of the international workers' movement» were entirely due to the «breaking off of relations between the CPY and the international communist movement» in 1948. According to them, the stand that was taken in 1948 and 1949 towards the Yugoslav party was wrong, because this stand allegedly «forced the leading circles of Yugoslavia to make approaches to the USA and Britain»(!), to conclude the «military-political agreement with Greece and Turkey» (the Balkan Pact), to make a «series of serious concessions to capitalism», to move «towards the restoration of capitalism», etc. In short, according to Khrushchev, since the Information Bureau took a severe stand towards Yugoslavia, the latter, either from resentment or from desire, went and sold itself to imperialism, like the bride who went to sleep with the miller to spite her mother-in-law.

According to this logic of Khrushchev's, when our Party of Labour came into open confrontation and broke off contact with Khrushchevite revisionism, it would have to sell itself and the country to

imperialism, because otherwise it could not exist! And we heard this later from Khrushchev's own mouth when he accused us of selling ourselves «to imperialism for 30 pieces of silver»!

This was nothing but an anti-Marxist, capitalist logic. Our Party opposed Khrushchevite revisionism heroically, just as it had opposed Yugoslav revisionism earlier, and just as it fought resolutely against any other variant of revisionism, but it did not sell out and never will sell out to imperialism or anyone else, because as long as a party considers itself and respects itself as a genuine Marxist-Leninist party, whatever the conditions and situations it is in, it never allows itself to be bought or sold, but resolutely pursues its course, the course of uncompromising struggle against imperialism, revisionism and reaction.

Therefore, even if the Yugoslav leadership had been unjustly condemned in 1949, as Khrushchev was claiming, nothing could permit or justify its falling into the lap of imperialism. On the contrary, the fact that it further strengthened its contacts with imperialism and world reaction, proved very clearly that Stalin, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Information Bureau, our Party and all the other parties, were right when they exposed and condemned it.

But Nikita Khrushchev, consistent in his decision to rehabilitate the Belgrade revisionists, in his letter made the accusation against the Informa-

tion Bureau, of course without mentioning it by name, that in 1948 and in 1949, «all the possibilities were not exploited to the end..., efforts were not made to settle the unsolved problems and disagreements», a thing which, according to him, «would have avoided Yugoslavia's going over to the enemy camp». In the letter which he handed us, Nikita Khrushchev went so far as to say openly that «many of the problems which served to cause differences between the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party of Yugoslavia..., did not constitute serious reasons for dispute and even the misunderstandings that had arisen could have been settled.» Nothing could have pleased Tito and the Yugoslav leadership more! With one stroke of his pencil, Khrushchev cancelled out major problems of principle which had been the basis of the struggle against Yugoslav revisionism, described them as «not serious reasons» and «misunderstandings», and hence, begged the traitors' pardon because they had allegedly been attacked over trifles!

But who were to blame for these «misunderstandings»? In his letter Khrushchev did not attack the Information Bureau, Stalin, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, or the other parties which supported the Information Bureau decisions of 1949, by name. Apparently, he considered it still too early to make these attacks. And those who were to blame were found to be Beria among

the Soviets, who with his actions had caused «justifiable dissatisfaction among the Yugoslav leadership», and Djilas among the Yugoslavs (who had been condemned by Tito in the meantime), who «openly propagated liquidationist views», was «an active partisan for the orientation of Yugoslavia towards the Western countries», etc.!

Thus, according to Khrushchev, the problem turned out to be very simple. The breach with Yugoslavia was based not on real reasons but on fabricated pretexts, so «we wronged you for nothing and the culprits have been found: Beria on our side, and Djilas on yours. Now we both have condemned these enemies, therefore, all we have to do is to kiss and make up and forget the past.»

How lightly this clown juggled with the issues! But we, Albanian communists, who had been fighting the Belgrade traitor clique tooth and nail for more than ten years, who had experienced their evil-doings and courageously resisted them, were not and could never be in agreement with this solution of the Yugoslav problem. However, it was still 1954. The open attack on Stalin had not yet been launched. Nothing bad about him had been said openly, Khrushchev was still using a very cunning and skilfully disguised demagogy, and to our eyes the Soviet Union retained the colours of the time of Stalin, though a little faded. What is more, in this letter, which disturbed us profoundly, Khrushchev vowed that everything

he did was «in favour of Marxism-Leninism and socialism», that in their new view of the Yugoslav problem, the Soviet leadership and the other sister parties had no aim other than «to ruin the plans of the Anglo-American imperialists and to utilize all the possibilities to strengthen their own influence over the people of Yugoslavia», «to exert a positive influence on the Yugoslav working class», etc. He added, also, that the efforts of the Soviet side and other parties and countries of people's democracy would serve as a new step to test «how ready and determined the Yugoslav leaders are to follow the road of socialism».

All these things made us very wary and cautious in our reply. During those days when we were in Moscow, Comrade Hysni, the other comrades of the delegation and I discussed the problem at length and finally gave the Soviet leadership our reply in writing.

In this reply, without openly opposing Khrushchev, we stressed our permanent stand towards the revisionist leadership in Belgrade, emphasized the importance of the Information Bureau decisions of 1948 and 1949 and did not permit any allusion to the re-examination of the stand adopted previously towards the deviations in line of the Yugoslav leadership.

In our written reply we countered Khrushchev's idea that the «breaking off of relations drove the Yugoslav leaders into the lap of im-

perialism», with the thesis that it was the Yugoslav leaders themselves who betrayed Marxism-Leninism and set their people and their homeland on the course of enslavement and under the dictate of Anglo-American imperialists, that it was their anti-Marxist line which was the factor that gravely damaged the vital interests of the peoples of Yugoslavia, that it was they who took Yugoslavia out of the socialist camp, who changed the Yugoslav party into a bourgeois party and isolated it from the world movement of the proletariat.

While clearly pointing out these truths, we went on to stress that we agreed that efforts should be made by the communist parties to help rescue the peoples of Yugoslavia from enslavement and poverty, but we stressed once again that in our opinion the Yugoslav leaders had gone a long way down their anti-Marxist road, the road of submission to American and British imperialists.

With this we told Khrushchev indirectly that we did not agree with the hopes and illusions which he nurtured towards the Yugoslav leaders and especially towards «Comrade Tito», as he began to call him. I expressed these opinions to Khrushchev, also, in the next talk I had with him, on June 23, 1954. However, he pretended not to notice the different stands each of us adopted over the Yugoslav problem. Perhaps he did not want to create conflicts with us in the

first official meetings we had with him. Perhaps he underrated us and did not bother his head about our opposition. I remember that he was all euphoria and spoke with the assurance of someone who has everything running smoothly. He had just returned from a lightning visit to Czechoslovakia (he was a master of every kind of visit: lightning, incognito, official, friendly, much publicized, secret, day, night, announced and unannounced, short, long, with his suite or quite alone, etc.).

«In Prague,» he told me, «I took up the Yugoslav problem again with representatives of several sister parties who were there. They were all fully in agreement with me and considered the efforts of our party very important.»

Then looking me right in the eye, he added:

«Recently we, the Hungarians, the Bulgarians, Rumanians, and others have taken good steps towards the normalization of relations with Yugoslavia...»

I sensed why he stressed this. He wanted to say to me: «See, we are all agreed, hence you Albanians should join us, too.»

I told him briefly that there is a very long history of our relations with the Yugoslav party and state, that the Yugoslav leadership itself was to blame for ruining our relations, and that if the Albanian-Yugoslav state relations were at a very low ebb, this was no fault of ours but a conse-

quence of the unceasing anti-Marxist and anti-Albanian stands and actions of the leaders in Belgrade.

«*Konechno, konechno*!»* said Khrushchev jumping up and I understood that he did not want me to go any further with the discussion of this problem.

«We have taken all measures,» he said. «Tomorrow our ambassador in Yugoslavia goes to meet Tito in Brioni. We think that there are great possibilities of achieving our objective. If nothing is achieved,» he said in conclusion, «then we still have other methods.»

This is how the romance of the Khrushchev-Tito love affair began. A few days later Khrushchev handed his opinions or «conclusions» about the «new analysis» of the Yugoslav problem in writing to Tito. The latter, of course, was gloating over the fact that things were developing with Khrushchev just as he had envisaged, but, as the sly old fox he was, he did not prove so foolish as to throw himself into Khrushchev's arms. On the contrary, Tito schemed and worked to ensure that Khrushchev, who had been the first to back down, would also be the first to openly beg his pardon in Belgrade. Moreover, Tito was up to his neck in the mire of imperialism, was bound hand and foot, therefore if he were to say the odd word about

* Of course, of course (Russian in the original).

«socialism» and «Marxism» he had to do this only to the extent that he was permitted by his Werstern overlords, first of all the American imperialists. After leaving Khrushchev on tenterhooks for some time, in order to play on the strings which were out of tune, Tito finally replied to him by the middle of August 1954, also in writing.

The essence of the letter from the revisionist in Belgrade was more or less this: I am pleased that you, Nikita Sergeyevich, are proving to be a reasonable and broad-minded man, but go a bit further, come out more clearly for the new course of reconciliation and embraces. We Yugoslavs agree that we should be reconciled, Tito told Khrushchev, but as you know, we have taken up with new friends with whom we have strong and deep links, therefore reconciliation with you «must develop in the direction which responds to our policy of international cooperation», that is to say, the Yugoslavs' links with imperialism must not be damaged but must be further strengthened.

Likewise, in dictatorial tones, Tito did not fail to set Khrushchev a series of other conditions for their future relations:

First, Tito demanded that the Soviet side should work harder to eliminate the «negative elements» and remove the obstacles which had exerted an influence on the break in 1948 and, obviously, with this the «master» in Belgrade was

openly demanding that the whole correct and principled line followed by the Information Bureau, Stalin and the other communist parties in 1948, should be revised.

Second, the coming reconciliation, dictated Tito, must not imply «complete unanimity in our assessment of and stand towards events», hence, let us be reconciled, but let each of us act on his own account, according to his own ideas.

Third, the road I follow and the road you follow for the construction of «socialism», is a matter for each of us to decide and must not influence the normalization of relations; hence, I shall build «specific socialism» and you must accept this without any quibble.

Fourth, the causes of the conflict, said Tito, are neither Beria nor Djilas. The causes go deeper, therefore you, the Soviets, and the others united with you, must completely abandon the line of the time of Stalin, abandon your former principles, because in this way the true causes of the conflict are automatically overcome.

Finally, Tito rejected Khrushchev's proposal on a bilateral top-level meeting, making this conditional «on the achievement of preliminary successes in the direction of normalization». The implication was quite plain: if you want to meet me and come to terms with me, you must take further steps on the course on which you have set out, must act more quickly and boldly within the So-

viet Union and other countries and parties to spread and extend this «new» course, which had been and was his old course.

And Khrushchev, sometimes apparently resentful and sometimes enthusiastic in his actions, began to submit to and zealously apply Tito's conditions and orders.

Amongst us who followed this process with attention and concern, suspicions increased that these stands were leading the Soviet Union on an anti-Marxist course. Day by day we were becoming more convinced that Khrushchev was covering up a diabolical game with his clowning. We saw that he was lowering the prestige of the Soviet Communist Party and state by bending the knee to Tito. We watched this with regret, but, after all, the improvement of the relations between the Soviets and the Yugoslavs was their internal problem and we had no reason to oppose it. However, we were not and could never be in agreement with his efforts to wipe out the past and to treat the causes and reasons for the condemnation of the Yugoslav revisionists as something quite different from what they were in fact. Likewise, we could not agree to become Khrushchev's partners in this dubious and dangerous ideological and political gamble. What the Rumanians, the Hungarians and the Bulgarians did was their affair. For our part, we were not going to kiss and make up with the Titoites.

Apart from his own revisionist convictions, Khrushchev was undoubtedly urged by Tito to take this anti-Marxist step. He did not want to bend the knee to Khrushchev, therefore he persisted in his demand that Khrushchev should come and bend the knee to him in Belgrade, should go to make a self-criticism in Canossa (Belgrade). And this is what was done. After a year or so of secret and public contacts through special envoys, after an intense and very intimate exchange of correspondence between «Comrade Khrushchev» and «Comrade Tito», in the end, in April 1955, Tito sent the good news to his new sweetheart that he was ready for the marriage and invited him to hold the «wedding ceremony» either «on a ship on the Danube, or if you agree, in Belgrade. In our opinion,» continued the *kralj** of Belgrade, «the meeting should be open and made public.» Khrushchev could hardly wait to rush off to Belgrade, where he kissed and embraced Tito, made a self-criticism and «resolutely» wiped off the «accumulations of the past», and opened the «epoch of friendship between the two peoples and the two parties».

Our Party condemned Khrushchev's going to Belgrade and especially his decision to cleanse the uncleansable Tito. Just two or three days before he set out for «Canossa», Khrushchev informed us

* king.

of the step he was about to take, but we had expected this, because the waters into which Khrushchev had plunged were bound to carry him to that mill. To go or not to go to Belgrade, that was his affair, let him do as he wished. What revolted and profoundly disturbed us was the announcement he made in the same letter that he had decided to annul as unjust the decision of the Information Bureau of November 1949, in connection with the condemnation of the Yugoslav leadership, to communicate this new decision of his to Tito and to publish a communiqué about it in the organ «For Lasting Peace, for People's Democracy!». In this communiqué, Khrushchev said that the communist and workers' parties, that were members of the Information Bureau, had allegedly reexamined the question of the third Resolution of the meeting of the Information Bureau on the Yugoslav problem adopted in November 1949 and had decided that the accusations contained in that resolution against the leadership of the Yugoslav Communist Party should be considered as without foundation and the resolution of the Information Bureau on the Yugoslav question should be annulled.

We wrote a letter to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on this and protested sternly. Such a decision about an enemy of international communism, that had been condemned jointly by all the parties, could

not be taken unilaterally by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union without consulting the other parties, including ours. The other parties submitted to the decision of Khrushchev and the desire of Tito that, after Khrushchev, the leaders of the parties of the socialist camp should go to Belgrade, kiss Tito's hand and beg his forgiveness. Dej and company went there, but we did not. We continued the struggle against the revisionists. It was in vain for Levichkin, the Soviet ambassador in Tirana, to come and try to convince us to withdraw our opposition.

I received Levichkin and once again put forward in principle to him what we had written in the letter to the Soviet leadership.

Amongst other things, I said, «The Communist Party of the Soviet Union has taught us to express our opinion openly and sincerely, as internationalists, on any question which has to do with the line of the party. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has informed us in advance and sought our opinion, too, on all matters which have to do with our common policy in connection with Yugoslavia. We have carefully studied the opinions of the Soviet leadership, have expressed our opinion on these problems and, as you know, we have agreed that we should make efforts to improve relations with Yugoslavia.»

«But in your reply of yesterday you oppose

the new step of Comrade Khrushchev,» said Levichkin.

«Yes,» I said, «and we have reasons for this. We think that in connection with the Yugoslav question there are many differences between the content of earlier letters of the Soviet leadership and that of the last letter.»

«To what differences do you refer?» asked Levichkin. «I think the view of our party has not altered.»

«Let us see,» I said, and took the letters of the Soviet leadership. «Here, for example, in the letter of June 4, 1954, your leadership writes: 'Re-examining the materials which have to do with the history of the breaking-off of relations between the Yugoslav Communist Party and the communist and workers' parties, as well as Yugoslavia's subsequent leaving the democratic camp, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union holds that the leading nucleus of the Yugoslav Communist Party has undoubtedly made serious departures from Marxism-Leninism, has slipped into the positions of bourgeois nationalism and launched attacks against the Soviet state. The leaders of the Yugoslav Communist Party also extend their hostile policy, in regard to the Soviet Union, to the countries of people's democracy, towards which, up till before the break of relations, they maintained a boastful and disdainful stand, while seeking for themselves re-

cognition of priorities and special merits which they did not have.'

«That letter also stresses,» I told Levichkin, «that 'the criticism which the communist and workers' parties made of the nationalist deviations and other deviations from Marxism-Leninism of the leaders of the Yugoslav Communist Party was necessary and completely correct. It contributed to tempering the communist and workers' parties from the Marxist aspect, to sharpening the vigilance of communists and to their education in the spirit of proletarian internationalism'.»

«That is true,» murmured Levichkin.

«Even after the initial efforts of the Soviet leadership to improve relations with Yugoslavia,» I continued, «the Yugoslav leadership persisted in its former course and stands and, only two or three months ago, in February this year, the Soviet comrades wrote to us that 'the leadership of the Yugoslav party is seriously entangled with the capitalist world in its political and economic relations'.»

«That is true, that is true!» repeated Levichkin in a low voice.

«Then how did the opinion and stand of the Soviet leadership towards these very important problems change so surprisingly and suddenly?!» I asked. «And how can they so readily take a

unilateral decision such as that to throw out the 1949 decision of the Information Bureau?!

«Our Political Bureau discussed the problems which are raised in your letter of May 23 with great attention and concern and in our reply we openly and sincerely expressed a series of opinions to Comrade Khrushchev.

«First, we think that the general line, the main content and principle of the November 1949 Resolution of the Meeting of the Information Bureau, is correct and the content of this resolution should not be taken separately from the resolution of July 1948. The daily experience of our Party in our relations with the Yugoslavs, both before the break with them in 1948 and to this very day, confirms this correctness.

«Second, the procedure, which is proposed to follow for the cancellation of the November 1949 Resolution of the Meeting of the Information Bureau, does not seem to us correct. It seems to us that the very short time allowed the communist and workers' parties, members of the Information Bureau, to express their views in connection with the content of your letter is inadequate to decide such an important matter as that which is raised in the letter. In our opinion, such a hasty decision on a matter of major importance of principle, without first making a thorough analysis, together with all the parties interested in this question, and moreover, the publication of this

decision in the press and its announcement in the Belgrade talks, would not only be premature, but would cause serious harm in the general orientation in connection with Yugoslavia.

«In regard to our Party of Labour, for seven years it has been fighting to implement its general line in regard to Yugoslavia, which is founded on the resolutions of the Information Bureau and endorsed by the 1st Congress of our Party. We are convinced that the general line of our Party in connection with relations with Yugoslavia is correct, but even if we thought for one moment that there is something to be changed in this line, for this the congress of the Party would have to be called together, or at least a conference of the Party, and the change could be made only after first thoroughly analysing the general line of all the communist and workers' parties in regard to Yugoslavia as well as the decisions and conclusions of the Information Bureau.

«Therefore,» I said to Levichkin in conclusion, «we propose that the matters which are raised in the recent letter of the Soviet leadership should be analysed at a meeting of the parties which participate in the Information Bureau, in which our Party, too, could possibly take part and have its say. Only there can a joint decision on this question be taken.»

Levichkin, who had gone pale as he listened

to me, tried to convince me to change my opinion, but when he saw my insistence he retreated:

«I shall report what you have said to me to the leadership of the party.»

«We have written everything I told you in our letter to Comrade Khrushchev,» I concluded, «but I repeated it to you, too, to make clear to you what impelled us to adopt this stand.»

Our opposition was completely correct and within the Marxist-Leninist norms of relations between parties. We were well aware how correct, substantiated and well based were the analyses and decisions of the Information Bureau and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in connection with the Yugoslav problem during the years 1948 and 1949. When the decision was taken to condemn the anti-Marxist activity of the Yugoslav leadership, we were not members of the Information Bureau. However, during that period, Stalin, the CPSU and the other parties that were members of the Information Bureau frequently consulted us and listened carefully to what we had to say in connection with our relations with the Yugoslav leadership. Stalin and his comrades did this, not only because ours were sister parties and, according to the Leninist norms, there should be wide-ranging and exhaustive exchanges of opinions, but also due to the important fact that, because of the special links we

had had since the wartime years with the Yugoslav leadership, we had a lot to say about it.

Among the many meetings and consultations on this problem was my incognito meeting with Vyshinsky in Bucharest, at which Dej was also present. There we exchanged opinions about the common stand we should adopt towards the treacherous activity of the Yugoslav leadership. The many incontestable arguments and facts which I brought to that meeting were valued very highly by Vyshinsky and Dej, who described them as a valuable contribution which our Party made to better knowledge of the hostile and anti-Marxist activity of the Belgrade leaders. This is not the place to speak at length about that meeting, from which I have many memories. I mention it only to show with what great care and wisdom Stalin and the Information Bureau acted at that time in the analyses they made and the decisions they took.

Now quite the opposite was occurring with Khrushchev and the other Soviet leaders. Precisely those who were now condemning the Information Bureau and Stalin for allegedly having acted and judged matters in an incorrect way, were trampling with both feet over the most elementary rules of relations between parties, were posing as indisputable masters who did not deign to seek the opinion of others. This could not fail to dismay and worry us.

Levichkin came to see us several other times

during those days. Apparently they were urgently demanding from the centre that he convinced us to give up our opinions and reconcile ourselves to Khrushchev's stands. Those were very difficult and grave moments. From what we could see, Khrushchev must have reached agreement in advance with the leaderships of other parties over what he was going to do in Belgrade. Thus our proposal that the Information Bureau should meet to examine the problem in detail, would fall on deaf ears. After we discussed the matter at length in the Political Bureau, we decided that I should summon Levichkin once more to make our stand clear to him. I met him on May 27, one of the days on which Khrushchev was in Belgrade, and the things which I told Levichkin were also written in a second letter to the Soviet leadership. Later, Khrushchev used this letter of ours as an «argument» allegedly to prove that we were wrong in our first letter of May 25, and that two days later we allegedly made a «self-criticism» and «retreated» from our former opinion. But the essence of the truth is not as Khrushchev and company said.

Both in the meeting with Levichkin on May 27, and in the second letter to the Soviet leadership, we explained once again why we were in open opposition to them on this occasion.

In this letter we again stressed to the Soviet leadership that although we had been and were

agreed that every effort must be made to solve the disagreements over principles with Yugoslavia in a Marxist-Leninist way, we were still convinced that the Yugoslav leaders would neither recognize their grave mistakes, nor abandon their course.

We have been and continue to be particularly sensitive on the Yugoslav question and especially towards the anti-Marxist activity of the leadership of the Yugoslav Communist Party, we said in the letter, because this hostile activity against the Soviet Union, the countries of people's democracy and the whole movement of the proletariat has been carried out in a specially ferocious way against our Party and the sovereignty of our Homeland.

Seeing the problem in this way, we continued, when we read that part of your letter which says that eventually it might be communicated to the Yugoslavs that the Resolution of the Information Bureau of November 1949 should be revoked and that a communiqué about this would be published in the organ «For Lasting Peace, for People's Democracy», we were profoundly shocked and said that if this were done it would be a very grave mistake. We considered that this Resolution should not be revoked, because it reflects the logical development of the hostile and anti-Marxist activity of the leadership of the Yugoslav Communist Party in practice.

This is how we reason: if this Resolution is

annulled, all that has been written there is cancelled out, and the trials of Rajk in Hungary and Kostov in Bulgaria, for example, are also annulled. By analogy the trial of the traitor gang headed by Koçi Xoxe and company ought to be annulled, too. The hostile activity of the traitor gang of Koçi Xoxe had its source in and was linked with the anti-Marxist, liquidationist and bourgeois-nationalist work of the leadership of the Yugoslav Communist Party. The just and principled struggle against this hostile activity was one of the directions of the line of our Party at its 1st Congress. «We will never budge from this correct line,» we stressed in the letter. Hence, we thought that if this Resolution is annulled as wrong, not only will the truth be distorted but a grave situation will be created for our Party, confusion will be created, anti-party and enemy elements will be encouraged to become active against our Party and state, as well as against the Soviet Union. We can never allow such a situation to be created.

We went on to say to the Soviet leadership: «We have been in a grave situation and we regret that, on this point, we cannot be of the same opinion as you.»

That was the essence of the content of our second letter to the Soviet leadership.

If there is any room to use the word «retreat» in regard to this, the only such thing on our part was the non-repetition of the proposal that a meet-

ing of the Information Bureau should be organized first. By this time this proposal would have been valueless, because Khrushchev had made the whole affair a fait accompli and had left for Belgrade. On the other hand, although we expressed our opinion in defence of principles, we could not come out openly against the Soviet leadership and the others at a time when the problem was still developing. However, we made our vigilance even sharper and kept our eyes even wider open. For us, both in the past and even after this, the stand towards the revisionists of Belgrade has been and still is the touch-stone to prove whether a party is following a sound Marxist line or a wrong anti-Marxist line. In the future, we were to put Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites to this test.

Not long after this event, in the summer of 1955, I received a most pressing invitation to go «for a holiday in the Soviet Union».

In Stalin's time I went there for work and very rarely for a holiday. In Khrushchev's time they began to put such pressure on us to go for holidays that it was difficult to refuse, because the Soviets, for their part, put the matter forward on the political plane. However, I did not like to go because, in fact, I could not rest there and it took a lot of time. To go to Moscow we had to travel eight days by ship from Durrës to Odessa, and the ships(«Kotovsky» and «Chiatura») were not big and rolled heavily. Two more days were

needed for the train trip from Odessa to Moscow and one day by aircraft from Moscow to the Caucasus (to go to Kislovodsk, etc.), that is, a trip of eleven days each way, plus several days of meetings, so you can see what sort of holidays they were.

Once in Moscow the meetings with the Soviet leaders would begin, but these meetings were no longer pleasant like those with Stalin. Now they were held sometimes with smothered anger, sometimes with open flare-ups.

This is what occurred on this occasion. As soon as I arrived in Moscow I had two meetings with Suslov.

In his opening words he told me that we would talk about the Yugoslav problem and stressed in a dictatorial tone:

«The leadership of your party must take careful account of this question, it must not look at the Yugoslav problem in a rigid way.»

I did not take my eyes off him as I listened. Sensing my displeasure, he back-pedalled a little:

«Their mistakes remain mistakes,» he said, «but our objective is to become friends and to advance the friendship with Yugoslavia. At its last meeting, our Central Committee once again analysed our relations with Yugoslavia,» he continued, «and we shall give the report delivered there to you personally, because it is top secret.»

He was silent for a moment, trying to assess

what impression his words were making on me, and then went on:

«The main problem is that the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has examined the Yugoslav question in a realistic light, bearing in mind the traitorous work of Beria, and we made self-criticism about this. Our Central Committee came to the conclusion that the breaking off of relations with Yugoslavia was a mistake, that is, we were hasty.»

«In what way, hasty?!» I said. «At that time, thorough analyses were made, long and thorough discussions were held and the true ideological and political causes of the existing disagreements were uncovered.»

«The main cause for this break,» continued Suslov, «was not the ideological issues, although they were making mistakes, and they have been pointed out openly to the Yugoslavs. The main cause lies in the slanders that were made against the Yugoslav leaders and in our lack of patience. The Yugoslavs' mistakes of principle should have been discussed, backed up by facts, and ironed out. This was not done.

«From all the facts examined,» he continued, «it turns out that there is no basis at all for saying that the Yugoslav comrades have deviated and have sold Yugoslavia, just as it does not turn out that the Yugoslav economy is dependent on foreigners.»

«Pardon me,» I said, « but let us not go back to those things we have analysed and decided in 1948 and 1949. Let us take only your correspondence with the Yugoslav leadership during the last two years. Not only in several of your letters, but the Yugoslavs themselves in their letters, admit that they have created strong links with the West. What are we to think now of your opposite assessment of these matters?»

«A number of mistakes have been made, but they must be examined carefully,» said Suslov, and started to list a series of «arguments» to convince me that the Yugoslav leaders were allegedly not on a wrong road. Naturally he also tried to lay the blame on Beria and Djilas and the efforts of imperialism «to attach Yugoslavia to itself».

«Molotov, too, has maintained a very sectarian stand on this problem,» continued Suslov. «He personally made mistakes in state relations with Yugoslavia while insisting that it was the Yugoslav comrades that made the mistakes. However, the Central Committee demanded that Molotov proved where the Yugoslavs had been wrong, and we criticized him severely for his stand. Finally he, too, expressed his solidarity with the Central Committee».

I began to speak and gave a detailed presentation of our relations with the Yugoslav leadership, beginning from the years of the National

Liberation War. I mentioned their main activities as an anti-Albanian agency, which they had undertaken and were undertaking against us continually, and I concluded by saying:

«It is these and many other facts, one more grave than the other, which convince us that the Yugoslav leadership has not been and is not on the right road. Nevertheless, we have always been and still are in favour of developing state relations with them normally.»

«Agreed, agreed!» said Suslov. «We must act with open hearts. This is in the interest of our camp; we must not allow the imperialists to take Yugoslavia from us.»

At the end of this meeting, as though in passing, he said to me:

«During past years you have condemned many enemies, accused of links with the Yugoslavs. Have a look at their cases and rehabilitate those that ought to be rehabilitated.»

«We have never accused and condemned anyone for nothing,» I said bluntly, and as we parted, he instructed me to be «more broad-minded».

It was clear why they had invited me to come for a holiday. However, the Khrushchevites did not content themselves just with this. They had hatched up diabolical plans to compel our Party, too, to follow their course of conciliation with the revisionists of Belgrade. This time they had

put me in a villa outside Moscow, which, as they told me, had been Stalin's villa. It was a simple house, all the main rooms were on the ground floor, including our suite, which was separated from the entrance hall by a glass door. On the right were the dining room, the study, and the sitting or reception room which, I remember, had very little furniture. On the left, through a corridor and a room with sofas around the walls, one entered the cinema room. The garden outside had been neglected, there was very little in the way of flowers and greenery. There were no trees for shade, but they had built a small semi-circular *besedka** with seats, which were also semi-circular, attached to the pillars built around the curve, where the children played. Beside the house there was a small vegetable garden. In this house one night we heard a loud knock at the glass door which led to our suite. My wife, Nexhmije, got up quickly, thinking that our son was not well, since he had fallen over that day and had hurt his hand. She went out, immediately returned and said to me:

«It's one of the officers of the guard — Mikoyan wants you on the telephone.»

I was sleepy and asked what time it was.

«Half past twelve,» said Nexhmije.

I put something over my shoulders and went

* Pavilion (Russian in the original).

into the study to the telephone. Mikoyan, at the other end of the line, did not beg my pardon for ringing me up after midnight, but said to me:

«Comrade Enver, Comrade Svetozar Vukmanovic-Tempo is here in Moscow and I was with him till now. You know him and it would be good if you were to meet; he is ready to meet you tomorrow.»

For a time I remained silent on the telephone, while Mikoyan, who had no intention of asking, said: «Tomorrow then, you agree,» in a tone as if he were giving an order to the party secretary of an *oblast**.

«How could I agree to this, Comrade Mikoyan,» I said. «I talked with Comrade Suslov, and expressed the view of our Party about the position of Yugoslavia and Tito.»

Mikoyan began to deliver a standard monologue about «socialist Yugoslavia», about Tito who was «a fine chap», about Beria's mistakes and the sins they had allegedly committed (the Soviet Union and the Information Bureau), and then he concluded:

«You ought to take this step, Comrade Enver. You know Tempo, talk with him and try to iron out your differences, because this is in your interest and in the interest of the camp. You, too, must help ensure that Yugoslavia does not go over

* region (Russian in the original).

to the imperialist camp... So, you agree, tomorrow.»

«All right, I agree, tomorrow,» I replied, clenching my teeth in rage. I went back to bed but I was so disgusted over these backstage manoeuvres and faits accomplis which the Khrushchevites were hatching up in the course of their betrayal that I could not sleep. I had met Tempo twice in Albania during the time of the war and both times we had quarrelled, because he was arrogant and a real megalomaniac. He made unfounded accusations against our war and the people who led it, or made absurd proposals about the «Balkan Staff», without mentioning how this staff was to function in those conditions, when we could communicate from one zone to the other within the country only with difficulty, let alone mentioning the ulterior motives hidden behind the organization of this «staff». What was I to say to Tempo now, after all those things which Tito, Rankovic, their envoys Velimir Stoynic, Nijaz Dizdarevic and their agents Koçi Xoxe and Co., had done to us? Must we swallow this too?! I tossed and turned sleepless all night thinking about what should be done. The time had not come yet to settle accounts with the Khrushchevite revisionists.

The next day we met Tempo. I began to speak about those things that had occurred.

«Let bygones be bygones,» he said and began to speak about the situation in Yugoslavia.

He told me that they had made progress in the sector of industry but were short of raw materials.

«Our agriculture is in a very bad state,» he said, «we are very far behind, therefore, we think we should devote more forces to it. The mistakes we have made in agriculture have left us hard pressed.»

He went on to tell me about the difficulties they had had and said that they had been obliged to accept aid at heavy interest rates from the Western countries.

«Now the Soviet Union is helping us and our agreement with the Soviets is going well,» he concluded.

I, too, spoke about the progress which our country had made during this time and the difficulties which we had had and still had. I spoke about the commission on the Ohri Lake, in which the discussions were being dragged on by their side, but he told me he knew nothing about it because «these were the plans of the Macedonians.»

«Nevertheless, we must look more carefully at the question of the Shkodra Lake where the benefits will be greater for both sides, especially for your side,» he added.

And that is how the meeting which the Soviets had arranged between Tempo and me, passed. After this meeting, when I met Mikoyan and Suslov, they both said to me:

«You did well to meet Tempo because the ice has been broken.»

According to them, the mountain of ice created between us and the Titoite revisionists could be broken with one chance meeting or contact, but this was not our opinion. There would be no «spring thaw» in the ideological field in our relations with Yugoslavia and we had no intention of plunging into the murky waters of the Khrushchevites and the Titoites.

5. THE «MOTHER PARTY» WANTS TO BE THE CONDUCTOR

Khrushchev seeks hegemony in the world communist movement. His attack on the Comintern and the Information Bureau. The Khrushchevites extend their tentacles to other parties. The sudden deaths of Gottwald and Bierut. Unforgettable memories from the meeting with Dimitrov and Kolarov. Correct but formal relations with Rumania. The opportunist zig-zags of the Rumanian leadership. Pleasant impressions from Czechoslovakia; wandering at will and visits to historical sites. Suffocating atmosphere everywhere in the Soviet Union. The *chinovniki* surround us everywhere. Our relations with the East Germans.

I spoke earlier about the «lecture» which Khrushchev gave me on the role of the first secretary of the party and the «opinion» which he had expressed to the Polish comrades about the replacement of Bierut by Ochab in this post. This

fact not only astounded me but seemed to me completely unacceptable, as a tactless undertaking (to put it mildly) towards a sister party.

Further developments were to make clear to us and convince us that such «undertakings» were Khrushchev's normal forms of «work» to put the international communist movement under his personal domination.

This activity did not lack its demagogic cloak. The essence of this demagogy was: «Stalin kept the communist and workers' parties in his grip through force, through terror, and dictated actions to them in the interests of the Soviet Union and to the detriment of the world revolution». Khrushchev was for struggle against the Comintern, except, allegedly, for the period when Lenin was alive. For Khrushchev and the other modern revisionists, the Comintern operated simply as a «Soviet agency in the capitalist countries». Their opinion, which was not expressed openly, but was implied, was in complete accord with the monstrous accusations of capitalism and the reactionary bourgeoisie throughout the world, that fought the proletariat and the new communist parties formed after the betrayal by social-democracy and the Second International.

By means of the Comintern, Lenin, and later Stalin, consolidated the communist and workers' parties and strengthened the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie and the rising fas-

cist dictatorship. The activity of the Comintern was positive and revolutionary. The possibility that some mistakes may have been made is not ruled out, but it is necessary to bear in mind the difficult circumstances of illegality in which the parties and the leadership of the Comintern itself were obliged to work, as well as the fierce struggle waged against the communist parties by imperialism, the bourgeoisie and reaction. The true revolutionaries never forget that it was the Comintern which assisted to set up and strengthen the communist parties after the betrayal by the Second International, just as they never forget that the Soviet Union of Lenin and Stalin was the country in which hundreds of revolutionaries found refuge to escape the reprisals of the bourgeoisie and fascism and carry on their activity.

In his assessment of the work of the Comintern and Stalin, Khrushchev also had the support of the Chinese, who continue to make criticisms, although not publicly, in this direction. When we have had the opportunity, we have expressed our opinion about these incorrect assessments of the overall work of the Comintern and Stalin to the Chinese leaders. When I had the opportunity to talk with Mao Zedong, during my only visit to China, in 1956, or in the meetings with Zhou Enlai and others in Tirana, I have expressed the well-known viewpoint of our Party about the figure of Stalin and the Comintern. I do not want to ex-

tend on these matters because I have written about them at length in my political diary and elsewhere.

The decisions of the Comintern and Dimitrov's direction-giving speech in July 1935 have gone down in the history of the international communist movement as major documents which mobilized the peoples, and first of all the communists, to create the anti-fascist front and to organize themselves for armed struggle against Italian fascism, German nazism and Japanese militarism. In this struggle, the communists and their parties were in the forefront everywhere.

Therefore, it is a crime to attack the great work of the Comintern and the Marxist-Leninist authority of Stalin, which played a major role in the creation and the organizational, political and ideological consolidation of the communist and workers' parties of the world. For its part, the Bolshevik Party was a powerful aid for those parties, and the Soviet Union, with Stalin at the head, was a great potential in support of the revolution in the international arena.

Imperialism, the capitalist bourgeoisie and its fascist dictatorship fought the Soviet Union, the Bolshevik Party and Stalin, with all their might, waged a stern struggle against the Comintern and the communist and workers' parties of every country and ruled the working class with terror, bloodshed and demagogy.

When nazi Germany attacked the Soviet Union, the communist and workers' parties of various countries took up arms, united with the other patriots and democrats in their own countries and fought the fascist invaders. Because of this natural struggle, the enemies of communism said: «The communist and workers' parties have put themselves in the service of Moscow.» This was a slander. The communist and workers' parties fought for the liberation of their own peoples, fought for the working class and people to take power. In the great alliance of the anti-fascist war, the sympathies of these parties were with the Soviet Union, because it was the most reliable guarantee for the victory.

It was Stalin himself, who, on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, announced the decision for the disbanding of the Comintern and the reason given was that no further need was felt for its existence. This stand was completely correct, because by that time, the communist and workers' parties had become mature and militant, had been tempered in class battles and in the great war against fascism and had gained colossal experience. Now, each party could march on its own feet and had Marxism-Leninism as its unerring guide.

After the Second World War the Information Bureau of communist and workers' parties was formed. It was necessary to create this, because

the parties of socialist countries and those of capitalist countries, especially of Europe, needed to exchange their very valuable experience. The exchange of experience between our parties was especially necessary in the unsettled period immediately after the war, when American and British imperialism wanted to interfere by any means in the internal affairs of the countries which had won their freedom.

Reaction, and Tito and the Titoites, later, wanted and fought to place the countries of Eastern Europe in a dilemma; with the assistance of the British, they tried to bring reaction to power in Czechoslovakia and to bring about the same thing in Albania, Rumania, Poland and elsewhere.

The »Marxist« Tito made a major issue of the Venezia Giulia province, claiming that the Soviet Union was not assisting him to take this province, which he described as entirely Yugoslav, while this same «Marxist» not only did not raise the issue of Kosova, which was truly Albanian, in order to give it to Albania to which it belonged, but did his utmost to prevent any talk about it. The Belgrade clique massacred people from Kosova, alleging that they were Ballists, and later also attempted to gobble up the whole of Albania and turn it into the seventh republic of Yugoslavia.

The Information Bureau uncovered the treachery of the Yugoslav revisionists and this was

one of its historic deeds and a tribute to the revolutionary vigilance of Stalin. Tito was exposed and condemned with ample, incontestable facts and subsequent events completely confirmed his betrayal. In this just action, which came after a patient stand, first with comradely explanation, then with rebuke and finally, with condemnation, all the communist and workers' parties took part, not because they «submitted to the arbitrary decision of Stalin», as has been slanderously alleged, but because they were convinced by the true facts which were brought out about the betrayal of the Yugoslav chiefs. Later, all these parties, apart from the Party of Labour of Albania, ate the very words which they themselves had said and endorsed against Tito and Titoism. One after another, the chiefs of these parties made self-criticism, went on pilgrimages to him, kissed his hand, begged his forgiveness and declared that he was a «genuine Marxist-Leninist», while according to them, Stalin was «an anti-Leninist, a criminal, an ignoramus and a dictator».

Khrushchev's plan, as all his work and his successive actions showed, was to rehabilitate Tito by going to Belgrade and denouncing Stalin for the «crime» and the «mistake» which he had allegedly committed in this direction. In order to carry this problem through to the end, Khrushchev took his unilateral decision and liquidated the Information Bureau, without asking anyone about

it. He dropped this on us as a *fait accompli** at one of the meetings which was organized in the Kremlin over a problem which had nothing at all to do with the Information Bureau.

Khrushchev announced the decision, and while administering the last rites to the Information Bureau said: «When I informed Nehru of this, he was pleased and told me that it was a wise decision which everybody would approve.» The big Indian reactionary heard the news of the break-up of the Information Bureau before our communist parties (!). This fact, too, apart from others, showed what this renegade, this revisionist-Trotskyite, who had come to the head of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, was.

With cunning Trotskyite forms and methods, such as flattery, blackmail, criticisms and threats, Khrushchev aimed to get control of the whole world communist movement, to have all the other parties under his «conductor's baton», and they, without his telling them openly, were to proclaim the Communist Party of the Soviet Union the «mother party», and moreover to think, as Liri Belishova, a secret agent of the Soviet revisionists whom we exposed later, put it, that «Khrushchev is our father»(!). This is the direc-

* French in the original.

tion in which Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites worked.

Of course, the Khrushchevites had begun this work when Stalin was still alive, behind his back. We base this conviction on the experience of our relations with the Soviet leaders, the arrogant, huckster's stand of Mikoyan and some others.

After Stalin's death, their attack to destroy socialism in the other countries mounted continuously. Both in the Soviet Union and in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Rumania, and Hungary, as well as in Albania, Khrushchev began to incite the disguised and undisguised anti-Marxist elements. Wherever these elements were in the leadership, Khrushchev and company struggled to get these elements under their control, and where they were not in the leadership, to put them there by eliminating the sound leaders through intrigues, putsches or even assassinations, as they wanted to do with Stalin (and it is very likely they did this).

Immediately after the death of Stalin, Gottwald died. This was a sudden, surprising death! It had never crossed the minds of those who knew Gottwald that this strong, agile, healthy man would die... of a flu or a chill allegedly caught on the day of Stalin's funeral ceremony.

I knew Gottwald. When I went to Czechoslovakia and met him in Prague, we talked at

length about our problems. He was a modest, sincere comrade, not a man of many words. I felt I could talk to him freely; he listened to me attentively, puffing away at his pipe and spoke with much sympathy about our people and our fight, and promised me that they would help us in the building of industry. He promised me neither mountains nor miracles, but a very modest credit which Czechoslovakia accorded us.

«This is all we can do,» he said. «Later, when we have our economy going, we shall re-examine matters with you.»

Gottwald, an old friend and comrade of Stalin and Dimitrov, died suddenly. This grieved us, but also surprised us.

Later came the equally unexpected death of Comrade Bierut, not to mention the earlier death of the great George Dimitrov. Dimitrov, Gottwald and Bierut, all died in Moscow. What a coincidence! The three of them were comrades of the great Stalin!

Edward Ochab replaced Bierut in the post of first secretary of the party. Thus Khrushchev's old desire was realized. Later, however, Khrushchev «fell out» with Ochab, apparently because he did not fulfil Khrushchev's demands and orders as he should have done. That is why Khrushchev later launched attacks on Ochab at those meetings at which we, too, were present. I met Ochab several times, in Moscow, Warsaw and Beijing,

and I think that he was a person who not only could not be compared with Bierut as a man, but also lacked the necessary capacity to lead the party and the country. Ochab came and went like a shadow, without being a year in that position.

Below I shall speak about how events developed in Poland later. It is clear that with the death of Bierut the road to the throne of Poland was opened to the reactionary Gomulka. This «communist», brought out of prison, after a number of ups and downs and writhings of a heterogeneous leadership, in which agents of zionism and the capitalist powers were not lacking, was to be brought into the leadership by his friend Nikita Khrushchev.

Poland was the «big sister» of the Khrushchevite Soviet Union. Then came Bulgaria, with which the Khrushchevites played and are still playing their game shamelessly, to the point that they have turned it into their «obedient daughter».

The Bulgarians were linked closely with Stalin and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union(B) led by him, quite differently from the Czechs, the Poles and the Rumanians, let alone the Germans. Moreover, the Bulgarian people had been traditionally linked with Russia in the past. Precisely because of these links, Czar Boris had not dared to involve Bulgaria officially in

the war against the Soviet Union and the Soviet armies entered Bulgaria without firing a shot.

Khrushchev wanted to consolidate this influence for his own chauvinist interests and the extension and consolidation of his revisionist views. Therefore he exploited this situation, the trust of the Bulgarian Communist Party in Stalin, the Soviet Union and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (B), and placed at the head of the Bulgarian Communist Party a worthless person, a third-rate cadre, but one ready to do whatever Khrushchev, his ambassador, or the KGB would say. This person was Todor Zhivkov, who was publicized and inflated until he became first secretary of the CC of the Bulgarian CP.

My opinion is that, after Dimitrov, the Bulgarian party and state did not have any leader equal to Dimitrov, or even to come anywhere near him, from the point of view of his adherence to principle, breadth of ideological and political understanding and capacity as a leader. Here, of course, I do not include Kolarov, who died very soon after Dimitrov, only a few months later, who was an old revolutionary and the second personality after Dimitrov, with whom he had worked together in the Comintern.

I met Kolarov when I went on an official visit to Bulgaria in December 1947. He was about the same age and size as Dimitrov, liked to converse and all the time we stayed with him, talked

to us about the missions to Mongolia, Germany and elsewhere the Comintern had charged him with. It seemed that the party had placed Kolarov in charge of relations with foreign countries, because he spoke to us several times about the relations of Bulgaria, especially with its neighbours: Yugoslavia and Greece, which were also our neighbours. He also explained the general international situation to us. This assisted us greatly.

Like the unforgettable George Dimitrov, Kolarov was a modest man. Although we were young, there was not the slightest sign of haughtiness to be seen in him during the talk. He honoured us and respected our opinions and, although we were meeting for the first time, as long as we stayed there, we felt ourselves as members of one family, in an intimate group, in which affection and unity and efforts for a single aim, the construction of socialism, predominated.

I met Dimitrov and Kolarov, these outstanding Bulgarian communists only once in my life, but they left an indelible impression on my memory. After Dimitrov, Kolarov became prime minister and was one of the initiators of the condemnation of the Titoite agent, Kostov. But only a few months later Kolarov died. His death, too, grieved me greatly.

After the deaths of Dimitrov and Kolarov, people without authority or personality began to

come to the head of the Bulgarian Communist party and state.

I have gone to Bulgaria several times on business, as well as on holidays with my wife and children. To tell the truth, I felt a special satisfaction in Bulgaria, probably because, although our two peoples are of quite different origin, during the centuries they had coexisted, had languished under and fought against the same occupying power, the Ottomans, and are alike in many directions, especially in their modesty, hospitality, stability of character, the preservation of good traditions, folklore, etc.

Up to the time when Stalin died there was not the slightest shadow over our relations with the Bulgarians. We both loved the Soviet Union with a pure and sincere love.

I have talked with the Bulgarian leaders many times, have eaten and drunk with them, and have made trips all over Bulgaria. Even later, until we broke with Khrushchev, we had no ideological and political contradictions and they welcomed me warmly. Many of them, like Velko Chervenkov, Ganev, Tsola Dragocheva, Anton Yugov, etc., were not young. They were people of the older generation, who had worked abroad in exile with Dimitrov, or at home in illegality, and later had been in the prisons of Czar Boris. In the end, Todor Zhivkov emerged above them, a man who is the prototype of political mediocrity.

After the death of George Dimitrov, Velko Chervenkov became general secretary of the party. He was a big man, with greying hair and bags under the eyes. Whenever I met him in Bulgaria or in Moscow, he gave me the impression of a good fellow who walked with his arms flopping aimlessly, as if to say: «What am I doing at this fair? I am serving no purpose here.»

He must have been a just man, but lacking in will. At least this was my impression. He was extremely sparing in words. In official talks he said so little that, if you didn't know him, you would form the impression he was haughty. But he wasn't in the least haughty. He was a simple man. In non-official talks, when we ate together, and met with other Bulgarian comrades to exchange opinions, Velko sat in stony silence, with his mouth closed, as if he were not there at all. The others talked and laughed, but not he.

Chervenkov was Dimitrov's brother-in-law. He had married the sister of the great leader of Bulgaria. It is possible that a little of Dimitrov's glory and authority had descended on Velko Chervenkov, but Velko was quite incapable of becoming Dimitrov. Thus, just as he came to the head of the leadership of the Bulgarian Communist Party in silence, so he went without any fuss when he was thrown out. His ouster did not become any sort of issue, he was removed without any commo-

tion leaving place of leadership in the party to Todor Zhivkov.

Thus, for Nikita, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Bulgaria had been settled. Rumania, too, where the party had some inglorious episodes in its history, was not to be left out of his aims and efforts, either.

We did not have any contacts with the Rumanians during the war, which is different from what occurred with the Yugoslavs, or with the Bulgarians, who once sent to our country Belgaranov, who informed us of the work in Macedonia, sought our help in organizing the struggle of the Albanians living in «Macedonian» territory occupied by the nazi-fascists. After the war, from the Soviets we had heard very good things about the Rumanian party and about Dej, as an old revolutionary, who had suffered greatly in the prisons of the Doftana. But to tell the truth, I was somewhat disappointed when I met him for the first time, in the meeting about the problem of the Yugoslav revisionists, which I mentioned above.

This is not the place to speak about my recollections of that meeting, but I want to stress that, from what I saw and heard in Rumania and from the conversations I had with Dej, the impression I formed about the Rumanian party and about Dej personally was not good.

Regardless of what the Rumanian leaders

claimed, the dictatorship of the proletariat was not operating in Rumania and the Rumanian Workers' Party was not in a strong position. They declared that they were in power, but it was very evident that, in fact, the bourgeoisie was in power. It had industry, agriculture and trade in its hands and continued to fleece the Rumanian people and to live in luxurious villas and palaces. Dej personally travelled in a bullet-proof car with an armed escort, which showed how «secure» their positions were. Reaction was strong in Rumania and, had it not been for the Red Army, who knows how things would have gone in that country.

During our talks in those few days which I stayed in Bucharest, Dej bombarded us with his boasting about the «valour» they had displayed in forcing the abdication of the corrupt King Michael, whom they had not condemned for his crimes against the people, but had allowed to leave Rumania for the West, together with his wealth and his mistresses.

Dej's self-glorification was astonishing, especially when he told me how he «challenged» the reactionaries by going into their cafés with a pistol in his belt.

Thus, from this first meeting I formed a poor impression, not only of Dej, but also of the Rumanian party and its line, which was an opportunist line, and the things which occurred

later with Dej and his party did not surprise me. The revisionist chiefs of that party were the most conceited you could imagine. They «blew their own trumpets» loudly about the fight which they had not fought.

When we began the struggle with the renegade Tito group, Dej became an «ardent fighter» against this group. In the historic meetings of the Information Bureau he was charged with delivering the main report against the Tito-Rankovic group.

As long as Stalin was alive and the Resolution of the Information Bureau remained in force, Dej performed like a rabid anti-Titoite. When the revisionist traitors, headed by Khrushchev, usurped power in their countries and did all those treacherous things we know about, and amongst others, proclaimed Tito clean and prettied him up, Dej was among the first to turn over the page and change his colour like a chameleon. He recanted all the things he had said, made a public self-criticism, and finally went to Brioni, where he publicly begged Tito's pardon. Thus Dej came out in his true colours as an opportunist of many flags.

After Liberation, we, of course, established friendly relations with Rumania, as with all the other countries of people's democracy. For our part, we greatly desired to develop our relations

to the maximum with that country, especially with the Rumanian people, not only because we were two socialist countries, but also because we retained a special feeling of friendship and sympathy, formed because of the aid which had been given the Albanian patriots residing in Rumania during the period of our Renaissance. However, our efforts in this direction did not yield the results we desired because of the indifference of the Rumanian leadership. This had its own reasons which did not depend on our stands and desires.

Nevertheless, the relations between our two countries developed in a correct, although entirely formal manner. There was not the slightest warmth and special friendship for a small socialist country like ours, which had fought and sacrificed so much in the war against the fascist invaders, to be seen among the Rumanian leaders. Rumania was the socialist country which proved to be more indifferent than all the others in regard to the development of Albania and the activation of relations between our parties and states.

Later, when I went to Rumania with a delegation, during the visits we made there I saw many interesting things; they showed me many aspects of the progress they had made in the economy. I visited Ploesti, which, in comparison with our Kuçova, was a colossal centre of the

oil industry. The oil there was subjected to a modern refining process and I remember that in the final meeting he had with me, Dej boasted that they had bought a very large and modern oil refinery from the Americans. (He told me that they had bought it for cash with dollars, but as it turned out later, it had been bought on credit. As early as that time, «socialist» Rumania was engaged in deals with American imperialism.) They showed me a metallurgical centre where many kinds of steel were produced, as well as a series of other factories of every kind, model agricultural farms, a big clothing combine, etc.

They showed me «the Rumanian Village», a big outdoor museum complex, which was an ensemble of rural buildings with the furnishings and clothing used in the Rumanian countryside, which was very beautiful and original.

We liked everything we saw and visited. They had many new buildings, but they had also inherited a very great deal from the past. True, the Rumanians had created agricultural cooperatives, but the work was not going well there; there was a lack of leadership, organization and political work. Nevertheless, on the whole, progress had been made in the country and it was obvious, as they told us themselves, that the Soviet aid was very great and in every direction, even including the construction of the big palace, where, at the time of our visit, «Scînteia»

was published and various cultural activities were carried out.

In regard to aid for Albania, I must say that up till the time when our relations with the Yugoslavs were broken off, none of the countries of people's democracy assisted Albania with some small credit. Later, these countries, to a greater or lesser extent, did give us a certain amount of aid. Some did so quite correctly, at first, some with trickery and wiles, and others just to keep in line and to display their «socialist solidarity», or to show the Soviet Union, from which they received large amounts of credits and aid: «See, we too are giving socialist Albania something. When we have more we will give more.»

Several times we sought credits from the Rumanians, but they either refused us or gave us some ludicrously small sum. In regard to experience on oil, in industry and in agriculture, for example, they made us promises, gave us their word, but never gave us anything of any substance. As to experience of party work and the state structure, we neither asked for nor received anything from them.

Why was this more pronounced with the Rumanians, although even with the others we had great difficulties in securing their aid?

In the other parties, at first, there was a more or less tangible spirit of unity and mutual

internationalist aid, and this was reflected towards us in practice. Whereas in the Rumanian party, this spirit of unity and aid was very weak.

In general the Rumanian leaders were prominent both for their megalomania towards «lesser mortals» and for their servility towards «the mighty». They cut their conversations with us very short, if they did not content themselves with a mere nod of recognition or a handshake. In meetings and congresses they were so «preoccupied» that it seemed as if they were carrying the entire weight upon their shoulders. On these occasions they were always to be seen together with the main leaders of the Soviet Union. Undoubtedly, they were their servile opportunist lackeys and this became quite obvious when it was necessary to fight in defence of principles.

In my opinion, the Czechoslovaks were different from the others. They were more serious than all of them. I have spoken about Gottwald, but it must be said that we Albanians also got along well with those who came after him. We were sincere with them, as with all the others, but the Czech leadership behaved well towards us, too. They had respect for our people and our Party. They were not very lively, but I can say they were restrained, correct and kindly.

Novotny and Shiroky, Dolansky and Kopecky, whom I have met and talked with many

times, when I went to their country on business or for holidays with the family, behaved openly and in a modest way with me and all our comrades. That conceit and arrogance, which was apparent in the others, was not to be seen in them.

After the Soviets, it was the Czechs who assisted us most from the economic angle, too. Naturally, when it was a question of granting credits, they were cool-headed and cautious, people who reckoned things carefully. In what they gave us, there was no obvious underestimation, or sense of their economic superiority. Amongst the countries of people's democracy, Czechoslovakia was the most industrially advanced; its people were industrious, skilful, systematic, orderly in work and life. Wherever you went in Czechoslovakia, it was obvious that it was a developed country, with a cultured people who preserved the traditions of their ancient culture. The Soviets used the country as a health resort, and abused it to the extent that they brought it to its present sate. The leaders of other countries of people's democracy were envious of the Czech leadership, and made vain gibes about it, but the Czechs displayed much more dignity than all the others. In the meetings of the socialist camp also, what the Czech leaders said carried weight. As far as I could see and judge, within the country, too, they enjoyed respect and sympathy.

When I went to Czechoslovakia I did not feel that heavy sense of isolation which was created in Moscow after Khrushchev took over the reins. As soon as we arrived in Moscow, they allocated us a *dacha** on the outskirts of the city, where we remained isolated for whole days. Officials such as Lesakov, Moshatov, Petrov and some other minor functionary of the apparatus of the Central Committee of the party would be there or would come and go, usually to accompany us, but also to eat and drink. They were all people of the security service, dressed as functionaries of the Central Committee, i.e., people of the apparatus. Of these, Lesakov was my inseparable companion and billiards partner. He liked me and I liked him because, although he was not outstandingly intelligent, he was a good, sincere person. Moshatov came more rarely, appeared to be more important, prepared the journeys or fulfilled any request we might have to buy something, because you could find nothing easily in the market (you had to order everything in advance, because they brought the things ordered from some mysterious source to a special room in the «GUM» store, which had a special entrance for the Central Committee). Petrov was an apparatus man who had long been engaged with the Greeks and our company interested him for this reason. He was a serious comrade and liked us. He had come to Albania several times, especially when we were supporting the Greek Democratic Army in its just war. As if all these were not sufficient, later, other «escorts» were added, such as a certain Laptiev, a young fellow who knew Albanian and who was swell-headed about the «position» they had given him, and another who dealt with Yugoslav affairs and whose name I don't remember, but whom I recall as more intelligent than all the others.

I was never free, I always had an escort. They were all Khrushchev's men, informers for the Central Committee and the Soviet security service, without taking account here of the official guards and the bugging devices with which they filled the various villas in which we stayed. But that is another story. Let us pass over the devices and concentrate on the people.

These Soviet employees tried to find out our *nastroyenie** in order to learn what we were seeking, what we would raise, with whom we would raise it, what the situation was in our country, what we thought about the Yugoslavs, about the leaders of the Greek Communist Party, or any other matter. They knew why they came and we knew who sent them and why they were

* country villa (Russian in the original).

* mood (Russian in the original).

sent, therefore both sides were friendly, we talked about what interested us and waited for news to come from the Central Committee about when we were to meet. The *chinovniki* did not talk about politics, no doubt because they had orders about this, but even if they had wanted to open some conversation they did not dare, because they knew that every word would be recorded. We talked especially against the Titoite revisionists. You could not visit any collective farm or state farm, or make contact with the comrades or the people, without giving two or three days notice. And if you did go on a visit, they would sit you down at a table laden with drinks and fruit and you would see nothing, no cattle stall or collective farmer's house.

It is fair to say that it was different in Bulgaria. Wherever you went, the atmosphere was more comradely, with less formality and fewer guards.

In Czechoslovakia the difference was even greater. Whether in Prague, Bratislava, Karlovy Vary, Brno and many other places to which I have travelled, either officially or privately, I have been free to go wherever I wanted, whenever I wanted, with one obvious guard and everywhere I have been welcomed in a very cordial and friendly way. In the course of a trip, they themselves spontaneously took me to stra-

tegic places. Wherever I have gone in Czechoslovakia, either in official talks or in free conversations with the families of Novotny and Shiroky in Prague and Karlovy Vary, or with Bacilek in Slovakia and with a number of party secretaries in various towns and factories, the conversations have been sincere, joyous, happy and not formal. There was not that heavy atmosphere which I felt in the Soviet Union, despite the great love we had for that country and that people.

After the break in relations with Tito, we travelled to the Soviet Union by sea, because the Yugoslavs did not permit us to fly over their territory. Thus, we have had to stay many times in Odessa where we met the famous Yepishev, the first secretary of Odessa and later, political director of the Soviet army. We saw none of the places of interest there. We did not see the famous catacombs of Odessa because they did not take us to visit them, nor even the historic Potemkin steps, because we would have had to walk down them. We saw these famous steps, which began from the statue of Richelieu, governor of the city at the start of the 19th century, only from the car.

«How is it possible,» I asked Yepishev, «that you keep this aristocratic French adventurer here, precisely at the head of the historic steps?!»

«Oh, he's just been left there,» replied the secretary of the Odessa Party Committee.

But what did we do in Odessa? We were bored, smoked cigarettes, went to the park of the «Kirov» villa, went to a room with an old billiard-table. We did not go to visit any museum or school, the only place he took us was to a vineyard, and there only so that he could taste and drink some of the bottles of selected wines which they kept in the nearby cellars.

This was what usually happened in the Soviet Union. Only at *priyoms* would you shake hands with some personality. When you went to a factory or a house of culture in Leningrad, Kiev or elsewhere, everything was organized: the workers were lined up waiting, a speech of introduction was made by a certain Kozlov, who, puffed up like a turkeycock, spoke with his voice made artificially deep in order to show himself omnipotent, and then people appointed in advance and told what they were to say, made speeches of welcome.

It was quite the opposite in Czechoslovakia, where the people, the leaders, and the factory workers would speak freely, ask questions and reply to everything you asked. There you could travel freely whenever you liked, by car or on foot.

I have always taken an interest in the history of nations and peoples. There are many historic

places in Czechoslovakia. I visited the place where the Taborite uprising took place and saw those characteristic villages through which Žižka had passed and in which he fought. I visited Austerlitz and from the museum hill I looked over the battlefield and imagined Bonaparte's historic manoeuvre and the sudden appearance of his troops on the Austrian flanks, precisely at the time the sun was rising over Austerlitz. I remembered the battles of Wallenstein and Schiller's famous trilogy. I asked the Czech comrades:

«Is there any museum about this historic personality?»

«Of course,» they said, and took me immediately to a palace, which was the Wallenstein Museum.

I went hunting deer many times. They had a special ceremony which was performed over the dead deer. To honour the body of the deer, you would break off a pine twig, dip it in the animal's blood and then stick the twig like a feather in your hat-band.

One day when I was out hunting I found myself in front of a big *château.** I asked:

«What is that building?»

«It is one of Metternich's residences,» they told me, «now it is a museum.»

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* French in the original.

«Can we visit it?» I asked the comrades accompanying me.

«Of course,» they replied.

We went in and looked at everything. The competent guide gave us full explanations. I recall that I went into Metternich's library, full of beautifully bound books. When we came out of the library, we passed a closed door and the guide told us:

«In here there is a mummy which was sent as a gift from Egypt to the Chancellor of Austria, the assassin of Napoleon's exiled son, the King of Rome.»

«Open it up,» I said, «let us see this mummy, because I am very interested in Egyptology and have read many books about it, especially about the findings of the scientist Carter, Carnarvon's associate, who discovered the undamaged tomb of Tutankhamen.»

«No,» said the guide, «I won't open that door.»

«Why?» I asked surprised.

«Because some misfortune might befall me, I might die.»

The Czech comrades laughed at him and said:

«What are you telling us, come on, open it up!»

The guide stuck to his guns and finally said:

«Here, take the key, open the door yourselves and have a look. I am not going inside and I won't take any responsibility.»

The Czech comrade escorting me opened the door, we turned on the lights and saw the mummy, completely black in a wooden sarcophagus. We closed the door, gave the key back to the guide, shook hands with him, thanked him, and left.

On our way out, the Czech comrade said to me:

«There are still superstitious people who believe in magic like that guide we saw.»

«No,» I said, «the guide is a man of learning, and not superstitious. The books on Egyptology say that nearly all the scientists who have discovered the mummies of Pharaohs have died in some mysterious way. There are many theories which say that the ancient Egyptian priests who lived about three thousand years before our era, were great scientists and to protect the mummies from robbers lined the walls with rock that contained uranium. It is said that in the sarcophagus chamber they burned plants which released powerful poisons. It has been proved that the structure of the pyramids is a rare miracle from the geometrical aspect in which sometimes the apex of the pyramid, like that of Cheops, coincides with a given star, or as occurs in the Valley of the Kings, in stated years, at a given hour of the day the

rays of the sun entered into the depths of the corridor and lit up the forehead of the statue of the Pharaoh.»

My Czech escort, Pavel he was called, who was a good, kindly, modest chap, changed his opinion about the guide, and was interested to know more.

The Czechs themselves took me to Slovakia to show me the figure of our National Hero, Skanderbeg, amongst other outstanding historical figures in an old mural on the portico of a monastery. I went to a small spa, at one time called Marienbad, in Sudetenland, to visit the historic house where Goethe lived. Here, in his old age, Goethe fell in love with a very young «Gretchen» and wrote his famous «Elegy of Marienbad».

I mention all these things to show the reality in Czechoslovakia and the good disposition of the Czechs towards us. However, they behaved in the same way with everybody. Even the Soviets felt themselves different people when they went to Czechoslovakia.

In Czechoslovakia I talked in a park for several hours with Rokossovsky and Konev, who, in the Kremlin would merely shake hands. I had to go hunting in Czechoslovakia to meet the president of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukraine and for Nina Khrushcheva to invite Nexhmije and me to tea. I had to go

to Czechoslovakia to talk to General Antonov and others.

But as I said above, after the death of Gottwald, the Khrushchevites were getting their grip on Czechoslovakia. It seemed that Novotny, as the first secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, adhered to correct positions, but time showed that he was a wavering opportunist element, and thus, in one way or another, he did the work for Khrushchev and Co. He played a major role in carrying through the plans which made Czechoslovakia a dominion occupied by Russian tanks.

Thus, the revisionist spider-web was being spun in the countries of people's democracy. The old leaders like Dimitrov, Gottwald and later, Bierut and others, were replaced with younger ones, who seemed suitable to the Soviet leaders, at least at that stage.

With the German Democratic Republic they considered the problem solved, because East Germany was heavily occupied by Soviet troops. We considered this necessary because no peace treaty had been signed, and as well as this, the Soviet army in Germany served to defend not only this socialist country, but also the socialist camp.

With the East Germans we had good relations as long as Pieck was alive. He was an old revolutionary and comrade of Stalin, for whom I had great respect. I met Pieck in 1959 when

I was heading a delegation to the GDR. By that time Pieck was old and sick. He gave me a kindly welcome, and listened to me cheerfully when I spoke about our friendship and told him of Albania's progress (he could hardly speak because of his paralysis).

In his last years Pieck apparently did not effectively lead the country and the party. He had been given the honorary position of President of the Republic and Ulbricht and Grottewohl and Co. ran things.

Ulbricht had not shown any sign of open hostility to our Party until we fell out with the Soviets and with him. He was a haughty, stiff-necked German, not only with small parties like ours, but also with the others. He had this opinion about relations with the Soviets: «You have occupied us, you have stripped us of industry, but now you must supply us with big credits and food, so that Democratic Germany will build up and reach the level of the German Federal Republic.» He demanded such credits arrogantly and he got them. He forced Khrushchev to say in a joint meeting: «We must assist Germany so that it becomes our show-case to the West.» And Ulbricht did not hesitate to tell the Soviets in our presence: «You must speed up your aid because there is bureaucracy.»

«Where is the bureaucracy,» asked Mikoyan «in your country?»

«No, not at all in our country but in yours,» replied Ulbricht.

However, while he received great aid for himself, he was never ready to help the others, and gave us a ludicrous credit. When we attacked the Khrushchevites in Moscow, both in the meeting and after it, he proved to be one of our most ferocious opponents and was the first to attack our Party publicly after the Moscow Meeting.

The Khrushchevites wanted to have not only the countries of people's democracy, but also the whole international communist movement, under their direction.

I shall speak elsewhere about the revisionist and opportunist views and stands of such leaders as Togliatti, Thorez, etc., but I want to stress here that, after the death of Stalin, both Togliatti and the others began to express their revisionist views more openly, because they sensed that Khrushchev and his circle were their ideological and political allies, because they saw Khrushchev's opportunist line towards the Titoites, the social-democrats, the bourgeoisie, etc. This line which Khrushchev was building up suited Togliatti and Co., who, to one degree or another, had long been following the line of collaboration with the bourgeois parties and the bourgeois governments of their own countries, and fighting

and dreaming that they would become the sponsors of marriages of convenience and take seats in those governments. These tendencies were latent at first, were displayed hesitantly, but after the 20th Congress they bloomed into «theories», like Togliatti's famous «polycentrism,» or his «Italian road to socialism.»

Of course, within the world communist movement, the Khrushchevites did not come out with a completely open revisionist platform right from the start. Just as within the Soviet Union, they tried to adopt a flexible line, in order to avoid arousing an immediate reaction in either their own party or the others. The «Leninism» of which they spoke, the odd good word dropped here or there about Stalin, their noisy advertisement of «Leninist principles in the relations among the socialist countries», served to disguise the plots they were hatching up, and to gradually prepare the ground for their subsequent frontal attack. This they launched at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. There they laid their cards on the table, because Khrushchev and Co. had worked for a long time to paralyze any possible reaction inside or outside the country.

6. THE OFFICIAL PROCLAMATION OF REVISIONISM

The 20th Congress of the CPSU. Khrushchev's theses — the charter of modern revisionism. The «secret» report against Stalin. Togliatti demands recognition of his «merits». Tito in the Soviet Union. Molotov is dismissed from the task of foreign minister. Abortive attempt of the «anti-party group». The end of the career of Marshal Zhukov. Another victim of the Khrushchevites' backstage manoeuvres: Kirichenko. May 1956: Suslov demands that we rehabilitate Koçi Xoxe and company. June 1956: Tito and Khrushchev are displeased with us. July 1957: Khrushchev arranges a dinner in Moscow so that we meet Rankovic and Kardelj.

The betrayal at the top of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and of the country where the October Socialist Revolution was carried out, was an all-round attack on the name and great teachings of Lenin, and especially on the name and work of Stalin.

In the framework of its post-Second World War strategy, imperialism, headed by American imperialism, when it saw the first vacillations and retreats of the new Soviet leadership, further intensified its all-round attacks and pressure to force Khrushchev and company to go further and further down the road of capitulation and betrayal. The «striving» and big expenditure of imperialism in this counter-revolutionary direction were not in vain. Having set out on their course of concessions and betrayal, Khrushchev and his henchmen were continually justifying the long-standing efforts and the old desires of imperialism.

When they thought that they had strengthened their positions, had control of the army through the marshals, had turned the security force to their course, had won over the majority of the Central Committee, Khrushchev, Mikoyan and the other Khrushchevites prepared the notorious 20th Congress held in February 1956, at which they delivered the «secret» report against Stalin.

This congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has gone down in history as the congress which officially legalized the thoroughly anti-Marxist, anti-socialist theses of Nikita Khrushchev and his collaborators, as the congress which flung the doors open to the penetration of alien, bourgeois-revisionist ideology in a series of communist and workers' parties of the former so-

cialist countries and the capitalist countries. All the distortions of the major issues of principle, such as those about the character of our epoch, the roads of transition to socialism, peaceful coexistence, war and peace, the stand towards modern revisionism and towards imperialism, etc., etc., which later became the basis of the great, open polemic with modern revisionism, have their official beginning in Khrushchev's report to the 20th Congress.

From the time Stalin died to the 20th Congress, the Khrushchevite conspirators manoeuvred cunningly with «bureaucratic legality», «the rules of the party», «collective leadership» and «democratic centralism», shed crocodile tears over the loss of Stalin, thus step by step preparing to torpedo the work of Stalin, his personality and Marxism-Leninism. This is a period full of lessons for the Marxist-Leninists, because it brings out the bankruptcy of «bureaucratic legality», which represents a great danger to a Marxist-Leninist party, brings out the methods which the revisionists used to profit from this «bureaucratic legality», brings out how leaders, who are honest and experienced but who have lost the revolutionary class spirit, fall into the traps of intriguers and give way, retreat before the blackmail and demagogy of revisionist traitors disguised with revolutionary phraseology. In this transition period we saw how the Khrushchevites, in order to consoli-

date their power, operated allegedly with «a great party spirit», «free from the fear of Stalin», with «truly democratic and Leninist forms», about which they set up a great clamour, while they worked actively to organize the filthiest slanders which only the bourgeoisie has been able to concoct against the Soviet Union, Stalin and the entire socialist order. All these monstrous calumnies of the Khrushchevite revisionists, all their destructive activity,were intended to «prove», allegedly with legal documents, with «arguments» and «analyses in the new spirit», the slanders which the reactionary bourgeoisie had been spreading for many years against Marxism-Leninism, the revolution and socialism.

Every good thing of the past was distorted, allegedly in the light of the «new situations», «new developments», «new roads and possibilities», in order to go ahead.

Many were misled by this demagogy of traitors. However, the Party of Labour of Albania was not misled. It has made a detailed principled analysis of this question and has had its say in defence of the Marxist-Leninist truth long ago.

Together with Comrades Mehmet Shehu and Gogo Nushi, I was appointed by our Party to take part in the proceedings of the 20th Congress. The opportunist «new spirit», which Khrushchev was arousing and activating, was apparent in the way

in which the proceedings of this congress were organized and conducted. This liberal spirit pervaded the whole atmosphere, the Soviet press and propaganda of those days like an ominous cloud; it prevailed in the corridors and the congress halls, it was apparent in people's faces, gestures and words.

The former seriousness, characteristic of such extremely important events in the life of a party and a country, was missing. Even non-party people spoke during the proceedings of the congress. In the breaks between sessions, Khrushchev and company strolled through the halls and corridors, laughing and competing with one another as to who could tell the most anecdotes, make the most wisecracks and show himself the most popular, who could drink the most toasts at the heavily laden tables which were placed everywhere.

With all this, Khrushchev wanted to reinforce the idea that the «grave period», the «dictatorship» and «gloomy analysis» of things were over once and for all and the «new period» of «democracy», «freedom», the «creative examination» of events and phenomena, whether inside or outside the Soviet Union, was officially beginning.

In fact, the first report delivered by Khrushchev at the congress, which was trumpeted loudly as a «colossal contribution» to the fund of Marxism-Leninism and a «creative development» of our science, constitutes the official charter of

modern revisionism. From those days on, the bourgeoisie and reaction gave exceptional publicity to Khrushchev's «new developments», spoke openly about the radical changes which were occurring in the Soviet Union and in the political and ideological line of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

While they gleefully welcomed Khrushchev's great and radical about-turn, reaction and the bourgeoisie, at the same time, did not fail to describe this turn on some occasions as «more dangerous» to their interests than the line of the time of Stalin. Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites used these «criticisms» by the bourgeoisie as arguments to convince the others that the «new line» was «correct» and «Marxist», but in fact, the fear of the international bourgeoisie had another source: in Khrushchev and his «new policy» it saw not only a new ally, but also a new and dangerous rival for spheres of influence, plunder, wars and invasions.

On the last day, the congress proceeded behind closed doors, because the elections were to be held, and we were not present at the sessions. In fact that day, besides the elections, a second report by Khrushchev was read to the delegates. It was the notorious, so-called secret report against Stalin, but which had been sent in advance to the Yugoslav leaders, and a few days later it fell into the hands of the bourgeoisie and reaction as a new «gift» from Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites.

After it was discussed by the delegates to the congress, this report was given to us and all the other foreign delegations to read.

Only the first secretaries of sister parties taking part in the congress read it. I spent all night reading it, and extremely shocked, gave it to Mehmet and Gogo to read. We had known in advance that Khrushchev and company had cancelled out the glorious work and figure of Stalin and we saw this during the proceedings of the congress in which his name was never mentioned in favourable terms. But we could never have imagined that all those monstrous accusations and calumnies against the great and unforgettable Stalin could have been put on paper by the Soviet leaders. Nevertheless, there it was in black and white. It had been read to the Soviet communists, who were delegates to the congress, and had been given to the representatives of other parties taking part in the congress to read. Our hearts and minds were deeply and gravely shocked. Amongst ourselves we said that this was a villany which had gone beyond all bounds, with catastrophic consequences for the Soviet Union and the movement, and that in those tragic circumstances, the duty of our Party was to stand firm on its own Marxist-Leninist positions.

After we had read it we immediately returned the terrible report to its owners. We had no need for that package of filthy accusations which

Khrushchev had concocted. It was other «communists» who took it away to give to reaction and to sell by the ton in their book-stalls as a profitable business.

We returned to Albania heart-broken over what we had seen and heard in the homeland of Lenin and Stalin, but at the same time we returned with a great lesson that we must be more vigilant and more alert towards the activities and stands of Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites.

Only a few days later the black smoke of the ideas of the 20th Congress began to spread everywhere.

Palmiro Togliatti, our near neighbour, who had shown himself to be the most remote and unapproachable towards us, was among the first to come out in his party beating his breast. Not only did he praise to the skies the new «prospects» which the congress of the Soviet revisionists opened, but he demanded that his merits should be recognized as the precursor of Khrushchev in regard to many of the new theses and as «an old fighter» for those ideas. «In regard to our party,» declared Togliatti in March 1956, «it seems to me that we have acted courageously. We have always been interested in finding our own way, the Italian way, of development towards socialism.»

The revisionists of Belgrade rejoiced and aroused themselves as never before, while the other parties of the countries of people's democ-

racy began, not only to envisage the future, but also to re-examine the past, in the spirit of Khrushchev's theses. Revisionist elements, who up till yesterday had kept under cover while they poured out their poison, now came out openly to settle accounts with their opponents; the wave of rehabilitations of condemned traitors and enemies erupted, the doors of prisons were opened and many of those who had been condemned were placed directly in the leadership of the parties.

The Khrushchev clique was the first to set the example. At the 20th Congress, Khrushchev boasted that more than 7,000 persons condemned in the time of Stalin had been liberated from the prisons of the Soviet Union and rehabilitated. This process was to continue and be deepened.

Khrushchev and Mikoyan began to liquidate, one by one, and finally all together, those members of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the party whom they were to describe as an «anti-party group». After they brought down Malenkov, replacing him temporarily with Bulganin, Molotov's turn came. This took place on June 2, 1956. That day the newspaper «Pravda» carried a huge photograph of Tito on the front page and the *dobro pozhalovat!** to the head of the Belgrade clique arriving in Moscow, and page four ended a report of daily events with the «news» about the removal of Molotov from the

* welcome (Russian in the original).

post of foreign minister of the Soviet Union. The report said that Molotov had been released from this position «at his own request», but in fact he was released because this was a condition laid down by Tito for his coming to the Soviet Union for the first time since the breaking off of relations in 1948-1949. And Khrushchev and company immediately fulfilled the condition set by Belgrade for Tito's satisfaction, since Molotov, together with Stalin, had signed the letters which the Soviet leadership had sent the Yugoslav leadership in 1948.

The positions of the revisionist reactionaries were becoming stronger and their opponents in the Presidium, Malenkov, Molotov, Kaganovich, Voroshilov and others, now began to see more clearly the revisionist intrigue and the diabolical plans which Khrushchev hatched up against the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat. At a meeting of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the party in the Kremlin, in the summer of 1957, after many criticisms, Khrushchev was left in the minority, and, as Polyansky told us from his own mouth, Khrushchev was dismissed from the task of the first secretary and was appointed minister of agriculture, since he was an «expert on *kukuruza*»*. However, this situation did not last

* maize (Russian in the original).

more than a few hours. Khrushchev and his supporters secretly gave the alarm, the marshals surrounded the Kremlin with tanks and soldiers and gave orders that not even a fly was to leave the Kremlin. On the other hand, aircraft were sent to the four corners of the Soviet Union to gather up the members of the Plenum of the CC of the CPSU. «Then,» said Polyansky, this product of Khrushchev, «we entered the Kremlin and demanded admission to the meeting. Voroshilov came out and asked what we wanted. When we told him that we wanted to enter the meeting, he cut us short. When we threatened to use force he said: 'What does all this mean?' But we warned him: 'Mind your words, otherwise we shall arrest you.' We entered the meeting and changed the situation.» Khrushchev was restored to power.

Thus, after this forlorn attempt, these former co-fighters of Stalin's, who had associated themselves with the slanders made against his glorious work, were described as an «anti-party group» and received the final blow from the Khrushchevites. No one wept over them, no one pitied them. They had lost the revolutionary spirit, were no longer Marxist-Leninists, but corpses of Bolshevism. They had united with Khrushchev and allowed mud to be thrown at Stalin and his work; they tried to do something, but not on the party road, because for them, too, the party did not exist.

All those who opposed Khrushchev, in one

way or another, or were no longer necessary to him, were to suffer the same fate. For years on end the «great merits» of Zhukov were publicized, his activity during the Great Patriotic War was used to throw mud at Stalin, and as minister of defence his hand was used for the triumph of Khrushchev's putsch. But later, we suddenly learned that he had been discharged from the functions he held. During those days Zhukov was on a visit to our country. We welcomed him warmly as an old cadre and hero of the Stalinist Red Army, talked about problems of the defence of our country and the socialist camp, and did not notice anything disturbing in his opinions. On the contrary, since he had come from Yugoslavia, where he had been on a visit, he told us: «With what I saw in Yugoslavia, I don't understand what sort of socialist country it is!» From this we sensed that he was not of one mind with Khrushchev. On the very day that he left, we learned that he had been removed from the post of minister of defence of the USSR for «mistakes» and «grave faults» in his application of the «line of the party», for violations of the «law in the army», etc., etc. I cannot say whether or not Zhukov was guilty of mistakes and faults in these directions, but it is possible that the reasons went deeper.

In one meeting at Khrushchev's, their attitude towards Zhukov had made an impression on me. I can't remember what year it was, but it was

summer and I was on holiday in the south of the Soviet Union. Khrushchev had asked me to lunch. The local people there were Mikoyan, Kirichenko, Nina Petrovna (Khrushchev's wife), and some others. Apart from me, Ulbricht and Grotewohl were there as foreign guests. We were sitting outside, eating and drinking on the verandah. When Zhukov came, Khrushchev invited him to sit down. Zhukov seemed out of sorts. Mikoyan got up and said to him:

«I am the *tamada**, fill your glass!»

«I can't drink,» said Zhukov, «I am not well.»

«Fill it, I say,» insisted Mikoyan in an authoritarian tone, «I give the orders here, not you.»

Nina Khrushcheva intervened:

«Don't force him when it harms him, Anastasiy Ivanovich,» she said to Mikoyan.

Zhukov said nothing and did not fill his glass. Khrushchev changed the subject by cracking jokes with Mikoyan.

Can it be that the contradictions with Zhukov had begun to arise as early as that, and they had begun to insult him and to show him that others were giving the orders and not he? Perhaps Khrushchev and company had begun to fear the power which they themselves had given Zhukov in order to seize state power, and that is why they accused him of «Bonapartism» later. Could it possibly be that information about Zhukov's views

* master of ceremonies (Russian in the original).

on Yugoslavia reached Khrushchev before Zhukov returned to the Soviet Union? In any case, Zhukov was eliminated from the political scene despite his four «Hero of the Soviet Union» stars, a series of orders of Lenin, and countless other decorations.

After the 20th Congress, Khrushchev elevated Kirichenko to the top and made him one of the main figures of the leadership. I had met him in Kiev many years before, when he was first secretary of the Ukraine. This big florid-faced man who did not make a bad impression on me, did not welcome me haughtily or as a mere formality. Kirichenko accompanied me to many places which I saw for the first time, showed me the main street of Kiev, which had been built entirely new, took me to the place called Babi Yar, notorious as the site of the massacre of Jews by the nazis. We also went together to the Opera, where we saw a performance about Bogdan Khmelnitsky, whom, I remember, he compared with our Skanderbeg. I was pleased about this, although I was sure that Kirichenko had remembered only the name of Skanderbeg from all that the *chinovniki* had told him about the history of Albania. He did not fail to respond to my love for Stalin with the same terms and expressions of admiration and loyalty. However, since he was from the Ukraine, Kirichenko did not fail to speak about Khrushchev, too, about his «wisdom, ability,

energy», etc. I did not see anything wrong with these expressions which seemed natural to me at that time.

In the Kremlin I frequently had occasion to sit at the table beside Kirichenko and talk to him. After Stalin's death, many banquets were organized, because, at that period it was usually only at banquets that one met the leaders of the Soviet Union. The tables were set day and night, laden with food and drink to the point of revulsion. When I saw the Soviet comrades eating and drinking, I was reminded of Gargantua of Rabelais. These things occurred after the death of Stalin, when Soviet diplomacy was carried out through *priyoms,* and Khrushchevite «communism» was illustrated, apart from other things, with banquets, with caviar, and the wines of the Crimea.

At one of these *priyoms,* when I was sitting near Kirichenko, I said to Khrushchev in a loud voice:

«You must come to visit Albania some time, because you have gone everywhere else.»

«I shall come,» replied Khrushchev.

Kirichenko jumped in at once and said to Khrushchev:

«Albania is far away, so don't promise when you will go and how many days you will stay.»

Of course, I did not like this intervention of his and asked:

«Why are you ill-disposed towards our country?»

He feigned regret over the incident, and to explain his gesture, said to me:

«Nikita Khrushchev is not well at present. We must look after him.»

This was just a tale. Khrushchev was as healthy as a pig, and ate and drank enough for four.

Another time (at a reception, of course, as usual), I happened to be seated near Kirichenko again. Nexhmije was with me, too. It was July 1957, the time when Khrushchev had fixed things up with the Titoites and was flattering them, as well as exerting pressure on them. The Titoites seemed to like the flattery, while as to the pressure and the stabs in the back, they gave as good as they got. Khrushchev had informed me the night before, «in order to get my permission», that he was going to ask me to this dinner at which Zhivkov and his wife, as well as Rankovic and Kardelj, with their wives, would be present. As was his custom, Khrushchev cracked jokes with Mikoyan. This is the way they combined their roles, with Khrushchev accompanying his arrows, trickery, wiles, lies, and threats with jibes at «Anastasiy» who played the «king's jester».

When he finished his introduction with jokes with the «king's jester», Khrushchev, in proposing a toast, started to give us a lecture about the

three-sided friendship that ought to exist between Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, and the four-sided friendship, between the Soviet Union, Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria.

«The relations of the Soviet Union with Yugoslavia have not proceeded in a straight line,» he said. «At first they were good, then they were cool, then they were broken off, and later, following our visit to Belgrade it seemed they were put right. Then the rocket went up (he was referring to events of October-November 1956 in Hungary), and they were ruined again, but now the objective and subjective conditions have been created for them to improve. Meanwhile the relations of Yugoslavia with Albania and Bulgaria have not yet been improved, and as I told Rankovic and Kardelj earlier, the Yugoslavs must stop their undercover activity against those countries.»

«It is the Albanians who do not leave us in peace,» interjected Rankovic.

Then I intervened and listed for Rankovic the anti-Albanian actions, sabotage, subversion, and the plots which they organized against us. That night we had Khrushchev «on our side», but he soft-pedalled his criticisms of the Yugoslavs.

«I don't understand this name of your party, the 'League of Communists of Yugoslavia',» said Khrushchev, waving his glass. «What is this word 'League'? Besides, you Yugoslavs don't like the term 'socialist camp'. But tell us, what should we

call it, the 'neutral camp', the 'camp of neutral countries'? We are all socialist countries, or are you not a socialist country?»

«We are, of course, we are!» said Kardelj.

«Then come and join us, we are the majority,» replied Khrushchev.

Khrushchev was on his feet throughout all this discourse, interspersed with shouts and gestures, and full of «criticisms» of the Yugoslavs, which he delivered in the context of his efforts to stand over Tito, who never agreed to consider Khrushchev as the «head» of the council.

Kirichenko, who was beside me, listened in silence. Later he asked me in a low voice:

«Who is this woman beside me?»

«My wife, Nexhmije,» I replied.

«Couldn't you have told me earlier? I have been keeping my mouth shut, thinking that she is the wife of one of them,» he told me, indicating the Yugoslavs. He exchanged greetings with Nexhmije and then began to abuse the Yugoslavs.

Meanwhile Khrushchev continued his «criticisms» of the Yugoslavs and tried to convince them that it was he (of course, under the name of the Soviet Union and the Soviet communist party), and no one else who ought to be at the «head». He was getting at Tito, who, for his part, tried to place himself and the Yugoslav party above everyone.

«It would be ridiculous,» he told them, «for

us to be at the head of the camp if the other parties did not think us worthy, just as it would be ridiculous for any other party to consider itself at the head when the others do not consider it so.»

Kardelj and Rankovic replied coolly, making great efforts to appear calm, but it was very easy to understand that internally they were boiling. Tito had instructed them to defend his positions well and they wanted to do their master's bidding.

The dialogue between them was dragging on, frequently interrupted by the shouts of Khrushchev, but I was no longer listening. Apart from the reply I gave Rankovic, when he made the accusation that we had interfered in their affairs, I exchanged not one word with them. I talked the whole time with Kirichenko, who left nothing unsaid against the Yugoslavs and described the whole stand of our Party towards the revisionist leadership of Yugoslavia as very correct.

But, this Kirichenko, also, was slapped down by Khrushchev later. Although foreign observers for a time, considered him to rank second after Khrushchev, he was sent to a small remote town of Russia, without doubt, virtually in exile. One of our military students told us when he returned to Albania:

«I was travelling on a train and a Soviet passenger came and sat down beside me, pulled out the paper and began to read. After a while he laid

down the paper and, as is customary, asked me: 'Where are you going?' I told him. Noticing the accent with which I spoke Russian, he asked me: 'What is your nationality?' 'I am an Albanian,' I said. The traveller was surprised, but pleased, looked at the door of the carriage, turned to me, and shook my hand warmly, saying: 'I admire the Albanians'. I was surprised by his stand,» said our officer, «because at this time the fight with the Khrushchevites had begun». It was the period after the Meeting of 81 parties. «'Who are you?' I asked,» related the officer. «'I am Kirichenko,' he told me. When he told me his name, I realized who he was,» our officer told us, «and I prepared myself to talk to him, but he straight away said: 'Shall we play dominoes?' 'All right,' I replied, and he pulled the box of dominoes out of his pocket and we began the game. I quickly understood why he wanted to play dominoes. He wanted to tell me something and to cover his voice with the rattle of the dominoes on the table. And he began: 'Good for your Party, which exposed Khrushchev. Long live Enver Hoxha! Long live socialist Albania!' And in this way we continued a very friendly talk, covered by the rattle of the dominoes. While we were talking, other people entered the compartment. He placed the last domino saying: 'Don't yield, give Enver my best wishes!' and took the newspaper and started to read it as if we had never met,» said our officer in conclusion.

Khrushchev and company did everything possible to spread and cultivate their openly revisionist line and their anti-Marxist, putschist actions and methods in all the other communist and workers' parties. We saw how Khrushchevism began to flourish very quickly in Bulgaria and Hungary, East Germany, Poland, Rumania and Czechoslovakia. The process of large-scale rehabilitations, disguised as the «correction of mistakes made in the past», was transformed into an unprecedented campaign in all the former countries of people's democracy. The doors of the prisons were opened everywhere, the chiefs of other parties were competing with each other as to who would be quickest to release the most condemned enemies from the prisons, and who would give them the most positions right up to the head of the party and the state. Every day the newspapers and magazines of these parties published communiques and reports about this spring of the revisionist mafia; the pages of the press were filled with the speeches of Tito, Ulbricht, and other revisionist chiefs, while «Pravda» and TASS hastened to report these events and to spread them as «advanced examples».

We saw what was occurring and felt the pressure mounting against us from all sides, but we did not waver a fraction from our course and our line.

This could not fail to anger Tito and com-

pany, first of all, because, exalted by the decisions of the 20th Congress and what was occurring in other countries, they expected a cataclysm in Albania, too. The activity of the Titoites who worked in the Yugoslav Embassy in Tirana, against our Party and country, was stepped up.

Taking advantage of our correct behaviour and the facilities we had provided for them to carry out their task, the Yugoslav diplomats in Tirana, on orders and instructions from Belgrade, started to arouse and reactivate their old agents in our country, instructed them and gave them the signal to attack. The attempt to attack the leadership of our Party at the Tirana Conference in April 1956, an attempt which failed, was the work of the Belgrade revisionists but, at the same time, it was also the work of Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites. With their revisionist theses and ideas, the latter were the inspirers of the plot, while the Titoites and their secret agents were the organizers.

When they saw that this plot had failed, the Soviet leaders, who posed as our friends to the death and men of principle, did not fail to make demands and exert pressure on us openly.

On the eve of the 3rd Congress of our Party, which was held at the end of May and the beginning of June 1956, Suslov quite openly demanded that our leadership should «re-examine» and «correct» its line in the past.

«There is nothing for our Party to re-examine in its line,» we told him bluntly. «We have never permitted serious mistakes of principle in our line.»

«You should re-examine the case of Koçi Xoxe and his comrades, whom you condemned earlier,» Suslov told us.

«They were and still are traitors and enemies of our Party and people, enemies of the Soviet Union and socialism,» we replied bluntly. «If their trials were reviewed a hundred times, they would be described only as enemies a hundred times. Such was the nature of their activity.»

Then Suslov began to speak about the things that were occurring in the other parties and the Soviet party in regard to looking at this problem with a «more generous», «more humane» eye.

«This has made a great impression on and has been welcomed by the peoples,» he said. «This is what should occur with you too.»

«If we were to rehabilitate the enemies and traitors, those who wanted to place the country in the chains of a new slavery, our people would stone us,» we told Khrushchev's ideologist.

When he saw that he was getting nowhere with this, Suslov changed his tack.

«All right,» he said, «since you are convinced they are enemies, that is what they must be. But there is one thing you should do: you should refrain from speaking of their links with the Yugo-

slavs and should no longer describe them as agents of Belgrade.»

«Here we are speaking of the truth,» we said. «And the truth is that Koçi Xoxe and his collaborators in the plot were downright agents of the Yugoslav revisionists. We have made known world-wide the links of Koçi Xoxe with the Yugoslavs for hostile activities against our Party and country and the great mass of facts which prove this. The Soviet leadership knows them very well. Perhaps you have not had the chance to acquaint yourself with the facts and, since you persist in your opinion, let us present some of them to you.»

Suslov could hardly contain his temper. We calmly listed some of the main facts and finally stressed:

«This is the truth about the links of Koçi Xoxe with the Yugoslav revisionists.»

«*Da, da,*»* he repeated impatiently.

«And how can we distort this truth?!» we asked him. «Is it permissible for a party to conceal or distort what has been proved with countless facts, to please this or that person?»

Suslov snorted, «But there is no other way you can repair your relations with Yugoslavia.»

Everything had become more than clear to us. Behind the «fraternal» intervention of Suslov

* Yes, yes (Russian in the original).

lurked the Khrushchev-Tito deals. The Tito group, which had now gained ground, was certainly demanding as much as possible space, along with economic, military and political advantages. Tito had insisted with Khrushchev that the Titoite traitors such as Koçi Xoxe, Rajk, Kostov, etc., be rehabilitated. While Tito achieved this aim in Hungary, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia, he was quite unable to do so in our country. In those countries the traitors were rehabilitated and the Marxist-Leninist party leaderships were undermined. This was the joint work of Khrushchev and Tito. With our resolute and unwavering stand towards him, we were a thorn in Tito's flesh. And if the enemies dared to undertake actions against us, we would counteract. Tito had long known this, and Khrushchev knew it and was becoming convinced of it, too. He, of course, was inclined to restrict Tito's roads and not allow him to graze in the «pastures» which Khrushchev considered his own.

About 15 to 20 days after the 3rd Congress of our Party, in June 1956, I was in Moscow for a consultation, about which I spoke above, in which the leaders of the parties of all the socialist countries took part. Although the purpose of the consultation was to discuss economic problems, Khrushchev, as was his custom, took the opportunity to raise all the other problems.

There, in the presence of all the representa-

tives of the other parties, he admitted with his own mouth the pressure which Tito had exerted on him for the rehabilitation of Koçi Xoxe and other enemies condemned in Albania.

«With Tito,» said Khrushchev among other things, «we talked about the relations of Yugoslavia with the other states. Tito was pleased with the Poles, the Hungarians, the Czechs, the Bulgarians and the others, but he spoke very angrily about Albania, thumping his fist and stamping his feet. 'The Albanians are not in order, they are not on the right road,' Tito told me, 'they do not recognize the mistakes they have made and have understood nothing from all these things that are taking place'.»

In fact, by repeating Tito's words and accusations Khrushchev found the opportunity to pour out all the spite and ire he felt against us, because at the congress we did not rehabilitate Koçi Xoxe, «whom Tito described as a great patriot,» stressed Khrushchev.

«When Tito spoke about the Albanian comrades he was trembling with rage, but I opposed him and said to him, 'These are the internal affairs of the Albanian comrades, and they will know how to solve them,'» said Khrushchev, continuing his «report», trying to convince us that he had had a great «quarrel» with Tito. However, we were now well aware of the meaning of the never-

ending kisses and quarrels between these two heralds of modern revisionism.

Up to his neck in treachery, Tito hatched up numerous plots against the socialist countries. However, when Khrushchev betrayed, he strutted like a «peacock» and posed as Khrushchev's «teacher». Tito was quite right to demand a great deal from him, and did not hang back in this direction. He aimed to make Khrushchev obey him and act according to his orders. Tito had the backing of American imperialism and world reaction, therefore Khrushchev, for his part, followed the tactic of making approaches to Tito, in order to flatter him and win him over, to embrace him and eventually strangle him. However, he was dealing with Tito, who had his own tactic of making approaches to Khrushchev in order to impose himself on him and not to submit to him, to dictate to him and not to take orders from him, to get the maximum possible unconditional aid and to compel Khrushchev to subjugate all Belgrade's opponents, first of all, the Party of Labour of Albania.

It is precisely for these reasons that we see many zig zags in Khrushchev's line towards Tito — sometimes they got on well, sometimes their relations were embittered, sometimes he attacked and cursed him and at other times he retracted only to criticize him again. This was the result of lack of principle in his political stand. Tito and Khrush-

chev were two revisionists, two agents of capitalism, who had things in common, but also contradictions, which were expressed in the zig zags and erratic behaviour of that time, which continue to this day, between Tito and Khrushchev's heirs.

There was nothing Marxist-Leninist in their actions and stands. They were guided by counter-revolutionary aims and had assumed the leadership of revisionism, which is capitalism in a new form, the enemy of the unity of peoples, the inciter of reactionary nationalism, of the drive towards and establishment of the most ferocious fascist dictatorship which does not permit even the slightest sign of formal bourgeois democracy. Revisionism is the idea and action which leads the turning of a country from socialism back to capitalism, the turning of a communist party into a fascist party, it is the inspirer of ideological chaos, confusion, corruption, repression, arbitrarity, instability and putting the homeland up for auction. This tragedy occurred in the Soviet Union and the other revisionist countries. Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites, incited and assisted by American imperialism and world capitalism, created this situation.

7. DESIGNING THE EMPIRE

Towards turning the socialist countries into Russian dominions. Changes in the Bulgarian leadership dictated by Moscow. Zhivkov's «clock» is wound up in Moscow. The Danubian complex and the Rumanians' «fall-out» with the Soviets. The official elimination of the Information Bureau. The reformist illusions of the Italian and French parties — Togliatti, the father of «polycentrism». Unforgettable meeting with two beloved French comrades, Marcel Cachin and Gaston Monmousseau. The vacillations of Maurice Thorez. Destruction of the unity of the communist movement, a colossal service for world imperialism.

The theses of the 20th Congress and especially the attack made on Stalin in Khrushchev's «secret» report enthused the revisionist elements, both in the parties of the socialist countries and in the other parties. Following the example of the rehabilitation of the enemies of socialism in the

Soviet Union, the «cases» of Rajk, Kostov, Gomulka, Slansky and other enemies, condemned by the dictatorship of the proletariat, were brought up again.

All the counter-revolutionary subversion which the Khrushchevite clique carried out within the Soviet Union also served its aims in foreign policy. At first, its main aims in this direction were: to strengthen its domination in the parties and former countries of people's democracy, which it thought were under its control, and to clamp down on those parties and countries which still had not submitted to it; to place the communist and workers' parties of the capitalist countries completely in its service; to win the trust of American and world imperialism by attacking socialism in the Soviet Union and elsewhere, while propagating «creative Marxism» through a series of opportunist theses.

Khrushchev thought that by slandering Stalin he would make the Soviet Union and especially himself «acceptable» to everybody. He calculated that in this way world reaction would be satisfied, all the other parties would gather round him, Tito's heart would be softened and they would be reconciled, and, together, like a reunited family, they would reach accord and join hands with imperialism and world capitalism on their course. Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites would say to them: «We are no longer those communists

with knives between their teeth, as in the days of Lenin and Stalin. We are no longer for world revolution, but for collaboration, peaceful coexistence and the parliamentary road. We opened up the concentration camps set up by Stalin and rehabilitated the Tukhachevskies and Zinovievs, and we may even go so far as to rehabilitate Trotsky. We freed the Solzhenitsyns and allowed them to print their anti-Soviet books. We flung Stalin out of the Mausoleum and burned his corpse. To those who called this action of ours against Stalin a crime, we said: 'Do you want this dead horse? Then take it!'»

As I pointed out above, Khrushchev had to get rid of his opponents, not only in the Soviet Union but also in the countries of people's democracy. Those who believed in the Marxist-Leninist line of Stalin had to be culled from the party leaderships. Likewise, those who were against Tito, with whom Khrushchev had come to agreement, had to be purged; while those who had condemned Tito's agents in their own countries had to rehabilitate these traitors and themselves be removed from the leadership. Khrushchev used all methods: Gottwald died, Bierut died, Gomulka and Kadar were returned to power, Dej turned his coat, Rakosi and Chervenkov were liquidated. We were the only ones whom Khrushchev was unable to liquidate.

Of course, in seeking rapprochement with

American imperialism, Khrushchevite revisionism intended to come out on the arena as its powerful partner, a country with developed industry and agriculture, able to compete with those of the United States of America (as was loudly proclaimed), and with its own colonial empire, part of which would be the countries of the socialist camp.

Khrushchev and company had begun their work for the making of this «empire» and now they continued it further. In some places this work went smoothly, in others there was friction, while in Albania these ambitions were never realized.

Bulgaria, for example, never caused the Soviet revisionists any trouble. After the deaths of Dimitrov and Stalin, apparently the «authority» of Velko Chervenkov could no longer be imposed on the Bulgarian Communist Party. He had become an obstacle in Khrushchev's way and, without doubt, the Soviet intrigues, the intrigues of Khrushchev, who seized power and did what he did, must have played a part in his liquidation.

Immediately after the 20th Congress, Chervenkov, who was prime minister at that time, was attacked over the «cult of the individual», the «mistakes» he had committed, etc. However, Velko did not seem to have been one of those who created a cult around themselves. He was used more as a «scapegoat» in order to justify the «corrections» which were made with the rehabilitation of Kos-

tov and company. Chervenkov made way without any fuss and left his post as prime minister in favour of Anton Yugov, who did not keep this position for long, either.

In Dimitrov's time, Anton Yugov was minister of internal affairs, while with the advent of Chervenkov, he became deputy prime minister and later, prime minister. During the war, Yugov fought in the underground movement and fought well. He was one of the main and most dynamic leaders, especially in the uprising which led to September 9, 1944, the day of the liberation of Bulgaria. When I went to Bulgaria for the first time I noticed that Dimitrov showed special respect for Yugov, kept him close and, it seemed, had great faith in him. Irrespective of certain shortcomings in Yugov, to the extent that I knew him, my opinion is that after the death of Dimitrov he was the clearest ideologically and politically amongst the Bulgarian leaders, a man determined in his opinions, courageous and a good organizer. I have had contacts with him many times in Bulgaria, in Moscow, and also in Albania, when he visited our country, and he always showed himself frank, friendly and ready to talk with me.

Yugov knew the political, economic and organizational situation in Bulgaria well and, from my impression, he knew this not only from reports, but more from his contacts. He went all over the country and was a man of the masses. Not

only did he know how to organize, but he was a man who took decisions and knew how to defend them. In other words, Yugov was not a leader who could be made to conform quickly or a «yes-man».

In the organization of the Bulgarian Communist Party under the leadership of Dimitrov, Yugov had his own role. The same thing must be said, also, in regard to the restoration of industry and the organization of agricultural cooperatives, which were built following the example and course of the Soviet collective farms.

When Chervenkov was removed from the post of general secretary of the party, he was replaced by Zhivko,* while Yugov remained where he was, as deputy prime minister. As the cunning devil he was, Khrushchev preferred Todor, who would do the work for him better. Khrushchev could not manoeuvre with Yugov as he wanted. Did Yugov like this Khrushchevite solution? Certainly not and he expressed it. Whenever we were together, it was quite clear that Yugov had utter disregard for Zhivkov.

One fine morning Yugov, too, was liquidated quietly like Chervenkov. We never heard the reasons for this liquidation, but we can guess them. He must have been in opposition to Zhivkov, i.e., to Khrushchev. In a word, he must have been against the colonization of Bulgaria

* Ironical diminutive for Zhivkov.

by the Khrushchevite Soviet Union, against the loss of the independence and sovereignty of Bulgaria. Yugov must have refused to become a marionette in the hands of the Khrushchevites, as Zhivkov did.

Together with Yugov's good qualities as a leader, in my opinion he also had some personal shortcomings. His main shortcoming was his conceit, which took concrete form in his boasting and the expressions which he used to boost himself and his work. I travelled through Bulgaria with him, he accompanied me to see cities, plains, agricultural cooperatives, historical sites, factories, artistic performances, etc. I enjoyed the beauties of the country and felt the affection of the Bulgarian people and the Bulgarian communists for our people and Party. Yugov's company was always pleasant and very instructive.

However, wherever he went he seemed to want to show off. We travelled by car, passed through many villages and Yugov never failed to tell me, not only the name of each cooperative, but also how many hectares of land, how many cows, how many horses, and even how many goats, let alone the hectares of vineyards, the type of grape and the number of fruit trees it had. Everything with statistics! Well, I thought, but even statisticians can be wrong! But no, Yugov, the «man with the ready answer», wanted

to impress me that he «had everything at his fingertips».

When they put on a folklore performance for us, he would jump up and join in dancing and singing. He was a *bon vivant.**

Despite these things, Yugov was a good man and I retain pleasant memories of him. I believe he has not degenerated politically and ideologically.

With his elimination, Khrushchev named Todor Zhivkov as the leader of Bulgaria or, more precisely, the «steward» of the Soviets in Bulgaria. Dimitrov raised the prestige of the Bulgarian Communist Party and of Bulgaria very high, but Todor Zhivkov completely reversed this process. This element without personality came to the top with the aid of Khrushchev, and became his docile lackey. At the time I met Dimitrov I never heard of Zhivkov. Later, in the time of Chervenkov, I saw him once or twice. Once he gave me an alleged talk about Bulgarian agriculture and another time he accompanied me somewhere outside Sofia to a field of strawberries.

When he talked to me about agriculture it seemed that it was not Zhivkov's mind talking but his notebook. He was Yugov's opposite. In a small notebook marked A-Z, he had noted down figures about everything — from the population

* jolly fellow (French in the original).

of the country to the number of strings of tobacco. In other words, he bored me with figures, without any conclusion, for a whole hour. Another comrade who was with him spoke much better about the Bulgarian economy, in general, and about industry, in particular. I completely forgot Zhivkov. Later, however, when Chervenkov was removed, he emerged as first secretary(!). We were astonished, but we had no reason to be surprised. I met him in this function, too! He was just what he had been. There was only one change: in order to distinguish himself from the past, he had assumed some new poses; he no longer brought up his notebook, smiled frequently, sat with his cap on and used more «popular expressions».

Even after this I never had a serious conversation with him. Many times we dined together with the comrades of the Bulgarian leadership; Zhivkov took us from one of Czar Boris' palaces to the other, from the palace of Sofia to that of Eksinograd in Varna, but he never said anything of consequence, merely indulging in idle conversation to pass the time.

The metamorphosis of Zhivkov came about gradually through the education which Khrushchev gave him. Zhivkov's watchword became: «With the Soviet Union for ever!» His subjugation to Khrushchev was complete. It was Zhivkov who «created» and launched the idea, «Let us

synchronize our watches with that of Khrushchev». Khrushchev's tactics towards the communist and workers' parties became those of Zhivkov; today he would speak against Tito, tomorrow pro Tito, today he would open the borders for fairs with Yugoslav participation, tomorrow he would close them, today he would claim Macedonia and tomorrow say nothing about it. By following the road and «advice» of Khrushchev, Zhivkov became a «personality» and, simultaneously with the build-up of his «personality» the Khrushchevite revisionists got everything in Bulgaria under their control. Every corner and sector of Bulgaria is run by the men of the Soviets. Nominally, the Bulgarian government, party and administration exist, but, in fact, everything is run by the Soviets. The Khrushchevites have turned Bulgaria into a dangerous arsenal. Bulgaria has become a bridge-head of the Russian social-imperialists against our country and the other Balkan countries. This is the work of Zhivkov and his team, who eat the bread of Bulgaria and serve Soviet social-imperialism.

As the facts of history show, Dej and his associates also were and still are satellites of Khrushchev. They swung whichever way the wind blew. In the close friendship between Tito and Khrushchev there were also quarrels which were caused by the Hungarian, Polish and other events, hence there were tiffs and periods of

sulking, then the friends would kiss and make up. Without the slightest political scruple, Dej threw himself completely into the whirlpool of Khrushchev's treacherous anti-Marxist activity in which he was caught up and tossed to and fro at will.

I shall speak later about what occurred in 1960 in Bucharest and Moscow, but here I want to point out only that in these events Dej once again displayed his unchanging essence as a person who could raise and lower any flag without the slightest qualm. There are certain key points and moments in the life and activity of the man which, taken together, provide the portrait of him. This is Dej: in 1948 and 1949 a resolute and zealous anti-revisionist and anti-Titoite; after 1954 an enthusiastic and zealous pro-revisionist and pro-Titoite; in 1960 a pro-Khrushchevite of the first order, although later, it seemed, he was waving this flag in order to manoeuvre with two or three flags simultaneously. In short, a politician who turned with the political breeze, who followed the line of «with this side and with that side», with Tito, with Khrushchev, and with Mao Zedong, indeed even with his successors and with American imperialism. He and his successors could be and were with anyone, but they were not and could not be with consistent Marxism-Leninism.

We saw both the period of the flowering of

the Dej-Khrushchev friendship and the period of rifts in this friendship.

Khrushchev thought that he had Dej in his waistcoat pocket like the small ivory knife which he would bring out and toy with in meetings. He thought he would use Dej just like this knife. Judging that the situation was ripe, after 1960 Khrushchev brought up the annexationist plan under which the Rumanian territory from the province of Bucharest up to the border with the Soviet Union, would be united economically with the Soviet Ukraine in an «industrial-agricultural complex». This was a very clumsy idea. Dej had swallowed many other things, but this time he kicked out.

Only when Khrushchev trod on Rumania's corns, did Dej silence the attacks on us, but even after this Dej never had sufficient civil decency, let alone the Marxist-Leninist courage, to make the slightest self-criticism over all the things he had said and done in regard to our Party. This revisionist, who kissed Tito's hand, never sought forgiveness from our Party.

It was said that Dej died of cancer. We sent a delegation to his funeral as a mark of friendship with the Rumanian people. There, Ceausescu, who had replaced Dej, hardly shook hands with our delegation. We repaid this new revisionist, who from the time he came to power took as his permanent motto the policy of agreement with

all the revisionist and imperialist chiefs — with Brezhnev, Tito, Mao, Nixon and the whole of world reaction, in the same coin.

On assuming power, this person, who was one of the lesser minions of Dej, made a complete exposure of him and by strengthening his positions, he is struggling to become «a world figure» like Tito, to take his place, thanks to a certain hypothetical resistance to the insidious pressure of the Soviets.

Even after the contradictions which the Rumanians had with the Soviets, their state relations with us remained just the same — cold, stale, tasteless and unpleasant. We do not have party relations with the Rumanian party and we will not have them, so long as that party does not publicly acknowledge the mistakes it has made in regard to our Party.

Of course, we greatly regret that Rumania has been turned into a capitalist country like Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union and others and is socialist only in name.

All these Dejs, Zhivkovs, Ceausescus, etc., are the offspring of revisionism, whom Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites have used and are still using for their own purposes.

The Soviet Khrushchevites replaced Marxist-Leninist trust and friendship with the domination of the great «socialist» state, in order to create the «socialist family», the «socialist community»,

in which Brezhnev and the Soviet marshals rule today with the iron fist by threatening any «wayward son» of the family with the bludgeon of the Warsaw Treaty.

Khrushchev and Co. were intolerant of any kind of criticism or complaint from the others, opposed to any kind of discipline and mutual control, however formal. For them the joint meetings, statements and decisions were formal and null and void if they hindered them in their plans.

Why did the Khrushchevites eliminate and, moreover, blacken the Information Bureau? They did this because the Information Bureau had condemned Tito, because they considered it the offspring of Stalin, which had earned a «bad reputation» in the eyes of the imperialists. It is clear that here they were not concerned with the organizational forms, because, after all, what difference would there be, in form, between the Information Bureau and the «bureau of contacts», which Khrushchev proposed (and which was never created)? The aim was to rehabilitate Tito and please imperialism.

Later, however, at a consultation of the parties of the socialist camp, the proposal for this «bureau» was rejected, partly because the Khrushchevites had changed their minds about it and partly because it was opposed, especially by the Poles. They (Ochab and Cyrankiewicz) were very

actively opposed to this idea. Indeed, even when it was decided to publish a joint organ, they said:

«Well, then, let us have it eventually, because it seems we have to have it.»

From this fruitless meeting, I remember the enthusiasm with which Togliatti embraced Khrushchev's idea and there and then advanced if further, by insisting on the creation of two «bureaus of contacts» — one for the parties of the socialist countries and one for the parties of the capitalist countries! The future father of «polycentrism» took matters even further and proposed that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union should not take part in the latter, «although,» added Togliatti, trying to sweeten the pill, «it will be our leadership.»

The Italian revisionist party was in the forefront of the hostile work against international communism, against the communist and workers' parties and the countries of the socialist camp.

The Italian and French «communists» had great illusions about bourgeois democracy and the parliamentary road. In the period immediately after the Second World War, both these parties took part in the first bourgeois governments. And this was a tactic of the bourgeoisie to avoid strikes and chaos, in order to re-establish the economy and especially to strengthen not only its economic positions but also its military and police positions.

This participation of communists in the bourgeois governments was a flash in the pan. The bourgeoisie threw the communists out of office, disarmed them, pushed them into opposition and promulgated such electoral laws that, despite the great number of votes the communists had received, the number of their deputies in parliament was reduced to the minimum.

As became clear later, even at that time, Tito and Togliatti ate from the one trough, and that is why the Italian party came to the aid of Tito's party, although not openly at first. Togliatti, who was a disguised inveterate revisionist, and all the leadership of the Italian Communist Party, which participated in the Information Bureau, were sorry that Tito was condemned. They voted for this condemnation along with the others, because they did not have the courage to come out openly against it, but time showed that the Italian revisionists were among the most ardent in their desire to kiss Tito.

Khrushchev's visit to Belgrade and his reconciliation with Tito opened the way for Togliatti and Co., not only to go to Belgrade to meet the Titoites and make peace with them, but also to develop their disruptive revisionist views openly against Stalin and the Soviet Union, not only as a state but also as a system. Togliatti and his followers openly took the side of Tito and did not follow Khrushchev's zigzag tactics. On his

part, Khrushchev manoeuvred with Togliatti, too; he praised him and gently reproved him, in order to keep him in check.

The leaders of the Italian party, such as Togliatti, Longo and company proved especially susceptible to the revisionist theses of the 20th Congress and, in particular, to Khrushchev's slanders against Stalin. Shortly after this congress, in an interview given to the magazine «Nuovi Argomenti», Togliatti launched his attacks on the socialist system, the dictatorship of the proletariat and Stalin. Here he also launched his idea of «polycentrism», which was the idea of the fragmentation and splitting of the international communist movement.

As to the leaders of the French Communist Party, such as Thorez, Duclos and others, however, it is a fact that at first they were dismayed at Khrushchev's «secret» report against Stalin and did not accept it. After this report was published in the Western press, the Political Bureau of the French Communist Party made a statement in which it condemned this report and expressed its reservations about the attacks on Stalin. Thorez personally, told me in regard to this problem: «We sought explanations from the Soviet comrades, they gave them to us, but we are not convinced.» I pointed out to Thorez, «You are not convinced, while we do not agree in the least.» Thus Thorez and the French Communist Party

had long been aware of our opinion of the 20th Congress and of the Khrushchevites' slanders against Stalin.

The French and the Italians were like cat and mouse. I had talked with Thorez and Duclos about the stands of the leaders of the Italian Communist Party against the Marxist-Leninist line, in defence of the Titoite revisionists and against our Party. At first, they and the French as a whole seemed to behave well towards us. We stuck to our views and they to theirs. We continued our ceaseless attacks against the Titoites and they seemed to have no trust in Tito. We were on the same course in our stand towards the Italian leaders, too.

Prior to the events which brought the split, Comrades Marcel Cachin and Gaston Monmousseau, two glorious veterans of communism, came to our country. Our whole Party and people welcomed them with joy and affection. I had very open and cordial talks with them. They visited our country, spoke to me about it with great sympathy, and wrote in glowing terms about our Party and people in «L'Humanité». Monmousseau also published a very pleasant book about our country. Sitting with me in front of the fire, he told me about the visit he made to Korça and his participation with the cooperativists of Korça in the grape harvest. In the course of our talk, I asked the author of «*Jean Bécot*»,

who is from Champagne, the place of famous wines:

«Comrade Monmousseau, what do you think of our wine?»

He replied *pince-sans-rire*[9]:

«Like vinegar.»

I laughed heartily and said:

«You are right, but tell me, what should we do about it?»

Monmousseau went on to speak for a whole hour about wine and this helped me greatly. I listened with admiration to the old man whose cheeks were glowing and eyes sparkling with enthusiasm, who had the colour of the wine of his birthplace, Champagne.

Before we went to the 81 parties' Meeting in Moscow, Maurice Thorez asked to come to our country for a holiday. We welcomed him with great pleasure. We thought (and we were not wrong) that he was sent by the Soviets to «soften us up».

When he was on holiday in Durrës, I told Thorez about all the vile things the Soviets had done to us.

Maurice listened attentively. He was astounded because he did not know these things. They had hidden everything from him. I spoke about the Bucharest Meeting and our stand at that

[9] dryly (French in the original).

meeting. He said that they had been informed about the stand of the Party of Labour of Albania at the Bucharest Meeting by the delegation from their party, and since this stand had impressed them, he had set out for Albania with the intention of talking about this question with us. Thorez said that the Bucharest Meeting was useful and did not pronounce himself at all on whether or not it was in order. He did not criticize our stand in Bucharest and when he had heard me out, all he said was:

«Comrade Enver, you must clear up these things they have done to you with the Soviet leadership.»

As to the struggle against Titoism, Maurice Thorez approved everything. We saw him off by ship for Odessa.

In Moscow, before I spoke at the 81 parties' Meeting, Maurice Thorez invited us to dinner. This time it was obvious that he had come from Khrushchev to persuade us not to speak against the revisionist betrayal at the meeting, but he failed in his mission. We did not accept the mistaken «advice» he gave us.

Maurice Thorez criticized us in the meeting, but in moderate terms. However, after I had spoken, Jeannette Vermeersch, Thorez's wife, met me and said:

«Comrade Enver, where are you heading on

this course you have begun? We do not understand you.»

«You do not understand us today, but perhaps you will understand us tomorrow,» I replied.

Everyone knows how things turned out for the French Communist Party. It, too, set out with determination on the revisionist road. It betrayed Marxism-Leninism and, with some nuances, followed the line of Khrushchev and Brezhnev.

Meanwhile Togliatti had no such zig zags as the French, and came out openly, like Tito, with his revisionist views, which he left as his behest to Longo and Berlinguer in his «Testament». He is the father of «polycentrism» in the international communist movement. Of course «polycentrism» was not to the benefit of Khrushchev who aimed to wield the «conductor's baton», just as it is not to the benefit of the Khrushchevites who are ruling in the Soviet Union today. The followers of Togliatti countered, and still counter, the meetings of Khrushchev and Brezhnev with the «meetings» of communist parties of the capitalist countries of Europe, Latin America, etc. The French, who leaned towards Khrushchev, did not approve Togliatti's proposals and fought them. I shall say no more in this direction because I have written elsewhere about this theory and the anti-Marxist actions of these revisionists.

The Italian revisionists have never looked on

socialist Albania or the Party of Labour of Albania with a kindly eye. In the first years following Liberation, we had a perfunctory visit from the elderly Terracini who came to Albania together with a young woman artist. He stayed one or two days and left as silently as he came. Later, Pajetta came. He stayed two days, decorated Mehmet and me with the «Garibaldi» Order of the Spanish War and the Resistance, and he too, departed just as silently. The Italian revisionists wrote almost nothing about socialist Albania in their organ «Unità». Perhaps they did not want to upset the Italian neo-fascists who were in power, whose armies we had smashed in the war, or perhaps it was because we exposed their comrade, Tito!

The Italian Communist Party, with a long-standing opportunist line, was openly a front to catch votes. There were continual squabbles in the leadership over positions, salaries, nomination of deputies and senators. One leader of that party, who was removed from his position by Togliatti, met us and complained to us, but immediately after this, as soon as they threw him a bone and made him a senator, he became as quiet as a lamb.

I remember a meeting I had in Karlovy Vary with one of them, a member of the leadership of Togliatti's Italian Communist Party.

«I am against Togliatti and his views,» he told me.

«But why?» I asked.

He listed one or two «arguments», but in the end the true reason emerged:

«Togliatti does not allow publication of the speeches I make in parliament. Both Togliatti and Pajetta not only do not publish them in Italy, but also intervene with the Soviets to ensure that they are not published in Moscow, either. Please, Comrade Enver, intervene with Khrushchev about this.»

Of course, I was astonished and told him there and then:

«How can I intervene? I could have an influence whether or not they are published in Albania, let us say, but in the Soviet Union? You must address yourself to the Soviet comrades. They are the hosts there and decide this.»

After the break with the Khrushchevites he, too, had «contradictions» with the Italian revisionist leadership. But these were not on a principled basis, they were nothing but squabbles over positions and money. As soon as he was made a senator he, too, quietened down and never raised his voice. This is what the Italian revisionists were and still are — collaborators with both the Italian and the international bourgeoisie.

All this revisionist activity ruined, destroyed the Marxist-Leninist cooperation and harmony which existed in the international communist movement. Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites

rendered world imperialism an incalculable service and placed themselves directly in its service. Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites of every hue, wherever they were, consummated that work of sabotage which imperialism and its lackeys had been unable to achieve in whole decades. By slandering Stalin, the Soviet Union, socialism and communism, they lined themselves up with the capitalist slanderers and weakened the Soviet Union, and this was the dream and the aim of the capitalists. They disrupted that monolithic unity which the capitalists fought, raised doubts about the revolution and sabotaged it, a thing which the capitalists had always tried to do. They carried the quarrel and split into the ranks of various communist and workers' parties, bringing down or elevating to their leaderships cliques which would better serve the hegemonic interests shaken by the great earthquake. These enemies have attacked Marxism-Leninism in every direction and in every manifestation and replaced it with the social-democratic reformist ideology, thus opening the way to liberalism, bureaucracy, technocracy, decadent intellectualism and capitalist espionage in the party, in other words, to degeneration. What world capitalism had been quite unable to do, the Khrushchevite clique did for it.

However, neither American imperialism nor world capitalism considered this colossal aid, this great sabotage which Khrushchev and the Khrush-

chevites carried out against Marxism-Leninism and socialism, sufficient. Therefore, the attack of the bourgeoisie and reaction began on the revisionist parties, in order to deepen the crisis to the maximum, not only to discredit Marxism-Leninism and the revolution, not only to deepen the split amongst the communist and workers' parties and to advance their rebellion against Moscow, but also, through all these activities, to weaken, to subjugate and enslave the Soviet Union, as a great political, economic and ideological power regardless of the fact that the Khrushchevite ideology was not Marxism, but anti-Marxism. World capitalism, headed by American imperialism, had to fight to prevent Khrushchevite hegemonism from remaining alive and consolidating itself on the ruins which it caused.

Therefore, American and world imperialism intensified the work of sabotage in the countries of the socialist camp in order to undermine the colonial empire which Khrushchev was designing. In the suitable climate which the Khrushchevites' slogans created, not only obedient pro-Khrushchev chiefs like Zhivkov, but also the agents of the Americans, the British, the French, the West Germans, and Tito, became more active. From the very nature of revisionism itself, as well as from the pressure and work of agents of imperialism, in many parties individuals who were dissatisfied with the way things were going to-

wards «democratization» and liberalization, began to raise their heads. In Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Rumania, the enemies of socialism wanted to go at a gallop on the road of the restoration of capitalism, flinging aside the tattered demagogic disguise which the group of Soviet leaders wanted to preserve. The traditional links of the bourgeoisie of these countries with the West and the desire to escape as quickly as possible from the fear of the dictatorship of the proletariat (although the Khrushchevites had destroyed it), orientated these enemies towards Washington, Bonn, London and Paris.

Khrushchev hoped to get the demons back into the bottle from which he had released them. But once released, they wanted to browse at their pleasure in the pastures which the Khrushchevites considered their own and were obedient no longer to Khrushchev's «magic flute». Then he had to contain them by means of tanks.

8. MY FIRST AND LAST VISIT TO CHINA

Our relations with the CPC and the PRC up till 1956. Invitations from China, Korea and Mongolia. An astounding event in Korea: two members of the Political Bureau flee to... China! Ponomaryov defends the fugitives. Mikoyan and Peng Dehuzi «tune up» Kim Il Sung. The meeting with Mao Zedong: «Neither the Yugoslavs nor you were wrong», «Stalin made mistakes», «It is necessary to make mistakes». Li Lisan at the 8th Congress of the CPC: «I ask you to help me, because I may make mistakes again.» Disappointment and concern over the 8th Congress of the CPC. Meetings in Beijing with Dej, Yugov, Zhou Enlai and others. Bodnaras as intermediary to reconcile us with Tito.

In regard to the relations between our Party and the Communist Party of China, from 1949 to 1956, and indeed for several years later, the term «normal», more or less in the sense that it is used in diplomatic language, would be quite appro-

priate. For our part, however, from the years of the National Liberation War, and especially after the liberation of our Homeland, we had followed with sympathy the just war of the fraternal Chinese people against the Japanese fascists and aggressors, Chiang Kai-shek reaction and the American interference, and we had backed up and supported this struggle with all our strength. Moreover, we rejoiced at the fact that, at the head of this struggle there was said to be a communist party recognized by the Comintern, which enjoyed the support of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, led by Stalin.

We knew also that at the head of the Communist Party of China was Mao Zedong, about whom personally, as well as about the party which he led, we had no information other than what we heard from the Soviet comrades. Both during this period and after 1949 we had not had the opportunity to read any of the works or writings of Mao Zedong, who was said to be a philosopher and to have written a whole series of works. We welcomed the victory of October 1, 1949 with heartfelt joy and we were among the first countries to recognize the new Chinese state and establish fraternal relations with it. Although greater possibilities and ways were now opened for more frequent and closer contacts and links between our two countries, these links remained at the level of friendly, cultural and commercial

relations, the sending of some second-rank delegation, mutual support, according to the occasion, through public speeches and statements, the exchange of telegrams on the occasion of celebrations and anniversaries, and almost nothing more.

We continued to support the efforts of the Chinese people and the Chinese leadership for the socialist construction of the country with all our might, but we knew nothing concrete about how and to what extent this great process was being carried out in China. It was said that Mao was following an «interesting» line for the construction of socialism in China, collaborating with the local bourgeoisie and other parties, which they described as «democratic», «of the industrialists», etc., that joint private-state enterprises were permitted and stimulated by the communist party there, that elements of the wealthy classes were encouraged and rewarded, and even placed in the leadership of enterprises and provinces, etc., etc. All these things were quite incomprehensible to us and however much you racked your brains, you could not find any argument to describe them as in conformity with Marxism-Leninism. Nevertheless, we thought, China was a very big country, with a population of hundreds of millions, it had just emerged from the dark, feudal-bourgeois past, had many problems and difficulties, and in time it would correct those things which were not in order, on the right road of Marxism-Leninism.

This is more or less what we knew about the Communist Party of China and the Chinese state up till 1956, when the Central Committee of our Party received Mao Zedong's invitation to send a party delegation to take part in the proceedings of the 8th Congress of the CP of China. We welcomed the invitation with pleasure and satisfaction, because we would be given the opportunity to gain first-hand experience of and direct acquaintance with this sister party and fraternal socialist country. At this same period we had also received invitations from the People's Republic of Mongolia and the People's Democratic Republic of Korea to send top-level government and party delegations to those countries for friendly visits.

We discussed the invitations from our friends in the Political Bureau and decided that, using the occasion of the trip to China for the 8th Congress of the CP of China, on the way to China, our top-level delegation should also go to Mongolia and Korea.

The Political Bureau appointed me, Comrades Mehmet Shehu and Ramiz Alia, and our then Foreign Minister, Behar Shtylla, as the delegation. Comrade Mehmet would lead the delegation in Mongolia and Korea, since it would be a government delegation, while I would lead the party delegation in China.

We made the necessary preparations and set out at the end of August 1956.

It was the time when modern revisionism, advanced by the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, had not only spread in the Soviet Union and the other countries of people's democracy, but was bringing out all its inherent filth, the split, the quarrels, the plots, and the counter-revolution. In Poland the cauldron, which had been simmering for a long time, was bringing out the notorious Gomulka as the finished product, in Hungary black reaction had broken out as never before and was feverishly preparing the counter-revolution. During those days Tito had been invited to the Crimea «on holiday» and together with Khrushchev, Rankovic and others, was putting the nails in Gerö's coffin. It seemed as if the revisionists of various countries were engaged in a villainous contest to see who could outdo the other in the practical application of Khrushchevism. In Europe the revisionist earthquake was rocking the foundations of everything, with the exception of our Party and country.

Those 3 or 4 days of our visit to Mongolia passed almost unnoticed. We travelled for hours on end to reach some inhabitated centre and everywhere the landscape was the same: vast, bare, monotonous, boring. Tsedenbal, who bounced around us as mobile as a rubber ball, harped on the sole theme — livestock farming. So many million sheep, so many mares, so many horses, so many

camels, this was the only wealth, the only branch on which this socialist country supported itself. We drank mare's milk, wished one another success and parted.

On September 7 we arrived in Pyongyang. They put on a splendid welcome, with people, with gongs, with flowers, and with portraits of Kim Il Sung everywhere. You had to look hard to find some portrait of Lenin, tucked away in some obscure corner.

We visited Pyongyang and a series of cities and villages of Korea, where both the people and the party and state leaders welcomed us warmly. During the days we stayed there, Kim Il Sung was kind and intimate with us. The Korean people had just emerged from the bloody war with the American aggressors and now had thrown themselves into the offensive for the recontruction and development of the country. They were an industrious, clean and talented people, eager for further development and progress, and we whole-heartedly wished them continued successes on the road to socialism.

However, the revisionist wasp had begun to implant its poisonous sting there, too.

In the joint talks we held, Kim Il Sung told us about an event which had occurred in the plenum of the Central Committee of the party held after the 20th Congress.

«After the report which I delivered,» Kim

told us, «two members of the Political Bureau and several other members of the Central Committee got up and raised the question that the lessons of the 20th Congress and the question of the cult of the individual had not been properly appreciated amongst us, here in Korea, that a consistent struggle against the cult of the individual had not been waged, and so on. They said to the plenum: 'We are not getting economic and political results according to the platform of the 20th Congress, and incompetent people have been gathered around the Central Committee.'

«In other words, they attacked the line and unity of the leadership,» continued Kim Il Sung. «The whole Central Committee rose against them,» he said in conclusion.

«What stand was taken towards them?» I asked.

«The plenum criticized them and that was all,» replied Kim Il Sung, adding: «Immediately after this the two fled to China.»

«To China?! What did they do there?»

«Our Central Committee described them as anti-party elements and we wrote to the Chinese leadership to send them back to us without fail. Apart from other mistakes, they also committed the grave act of fleeing. The Chinese comrades did not send them back. They have them there to this day.»

We said openly to Kim Il Sung: «Although

we have no detailed knowledge of the matters which these two members of the Political Bureau raised, and it is not up to us to pass judgement on your business, since you have told us about this problem, we think that this is a serious event.»

«In our country, too,» we told him, «after the 20th Congress of the CPSU, there was an attempt by anti-party elements to organize a plot against our Party and our Central Committee. The plot was a deed organized by the revisionists of Belgrade, and as soon as we became aware of it, we crushed it immediately.»

We went on to speak about the Party Conference of Tirana in April 1956, about the pressure which was exerted on us, and the unwavering, resolute stand of our Party towards external and internal enemies.

«You are right, you are right!» said Kim Il Sung, while I was speaking.

From the way he spoke and reacted I sensed a certain hesitation and uncertainty that were overwhelming him.

I was not mistaken in my doubts. A few days later in China, during a meeting I had with Ponomaryov, a member of the Soviet delegation to the 8th Congress of the CP of China, I opened up the problem of the Korean fugitives.

«We know about this,» he replied, «and have given Kim Il Sung our advice.»

«You have advised him? Why?» I asked.

«Comrade Enver,» he said, «things are not going well with the Koreans. They have become very stuck up and ought to be brought down a peg or two.»

«I am not talking about their affairs in general, because I know nothing about them,» I told Ponomaryov, «but about a concrete problem. Two members of the Political Bureau rise against the Central Committee of their own party and then flee to another socialist country. Where is Kim Il Sung at fault in this?!»

«The Korean comrades have made mistakes,» insisted Ponomaryov. «They have not taken measures in line with the decisions of the 20th Congress, and that is why two members of the Political Bureau rose against this. The Chinese comrades have been revolted by this situation, too, and have told Kim Il Sung that if measures are not taken, they are not going to hand over the two comrades taking refuge in China.»

«Astonishing!» I said.

«You have no reason to be astonished,» he said. «Kim Il Sung himself is retreating. A plenum of the Central Committee of the Korean party has been held these days and the Koreans have agreed to correct the mistakes.»

And this turned out to be true. The two fugitives returned to Korea and the places they had had in the Political Bureau. Under pressure, Kim

Il Sung bowed his head and gave way. This was a joint act of the Soviets and the Chinese, in which a special «merit» belonged to Mikoyan. He had been sent to China at the head of the Soviet delegation to the 8th Congress of the CPC, and without waiting for the Chinese congress to finish, the man of the Khrushchevite mafia together with Peng Dehuzi, whom Mao Zedong gave him as the representative of China, hastened to Korea to tune up the wavering Kim Il Sung to bring him into harmony with the Khrushchevites. Later, other «tuning up» trips would be made to Korea by the Soviets, the Chinese, and others, but we were to see these in the future. Let us return to September 1956.

In Beijing, which we reached on September 13, they welcomed us with crowds of people, music and flowers, not forgetting the horde of portraits of Mao Zedong. Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, Deng Xiaoping, and others whose names I can't remember, had come out to the airport.

We exchanged greetings with them, wished them success in the congress, which was to begin two days later, and could hardly cope with their stereotyped expressions: «great honour», «great assistance», «brothers from the distant front of Europe», «please, offer us your criticism», etc., etc., expressions with which, in a few years' time, we would be full up to our necks. (However, in

those days these expressions, which were served up ready-made everywhere, did not make any bad impression on us — we considered them expressions of the Chinese simplicity and modesty.)

Mao Zedong received us during an interval between sessions of the congress in one of the adjoining rooms. This was the first time that we met him. When we entered the reception room, he stood up, bowed a little, held out his hand, and thus, without shifting from the spot, waited to give his hand and a smile to each of us in turn. We sat down.

Mao began to speak. After saying that they were very happy to have friends from distant Albania, he said a few words about our people, describing them as a valiant and heroic people.

«We have great admiration for your people,» he said among other things, «because you have been liberated much longer than we.»

Immediately after this he asked me:

«How are things between you and Yugoslavia?»

«Cold,» I replied, and immediately noticed that he expressed open surprise. «Apparently he is not well acquainted with our situation with the Yugoslavs,» I thought, therefore I decided to explain something from the long history of the relations of our Party and country with the Yugoslav party and state. I gave him a brief outline, dwelling on some of the key moments of

the anti-Albanian and anti-Marxist activity of the Yugoslav leadership, expecting some reaction from him. But I noticed that Mao only expressed surprise and from time to time looked at the other Chinese comrades.

«On this question,» said Mao, «you Albanians have not made mistakes towards the Yugoslavs, and neither have the Yugoslav comrades made mistakes towards you. The Information Bureau has made great mistakes here.»

«Although we did not take part in the Information Bureau,» I replied, «we have supported its well-known analyses and stands towards the activity of the Yugoslav leadership and have always considered them to be correct. Our long-standing relations with the Yugoslav leadership have convinced us that the line and stands of the Yugoslavs have not been and are not Marxist-Leninist. Tito is an incorrigible renegade.»

Without waiting to hear the end of the translation of what I said, Mao asked me:

«What is your opinion of Stalin?»

I said that our Party had always considered Stalin a leader of very great, all-round merits, a loyal disciple of Lenin and continuer of his work, a . . .

He interrupted me: «Have you published the report which Comrade Khrushchev delivered in the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union?»

«No,» I replied. «We have not done and never will do such a thing.»

«You Albanian comrades have acted very correctly and the line of your Party is right,» he said. «We, too, have acted as you have done. As long as the Soviet leadership does not publish this report officially, there is no reason for us to act as some have done.»

After a pause, he continued:

«Stalin made mistakes. He made mistakes towards us, for example, in 1927. He made mistakes towards the Yugoslav comrades, too.»

Then he continued calmly in a low voice:

«One cannot advance without mistakes.» And he asked me: «Has your Party made mistakes?»

«We cannot say that there have been no mistakes,» I told him, «but the main thing is that we struggle to make as few mistakes as possible or none at all, and, when mistakes are discovered, we struggle to eliminate them immediately.»

I was too «hasty». The great philosopher was getting at something else:

«It is necessary to make mistakes,» he said. «The party cannot be educated without learning from mistakes. This has great significance.»

We encountered this method of «education» of Mao Zedong's materialized everywhere. Du-

ring the days we were at the congress, a Chinese comrade told us:

«A terrible fear has existed amongst us. People tried to avoid making mistakes, because they were afraid of being expelled from the party. However, with the correct policy of Chairman Mao, that fear has now disappeared, and initiative and drive in creative work has increased among the party people.

«You see that comrade who is speaking?» he said. «He is Li Lisan, one of the founders of our Communist Party. During his life he has made grave mistakes, not just once, but three times on end. There were comrades who wanted to expel this old man from the party, but on the insistence of Chairman Mao, he remains a member of the Central Committee of the party, and now he works in the Central Committee apparatus.»

Meanwhile Li Lisan was making a new «self-criticism» before the 8th Congress.

«I have made mistakes,» he said, «but the party has helped me. Comrades,» he continued, «I ask you to help me still because I might make mistakes again. . .»

But let us return to the meeting with Mao Zedong. After he philosophized about the «great significance of making mistakes», I seized the opportunity to add to what I had previously said about the Yugoslavs and spoke about the work of the Belgrade revisionists through their agents to

organize the plot in the Party Conference of Tirana of April 1956.

«In our opinion,» I said, «they are incorrigible.»

Mao's reply, in the Chinese style, was a phrase out of context:

«You have a correct Marxist-Leninist line.»

The time had come for us to leave. We thanked him for the invitation, for receiving us and for the aid given us by the People's Republic of China.

«There is no need to thank us,» interrupted Mao, «first, because the aid we have given you is very little,» and he closed one finger. «Second,» he continued, closing the other finger, «we are members of the great family of the socialist camp, which has the Soviet Union at the head, and it is just the same as passing something from one hand to the other, parts of the same body.»

We thanked him once again and stood up. We had several photographs taken together, shook hands again and departed.

To tell the truth, our impressions from this meeting were not what we had expected, and when we came out, I talked over with Mehmet and Ramiz what we had heard. From the talk with Mao we did not learn anything constructive, which would be of value to us, and the meeting seemed to us mostly a gesture of courtesy. We were especially disappointed over the things we

heard from the mouth of Mao about the Information Bureau, Stalin and the Yugoslav question.

However, we were even more surprised and worried by the proceedings of the 8th Congress. The whole platform of this Congress was based on the theses of the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, indeed, in certain directions, the theses of Khrushchev had been carried further forward by Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi and other top Chinese leaders.

We felt that the epidemic of modern revisionism had infected China, too. To what proportions the disease had been spread we could not judge at that time, but the things which had occurred and were occurring in China, showed that at that time the Chinese leaders were hurrying to avoid lagging behind, and indeed, to grab the motley flag of the Khrushchevites with their own hands.

Apart from other things, in the reports which Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and Zhou Enlai delivered one after the other at the 8th Congress they defended and further deepened the permanent line of the Communist Party of China for extensive collaboration with the bourgeoisie and the kulaks, «argued» in support of the great blessings which would come to «socialism» from treating capitalists, merchants, and bourgeois intellectuals well and placing them in high leading positions, vigorously propagated the necessity of col-

laboration between the working class and the national bourgeoisie, and between the communist party and the other democratic nationalist parties, in the conditions of socialism, etc., etc. In fact, the «hundred flowers» and the «hundred schools» of Mao Zedong, which blossomed and contended in the sessions of the congress, blossomed and contended throughout the whole Chinese party and state. This Mao Zedong's theory of a hundred flags, widely proclaimed in May 1956 by the alternate member of the Political Bureau of the CC of the CP of China, Lu Dingyi, constituted the Chinese variant of the bourgeois-revisionist theory and practice about the «free circulation of ideas and people», about the coexistence of a hotch-potch of ideologies, trends, schools and coteries within socialism.[1]

Many a time later I have turned back to this period of the history of the Communist Party of China, trying to figure out how and why the profoundly revisionist line of 1956 subsequently seemed to change direction, and for a time, became «pure», «anti-revisionist» and «Marxist-Leninist». It is a fact, for example, that in 1960 the Communist Party of China seemed to be strongly

1 It turned out later that Mao Zedong's utterly revisionist decalogue «On the Ten Major Relationships» belongs precisely to this period of the «spring» of modern revisionism. (Author's note).

opposing the revisionist theses of Nikita Khrushchev and confirmed that «it was defending Marxism-Leninism» from the distortions which were being made to it, etc. It was precisely because China came out against modern revisionism in 1960 and seemed to be adhering to Marxist-Leninist positions that brought about that our Party stood shoulder to shoulder with it in the struggle which we had begun against the Khrushchevites.

However, time confirmed, and this is reflected extensively in the documents of our Party, that in no instance, either in 1956 or in the 60's did the Communist Party of China proceed or act from the positions of Marxism-Leninism.

In 1956 it rushed to take up the banner of revisionism, in order to elbow Khrushchev out and gain the role of the leader in the communist and workers' movement for itself. But when Mao Zedong and his associates saw that they would not easily emerge triumphant over the patriarch of modern revisionism, Khrushchev, through the revisionist contest, they changed their tactic, pretended to reject their former flag, presented themselves as «pure Marxist-Leninists», striving in this way, to win those positions which they had been unable to win with their former tactic. When this second tactic turned out no good, either, they «discarded» their second, allegedly Marxist-Leninist, flag and came out in the arena as they had always been, opportunists, loyal champions

of a line of conciliation and capitulation towards capital and reaction. We were to see all these things confirmed in practice, through a long, difficult and glorious struggle which our Party waged in defence of Marxism-Leninism.

After the proceedings of the congress were over, they took us on visits to a number of cities and people's communes, such as to Beijing, Shanghai, Tientsin, Nanking, Port-Arthur, etc., where we saw the life and the work of the great Chinese people at first hand. They were simple and industrious people with few pretensions, humble and attentive to their guests. From what the Chinese leaders and those who accompanied us told us, and from what we were able to see for ourselves, it seemed that they had achieved a series of positive changes and developments. However, these were not of that level they were claimed to be, the more so if account is taken of the exceptional human potential of the Chinese continent, and the desire and readiness of the Chinese people to work.

In China they had managed to eliminate the mass starvation, which had always plagued that country, had built plants and factories and were organizing the people's communes, but it was obvious that the standard of living was still low, far from the level, not just of the developed socialist countries, but even of our country. From the visits we made throughout this vast country, from the contacts we had with the masses, we were

impressed that their behaviour really was good. correct, but we observed a certain hesitation, both towards us and towards those who accompanied us. It was obvious from their words and their attitude towards the cadres that something from the past was still retained. It was clear that the many centuries of the past, the absolute power of the Chinese emperors, feudal lords and capitalists, of Japanese, American, British and other foreïgn exploiters, Buddhism, and all the other reactionary philosophies, from the most ancient to the most «modern», had not only left this people in terrible economic backwardness, but had cultivated the slave mentality of submission, of blind belief, and unquestioning obedience to authorities of every rank, in their world outlook. Of course, these things cannot be wiped out all at once, and we considered them as forms of atavism, which would be eliminated from the consciousness of this people, who with their positive qualities and with sound leadership, would be capable of achieving miracles.

Apart from meetings with Mao Zedong and other Chinese leaders, during the days of our stay in China, we also had occasion to meet a number of delegations of communist and workers' parties which had attended the 8th Congress of the CP of China.

All of them enthusiastically hailed the «new line» of the period after the 20th Congress.

The Bulgarians called it «the April line», since they had organized a plenum of their Central Committee in April, at which they had cancelled out the stands of Blagoyev and Dimitrov, and had embraced the Khrushchevite line.

«We rehabilitated Traycho Kostov, because we could not find any proof of his guilt,» Anton Yugov told us.

He spoke as though with some trepidation. Apparently, he sensed that sooner or later they would bring him down, in order to enjoy the whole of the revisionist line which had been prepared in Bulgaria according to Khrushchev's orders. Dej, the «man of the Information Bureau,» who a few years earlier had delivered the report of the Information Bureau on the condemnation of the activity of the revisionists of Belgrade, had now made peace with Tito in Bucharest and was preparing to taste his kisses in Belgrade.

«I am going to Belgrade to meet Tito,» he told us, as soon as we met in Beijing, where he, too, had gone invited to the congress. «Tito is a good positive comrade, not like Kardelj and Popovic,» he continued. (Three months before we had heard this in Russian, and now we had to hear it in Rumanian, too!) «When Tito was to go to Moscow in June,» continued Dej, «we invited him to stay in Bucharest, too, and hold talks with us, but he did not accept. Then what did we do? We gathered up all the leadership of the party

and state and went to meet him at the railway station. What could Tito do, he was cornered! And we obliged him to stay not just 45 minutes to rest, as he had planned, but two full hours! (A fine «obligation» you have imposed on Tito, I said to myself.) When Comrade Tito was about to return from the Soviet Union,» said Dej, «he informed us that he wanted to stay for talks in Bucharest. We welcomed this request, met him and talked with him...» and Dej went on to give us all the details about how they had smoothed things over with Tito.

«Now that I am going to Belgrade myself, would you like me to speak on your behalf?» he asked me.

«If you wish to speak on our behalf,» I told Gheorghiu Dej, «tell him to give up his secret activity and plots against the People's Republic of Albania and the Party of Labour of Albania. Tell him that before and after the Tirana Conference the Yugoslav diplomats were involved in vicious activity...» and I told him briefly what had occurred in our country after the 20th Congress.

«Is that so?» he said and I saw that he was put out. He was not pleased that I exposed Tito. Dej displayed the same sentiments later, too, when I met him after he had made his long-desired visit of reconciliation to Belgrade and had put himself on Tito's side. Some months after that visit I

passed through Bucharest where I met and talked with Dej and Bodnaras.

In the course of the talks Bodnaras (Emil, the elder) began to tell me that they had been to Tito, and in talks with him the conversation had come around to Albania. «Tito spoke well and with sympathy of your country, of your heroic people,» said Bodnaras, «and expressed his wish for good relations with you», etc. In other words, this Titoite «spokesman» was making himself an intermediary for conciliation with Tito, trying to achieve what Khrushchev had failed to do.

I put Bodnaras in his place, telling him that we would be in struggle to the end against Tito and Titoism, because he was a renegade from Marxism-Leninism.

«For our part there will be no conciliation with Tito,» I told Bodnaras bluntly.

During the time that I was sounding off about Tito to Bodnaras, I observed that Dej was scribbling with a pencil on a piece of white paper, without doubt from irritation, but he did not speak at all — my words had a bitter taste for him.

But let us return to China, to the meetings which we had those days with other comrades of the sister parties.

It was interesting: everyone we met was talking about rehabilitations and Tito. Even Zhou Enlai said to us in a meeting we had with him:

«Tito has invited me to go on a visit to Yugo-

slavia and I have accepted the invitation. If you agree, I can come to Albania too, on this occasion.»

«We agree whole-heartedly that you should come to Albania,» we told him and thanked him for making the proposal, although it did not sound at all pleasant to us that the premier of China linked his coming to Albania «with the occasion» of his visit to Yugoslavia.

However, as I wrote above, it was the time when the fever of revisionism had infected everyone and they were all trying to go to Belgrade as quickly as possible to receive the blessing and «the experience» of the veteran of modern revisionism. One day Scoccimarro came up to me and complained that Togliatti had gone to Belgrade but had not got on well with Tito.

«What do you mean?» I asked, not without irony. «Did they quarrel?»

«No,» he replied, «but they did not agree about everything. Nevertheless,» he continued, «for our part we are going to send a delegation to Belgrade to gain experience.»

«In what direction?» I asked.

«The Yugoslav comrades have fought bureaucracy effectively and now there is no bureaucracy in Yugoslavia,» he replied.

«How do you know that there is no bureaucracy there?» I asked.

«Because there the workers, too, get profits,» was his reply. I told him about the stand of our

Party on this problem, but the Italian could think of nothing but Tito. Mehmet intervened and asked him:

«Why do you want to send people 'to get experience' only to Yugoslavia? Why haven't you sent such delegations to the countries of people's democracy, too, such as Albania, for example?!»

The Italian comrade was confused for a moment and then he found the solution:

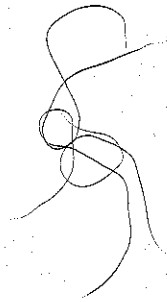
«We shall send them,» he said. «For example, the experience of China in regard to the collaboration of the working class with the bourgeoisie and of the communist party with the other democratic parties is very valuable to us. We shall study it...»

He had hit the nail on the head. And from now on, the Italian revisionists could go not only to Yugoslavia and China, but everywhere, to give and take experience of the betrayal of the cause of the proletariat, the revolution and socialism. Only to our country they did not come and they had no reason to come, because only Marxism-Leninism is implemented in our country. But this experience was of no use to them.

On October 3, 1956, we set out on our return journey. This whole trip made us even more convinced about the great and dangerous proportions which Khrushchevite modern revisionism had assumed.

In Budapest we were to see one of the mon-

strous consequences of the Khrushchevite-Titoite «new line»: the counter-revolution. It had been simmering for a long time, now it was about to burst out.



9. THE «DEMONS» ESCAPE FROM CONTROL

The counter-revolution in action in Hungary and Poland. Matyas Rakosi. Who cooked up the «broth» in Budapest? Talk with Hungarian leaders. Debate with Suslov in Moscow. Imre Nagy's «self-criticism». Rakosi falls. Reaction surges ahead. Khrushchev, Tito and Gerö in the Crimea. Andropov: «We cannot call the insurgents counter-revolutionaries.» The Soviet leadership is hesitant. The Hungarian Workers' Party is liquidated. Nagy announces Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Treaty. Part of the back-stage manoeuvres: the Tito-Khrushchev letters. Poland 1956 — Gomulka on the throne. In retrospect: Bierut. Gomulka's counter-revolutionary program. What we learn from the events of 1956. Talks in Moscow, December 1956.

The infection of the 20th Congress encouraged all the counter-revolutionary elements in the socialist countries and the communist and workers' parties, emboldened all those who had disguised themselves and were awaiting the moment to

overthrow socialism wherever it had triumphed.

The counter-revolutionaries in Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and elsewhere, the betrayers of Marxism-Leninism in the parties of Italy and France and the Yugoslav Titoites gleefully welcomed Khrushchev's ill-famed theses about «democratization», the «cult of Stalin», the rehabilitation of condemned enemies, «peaceful coexistence», «peaceful transition» from capitalism to socialism, etc. These theses and slogans were embraced with enthusiasm and hope by the revisionists, in or out of power, by social-democracy, by the reactionary bourgeois intellectuals.

The events in Hungary and Poland were the visible prologue of the counter-revolution which was to be carried out more extensively and thoroughly, not only there, but also in Bulgaria, in East Germany, in Czechoslovakia, in China, and especially in the Soviet Union.

After securing its positions to some extent in Bulgaria, Rumania, Czechoslovakia and elsewhere, the Khrushchevite clique attacked Hungary, the leadership of which was not proving so obedient to the Soviet course. However, Tito, together with the Americans, had his eyes on Hungary.

As was becoming apparent, Hungary had many weak points. There the party had been created, headed by Rakosi, around whom there were a number of veteran communists like Gerö

and Münnich, but also young ones who had just come to the fore, who found the table laid for them by the Red Army and Stalin. The «construction of socialism» in Hungary began, but the reforms were not radical. The proletariat was favoured, but without seriously annoying the petty-bourgeoisie. The Hungarian party was allegedly a combination of the illegal communist party (Hungarian prisoners of war captured in the Soviet Union), old communists of Bela Kun and the social-democratic party. Hence, this combination was a sickly graft, which never really established itself, until the counter-revolution and Kadar, together with Khrushchev and Mikoyan, issued the decree for the total liquidation of the Hungarian Workers' Party.

I have been closely acquainted with Rakosi and I liked him. I have often talked with him, because I have visited him several times both on business and as a family, with Nexhmije. Rakosi was an honest man, an old communist and a leader in the Comintern. His aims were good, but his work was sabotaged from within and from without. As long as Stalin was alive everything seemed to be going well, but after his death the weaknesses in Hungary began to show up.

Once, in a talk with Rakosi, he spoke about the Hungarian army and asked about ours.

«Our army is weak, we have no cadres. The officers are the old ones from the Horthy army,

therefore we are taking ordinary workers from the factories of Csepel and putting them in officer's uniforms,» he told me.

«Without a strong army socialism cannot be defended,» I told Rakosi. «You should get rid of the Horthy men. You did very well to take workers but you must give importance to educating them properly.»

While we were talking in Rakosi's villa, Kadar arrived. He had just returned from Moscow where he had gone for treatment of an eye complaint. Rakosi introduced me, asked him how his health was now, and gave him leave to go home. When we were alone Rakosi said:

«Kadar is a young cadre and we have made him minister of internal affairs.»

To tell the truth, he didn't seem to me to be of the right stuff to be minister of internal affairs.

Another time we talked about the economy. He spoke to me about the economy of Hungary, especially about agriculture, that was going so well that the people could eat their fill and they did not know what to do with all their pork, sausage, beer and wines! I opened my eyes in surprise, because I knew that not only in our country, but in all the socialist countries, including Hungary, the situation was not like that. Rakosi had one shortcoming, he was sanguine, exaggerated

the results of the work. But despite this weakness, in my opinion, Matyas had a good communist heart and did not have an incorrect view of the line of the development of socialism. It must be recognized, in my opinion, that international reaction, supported by the clergy, the powerful kulak stratum and the disguised Horthyite fascists, set about undermining Hungary and Rakosi's leadership, acting together with Yugoslav Titoism and its agency, headed by Rajk, Kadar (disguised) and others, and finally also by Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites, who not only disliked Rakosi and those who supported him, but even hated him, because he was loyal to Stalin and Marxism-Leninism, and when need be, opposed them with authority in the joint meetings. Rakosi was one of the old guard of the Comintern and to the modern revisionists the Comintern was the «bête noire».

Thus Hungary became the field for intrigues and combinations between Khrushchev, Tito and counter-revolutionaries (behind whom stood American imperialism), who eroded the Hungarian party and the positions of Rakosi and sound elements in the leadership of the party from within. Rakosi was an obstacle both for Khrushchev, who wanted to put Hungary under his control, and for Tito, who wanted to destroy the socialist camp and had a double hatred for Rakosi

as one of the «Stalinists» who exposed him in 1948.

In April 1957, when the «anti-party group» of Malenkov, Molotov, etc., had still not been liquidated, I was in Moscow with a delegation of our Party and Government. After a non-official dinner in the Kremlin, in Yekaterinsky Zal, we sat down in a corner to take coffee with Khrushchev, Molotov, Mikoyan, Bulganin, etc. In the course of the conversation Molotov turned to me and, as if joking, said:

«Tomorrow Mikoyan is going to Vienna, to try to cook up the same broth as he did in Budapest.»

To keep the conversation going I asked him:

«Did Mikoyan prepare that broth?»

«Who else?» said Molotov.

«Then Mikoyan can't go back to Budapest again,» I said.

«If Mikoyan goes there again, they will hang him,» Molotov continued.

Khrushchev had dropped his eyes and was stirring his coffee. Mikoyan frowned, ground his teeth and then said with a cynical smile:

«Why should I not go to Budapest? If they hang me, they will hang Kadar, too, because we prepared that broth together.»

The role of the Khrushchevites in the Hungarian tragedy was clear to me.

The efforts of Khrushchev and Tito to li-

quidate everything healthy in Hungary united them, therefore they co-ordinated their activities. With Khrushchev's visit to Belgrade they aimed their attacks to rehabilitate the Titoite conspirators, Koçi Xoxe, Rajk, Kostov, etc. While our Party did not budge a fraction from its correct principled positions, the Hungarian party gave way and Tito and Khrushchev triumphed. With Rajk, the betrayal was rehabilitated. Rakosi's positions were greatly weakened.

Possibly the leadership of the Hungarian party, under Rakosi and Gerö, made economic mistakes, too, but these were not what caused the counter-revolution. The main mistake of Rakosi and his comrades was that they did not stand firm, but wavered under the pressure of external and internal enemies. They did not mobilize the party and the people, the working class, to nip the attempts of the reaction in the bud, made concessions to it, rehabilitated enemies like Rajk, etc., and weakened the situation to the point that the counter-revolution broke out.

In June 1956, on my way to Moscow for a meeting of Comecon, I had a talk with the comrades of the Political Bureau of the Hungarian Workers' Party in Budapest. I did not find Rakosi, Hegedüs, who was prime minister, or Gerö there because they had left for Moscow by train. (In fact, in Moscow I did not meet or see Rakosi in any consultation or anywhere else. No doubt he

was «resting» in some «clinic» where the Soviets «convinced him to hand in his resignation». Only two or three weeks later he was discharged from the duties he held.) The Hungarian comrades told me that they had some difficulties in their party and their Central Committee.

«A situation against Rakosi has been created in the Central Committee,» they told me. «Farkas, who was a member of the Political Bureau, has taken up the banner of opposition to him.»

«The time has come for Farkas to be expelled not only from the Central Committee, but also from the party,» said Bata, the minister of defence. «His stand is anti-party and hostile,» he continued. «His thesis is: 'I have made mistakes, Beria is a traitor. But who ordered me to make those mistakes? Rakosi.'»

«This question has also been raised by Revay, who proposed that 'we should set up a commission to study the faults of this one and that one, the mistakes of Rakosi, etc.,'» the Hungarian comrades told me.

Here I interrupted and asked:

«Then the Central Committee has no confidence in the Political Bureau?»

«So it turns out,» they said. «We were obliged to accept the commission but we decided that its report would go to the Political Bureau first.»

«What is this commission?» I asked. «The Political Bureau must be charged by the Central

Committee with such matters and the report should be discussed in the Central Committee. If it is considered necessary, the Central Committee removes the Political Bureau.»

Amongst other things the Hungarian comrades told me that Imre Nagy, who had been expelled from the party as a counter-revolutionary, had put on a big dinner on the occasion of his birthday to which he had invited a hundred and fifty people, including members of the Central Committee and the government. Many of them had accepted the traitor's invitation and had gone to the dinner. When one member of the Central Committee had asked the comrades of the leadership whether he should go or not they had replied: «This is up to you to decide.» Of course, such a reply was astonishing to me and I asked the Hungarian comrades:

«But why did you not tell him flatly that he should not go because Imre Nagy is an enemy?»

«We left him to judge and decide for himself with his own conscience,» was the reply.

During this conversation the Hungarian leaders admitted that they had a difficult situation in the party. The 20th Congress had added to these troubles.

«There are groups in the party, writers, etc.,» they told me, «who are not on the rails, who want to avail themselves of the 20th Congress. These elements tell us, 'The 20th Congress confirms our

theses that there are mistakes in the leadership. Therefore we are right.'»

«Togliatti's interview has caused us many problems,» said one of those present. «There are members of the Central Committee who have said to me: 'What are we doing? It would be better to act, to have a different, independent policy in Hungary, too, as in Yugoslavia.'»

In fact, things there had gone from bad to worse. Another member of the Central Committee had said to them angrily: «Are you of the Political Bureau still hiding from us issues like those of the 20th Congress? Why aren't you publishing Togliatti's interview?»

«And we published it, because the party had to be informed!. . .» the comrades of the Political Bureau told me.

I told the Hungarian comrades that the situation with us was good and explained how we acted at the Tirana Conference.

«There is proper democracy in the Party,» I stressed, «democracy which must strengthen the situation and unity and not destroy them. Therefore we came down hard on those who sought to exploit the democracy to the detriment of the Party. We have not permitted such things to occur among us.»

Speaking about Togliatti's interview they asked my opinion of it:

«With what he has said, Togliatti is not in

order,» I replied. «Of course, we have not raised our objections to him publicly, but we have called in the first secretaries of the party district committees and have explained the question to them so that they will be vigilant and ready at any moment.»

Szallay, a member of the Political Bureau, rose and said:

«I have read Togliatti's interview and it is not all that bad. The beginning is good and it is only the final part which spoils it.»

«We did not publish it and were surprised that Radio Prague broadcast it,» I told them.

From this conversation I formed the conviction that their line was wobbly. Apart from this, it seemed that the sounder elements in the Political Bureau were under pressure from counter-revolutionary elements, and therefore they themselves had vacillated. The Political Bureau seemed to be solid, but was completely isolated.

In the evening they put on a dinner for us in the Parliament Building, in a room where a big portrait of Attila hanging on the wall struck the eye. We talked again about the grave situation that was simmering in Hungary. But it seemed that they had lost their sense of direction. I said to them:

«Why are you acting like this? How can you sit idle in the face of this counter-revolution which

is rising, why are you simply looking on and not taking measures?»

«What measures could we take?» one of them asked.

«You should close the 'Petöfi' Club immediately, arrest the main trouble-makers, bring the armed working class out in the boulevards and encircle the Esztergom. If you can't jail Mindszenty, what about Imre Nagy, can't you arrest him? Have some of the leaders of these counter-revolutionaries shot to teach them what the dictatorship of the proletariat is.»

The Hungarian comrades opened their eyes wide with surprise as if they wanted to say to me: «Have you gone mad?» One of them told me:

«We cannot act as you suggest, Comrade Enver, because we do not consider the situation so alarming. We have the situation in hand. What they are shouting about at the 'Petöfi' Club is childish foolishness and if some members of the Central Committee went to congratulate Imre Nagy, they did this because they had long been comrades of his and not because they disagree with the Central Committee which expelled Imre from its ranks.»

«It seems to me you are taking the matter lightly,» I said. «You don't appreciate the great danger hanging over you. Believe us, we know the Titoites well and know what they are after as

the anti-communists and agents of imperialism they are.»

Mine was a voice in the wilderness. We ate that ill-omened dinner and during the conversation which lasted for several hours, the Hungarian comrades continued to pour into my ears that «they had the situation in hand» and other tales.

In the morning I boarded the aircraft and went to Moscow. I met Suslov in his office in the Kremlin. As usual, he welcomed me with those mannerisms of his, prancing like the ballerinas of the Bolshoi, and when we sat he asked me about Albania. After we exchanged opinions about our problems, I raised the question of Hungary. I told him my impressions and my opinions frankly, just as I had expressed them to the Hungarian comrades. Suslov watched me with those penetrating eyes through his horn-rimmed spectacles, and as I spoke I noticed signs of discontent, boredom and anger in his eyes. These feelings and this disapproval were accompanied by doodling with a pencil on a sheet of paper he had on the table. I carried on speaking and concluded by saying that I was astonished at the passivity and «lack of concern» of the Hungarian comrades.

Suslov began to speak in that reedy voice of his and in essence said:

«We cannot agree with your judgements over the Hungarian question. You are unnecessarily alarmed. The situation is not as you think. Per-

haps you have insufficient information,» and Suslov talked on and on, trying to «calm» me and convince me that there was nothing alarming in the situation in Hungary. I was not in the least convinced by his «arguments», and the events which occurred in the subsequent days confirmed that our observations and opinions about the grave situation in Hungary were completely correct. About two months later, at the end of August 1956, I had another bitter argument with Suslov about the Hungarian question. In passing through Budapest when we were going to the congress of the Chinese party, from a talk which we had at the airport with the Hungarian leaders of that time, we became even more convinced that the situation in Hungary was becoming disastrous, that reaction was moving, while with its actions the Hungarian leadership was favouring the counter-revolution. During the stop-over we made in Moscow, Mehmet, Ramiz and I met Suslov and told him of our apprehensions so that he would transmit them to the Soviet leadership. Suslov maintained the same stand as in the meeting I had with him in June.

«In regard to what you say, that the counter-revolution is on the boil,» said Suslov, «we have no facts, either from intelligence or other sources. The enemies are making a fuss about Hungary, but the situation is being normalized there. It is true that there are some student movements,

but they are harmless and under control. The Yugoslavs are not operating there, as you say. You should know that not only Rakosi but also Gerö have made mistakes. . .»

«Yes, it is true that they have made mistakes, because they rehabilitated the Hungarian Titoite traitors who had plotted to blow up socialism,» I interjected. Suslov pursed his thin lips and then he went on:

«As for Comrade Imre Nagy, we cannot agree with you, Comrade Enver.»

«It greatly astonishes me,» I said, «that you refer to him as 'Comrade' Imre Nagy when the Hungarian Workers' Party has thrown him out.»

«Maybe they have done so,» said Suslov, «but he has repented and has made a self-criticism.»

«Words go with the wind,» I objected, «don't believe words. . .»

«No,» said Suslov, his face flushing. «We have his self-criticism in writing,» and he opened a drawer and pulled out a note signed by Imre Nagy, addressed to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, in which he said that he had been wrong «in his opinions and actions» and sought the support of the Soviets.

«Do you believe this?» I asked Suslov.

«Why shouldn't we believe it!» he replied, and went on, «Comrades can make mistakes, but when they acknowledge their errors we must hold out our hand to them.»

«He is a traitor,» I told Suslov, «and we think that you are making a great mistake when you hold out your hand to a traitor.»

This brought the conversation with Suslov to an end and we left disagreeing with him. From this meeting we formed the impression that, after having definitely condemned Rakosi, the Soviets were fearful and alarmed about the situation in Hungary; that they did not know what to do and were seeking a solution before the storm broke. Without doubt they were talking with Tito about a joint solution. They were preparing Imre Nagy, thinking they would master the situation in Hungary through him. And so it turned out.

The circle around Rakosi was very weak. Neither the Central Committee nor the Political Bureau were up to the mark. People like Hegedüs, Kadar, old men like Münnich and a few young fellows without any experience of the party and struggle, weakened the running of affairs more and more each day and fell into the Titoite-Khrushchevite spider's web.

This whole adventure was being feverishly prepared. Reaction was aroused, surged up, spoke and acted openly. The pseudo-communist, kulak and traitor, Imre Nagy, with the mask of communism, became the standard-bearer of Titoism and the struggle against Rakosi. The latter had seen the danger which was threatening the party and the country and had taken measures against

Imre Nagy, by expelling him from the party at the end of 1955. But it was too late. Hungary had been caught up in the spider's web of the counter-revolution and was lost. Rakosi was attacked by Khrushchev, by Tito, by the centre of Esztergom as well as by foreign reaction. Anna Ketli, Mindszenty, the counts and barons in the service of world reaction, who had been assembled within Hungary, as well as outside, in Austria and elsewhere, organized the counter-revolution and sent in weapons for the bloodbath which they were preparing.

The «Petöfi» Club became the centre of reaction. Allegedly it was a cultural club of the Youth Union, but in fact it operated, under the nose of the Hungarian party, as a centre where the reactionary intellectuals not only spoke against socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat, but also prepared and organized themselves until they reached the point of arrogantly presenting their demands to the party and the government in the form of an ultimatum. Initially, as long as Rakosi was still at the head of affairs, attempts were made to take some measures: the «Petöfi» Club was attacked in a resolution of the Central Committee, one or two writers were expelled from the party, but these were mere pin-pricks, and not at all radical measures. The nest of the counter-revolution continued to exist and only a little later,

almost all those who had been attacked were rehabilitated.

The demoted Imre Nagy continued to sit like a pasha in his home, which he had made a haunt for his partisans. Among these partisans he had people in the Central Committee of the Hungarian Workers' Party. The Hungarian leaders went back and forth to Moscow in a daze, while instead of taking measures against the reactionary element which was building up, their alleged comrades of the Central Committee went to pay visits to Imre Nagy in his home to congratulate him on his birthday. The courtiers of Rakosi became the courtiers of Nagy and paved the way for him to seize power.

The decision to remove Rakosi was taken in Moscow and Belgrade. He gave way and did not resist the pressure of the Khrushchevites and the Titoites, and the intrigues of their agents in the Hungarian leadership. They forced Rakosi to resign, allegedly for «health reasons» (because he suffered from hypertension!), while admitting «his mistakes in violation of the law». At first there was talk about the merits of «Comrade Matyas Rakosi» (thus they «buried» him with honours), then there was talk about his mistakes, until the point was reached of talking about the «criminal Rakosi gang». In the preparation of the backstage manoeuvres which preceded the removal of Rakosi, a major role was played by Suslov, who,

precisely at this time, went to Hungary on holiday(!).

Apparently Rakosi was the last obstacle that hindered the revisionist waggon from going full speed ahead. It is true that Gerö was elected first secretary, and not Kadar, as the Soviets and the Yugoslavs wanted, but his days were numbered. Kadar, who had been in prison and rehabilitated a little earlier, was elected to the Political Bureau at first and, as the man of Khrushchev and Tito, in fact he played «first fiddle» there.

After the plenum of July 1956, (at which Gerö replaced Rakosi, and Kadar joined the Bureau) reaction surged ahead, and the authority of the party and the government virtually did not exist. The counter-revolutionary elements insistently demanded the rehabilitation of Nagy and the removal of those few sound elements left in the leadership. Gerö, Hegedüs and others went from city to city and from factory to factory trying to cool tempers, promising «democracy», «the rule of socialist law» and increased pay. Obviously, all these things were done not in the correct Marxist-Leninist way, but submitting to the pressure of the powerful upsurge of the petty-bourgeoisie and reaction.

We considered the removal of Rakosi from the leadership of the Hungarian party a mistake which did great damage to and seriously weakened the situation in Hungary, and we ex-

pressed this opinion to the Soviet leaders when we went to Moscow in December. The events themselves showed how right we were.

The «happy» period of liberalization began, the period of dragging from the prison and the grave those whom the dictatorship of the proletariat had justly condemned. The traitor Rajk and his associates were reinterred after a pompous ceremony in which thousands of people, headed by the Hungarian leadership, took part and which ended with the «International». Thus, the traitor Rajk became «Comrade Rajk», and a national hero of Hungary, almost the same as Kossuth.

After a formal letter to the Central Committee, Nagy was readmitted to the party and confidently awaited the development of events which would bring him to power. They were not long delayed.

After Rajk, many others previously condemned came on the scene — officers and priests, people sentenced for political crimes and thieves, to whom moral satisfaction as well as material satisfaction was given. Rajk's widow received 200,000 forints as a reward for her husband's treachery, and the Budapest newspapers published reports about the generosity of «Madame Rajk» who donated this sum to the people's colleges. Those condemned by the courts were proclaimed the victims of Rakosi, Gabor Peter, and Mihaly Farkas, who was arrested at this time. The top officials begged

the pardon of reaction for their «crimes». «But what could we do,» said the minister of justice, «when Comrade Rajk, himself, admitted his guilt!»

Hegedüs, while still prime minister, declared under the pressure of Khrushchev, «We greatly regret that our party and government slandered the Yugoslavs», while Gerö, in his first speech after he had been elected to the head of the party said, «Our party still has to pay its debts to the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and the leaders of Yugoslavia and to deny the slanders we have spread to the detriment of the Yugoslav Federal Republic.»

In all that was taking place, Gerö, who was one of the oldest leaders of the party, proved to be an opportunist and a coward who swung from side to side and moved like a puppet manipulated by the real actors behind the scenes in the Hungarian tragedy. When Tito was on «holiday» in the Crimea, Gerö went to talk with him in Khrushchev's villa and the three of them, together with their suites, «took walks along the seashore, talked and had photographs taken». If the history of intrigues and diabolical manoeuvres to the detriment of the peoples is ever written, these will be «historic photographs». Here, in Khrushchev's villa at Yalta, the first steps to conciliation were taken and, a few days later, Gerö with Hegedüs and Kadar, went to Belgrade, where they talked with Rankovic. Not

much later, when the disturbances began, they threw Gerö into the rubbish bin and Kadar, with the blessing of Khrushchev and the manoeuvres of Mikoyan and the revisionist ideologist Suslov, was elevated to first secretary.

Meanwhile Imre Nagy emerged from his hole, took power, shouted in triumph, proclaimed «democracy», and Tito was at the culmination of his victory. Reaction came to power, gangsters swarmed in from abroad, and the fascist Horthyite and clerical parties of the bourgeoisie were reformed. Imperialism filled the country with spies and was pouring in arms wholesale from Austria. Radio «Free Europe» urged on the counter-revolution day and night and called for the overthrow and total liquidation of the socialist order. Even earlier Hungary had opened its doors to spies disguised as tourists.

When we passed through Budapest in October 1956, on the return journey from China, the members of the Bureau of the Hungarian Workers' Party themselves told us that «20,000 tourists have visited Hungary recently». When I pointed out that this was dangerous, they replied: «But we get hard currency from them.» After the removal of Rakosi, especially in those ill-famed October days, the doors were opened to the Horthyites, the barons and counts, the former masters and oppressors of Hungary. Esterhazy established himself in the middle of Budapest and telephoned em-

bassies, announcing that he intended to place himself at the head of the government. Mindszenty, released from prison, returned to his palace escorted by the «national guard» and blessed the people. The old parties, owners' parties, peasants' parties, social-democratic parties, catholic parties, revived like maggots in a festering wound, re-established themselves in their former premises, brought out newspapers and Nagy and Kadar were placed in the government. The counter-revolution swept the entire capital and was spreading to other parts of Hungary.

As Bato Karafili, our ambassador in Budapest, told us later, the frenzied crowds of counter-revolutionaries first rushed upon a bronze monument of Stalin, which had still been left standing in a square of Budapest. Just as Hitler's assault squads in the past were let loose on everything progressive, the Horthyites and other riff-raff of Hungary hurled themselves in fury on the monument of Stalin, trying to uproot it. Since they failed to achieve this even with steel ropes attached to a heavy tractor, the bandits did their work with the aid of cutting torches. Their first act was symbolic: by knocking down the monument of Stalin they wanted to say that they were going to destroy everything that still remained in Hungary from socialism, the dictatorship of the proletariat and Marxism-Leninism.

Destruction, killings and rioting swept the whole city.

The scabby bird — Imre Nagy, had flown from the hands of Khrushchev and Suslov. This traitor, in whom Moscow had placed its hopes, like a drowning man clutching at his own hair to save himself from death, showed what he was, and in the upsurge of the counter-revolutionary fury, announced his reactionary policy and made public declarations about Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Treaty. The Soviet ambassador in Hungary was a certain Andropov, a KGB man, who was elevated to power later and played a dirty role against us. This agent, with the label of ambassador, found himself surrounded by the counter-revolution which broke out. Even when the counter-revolutionary events were taking place openly, when Nagy came to the head of the government, the Soviets still continued to support him, apparently hoping that they could keep him under control. During those days, after the first half-hearted intervention of the Soviet army, Andropov told our ambassador in Budapest:

«We cannot call the insurgents counter-revolutionaries because there are honest people among them. The new government is good and it is necessary to support it in order to stabilize the situation.»

«What do you think of Nagy's speeches?» our ambassador asked him.

«They are not bad,» replied Andropov, and when our comrade pointed out that what was being said about the Soviet Union did not seem to be correct, he replied:

«There is anti-Sovietism, but Nagy's recent speech was not bad, it was not anti-Soviet. He wants to maintain links with the masses. The Political Bureau is good and has credit.»

The counter-revolutionaries acted with such arrogance that they forced Andropov, together with all his staff, out into the street and left them there for hours on end. We instructed our ambassador in Budapest to take measures for the defence of the embassy and its staff, and to place a machine-gun at the top of the stairs. If the counter-revolutionaries dared to attack the embassy he was to open fire without hesitation. But when our ambassador asked Andropov for weapons to ensure the defence of our embassy, he refused:

«We have diplomatic immunity, therefore no one will touch you.»

«What diplomatic immunity?!» said our ambassador. «They threw you out into the street.»

«No, no,» said Andropov, «if we give you arms, some incident might be created.»

«Very well,» said our representative. «I am making you an official request on behalf of the Albanian government.»

«I shall ask Moscow,» said Andropov, and

when the request was refused our ambassador declared:

«All right, only I am letting you know that we shall defend ourselves with the pistol and shotguns we have.»

The Soviet ambassador had shut himself up in the embassy and did not dare to stick his head out. A responsible functionary of the Foreign Ministry of Hungary, who was being chased by the bandits, sought refuge in our embassy and we admitted him. He told our comrades that he had gone to the Soviet embassy but they had turned him away.

The Soviet troops stationed in Hungary intervened at first, but were then withdrawn under the pressure of Nagy and Kadar and the Soviet government declared that it was ready to begin talks about their withdrawal from Hungary. While the counter-revolutionaries were wreaking havoc, Moscow trembled. Khrushchev was afraid, hesitating to intervene. Tito was king of the situation and the supporter of Imre Nagy, indeed, he had assembled his army and was ready to intervene. Then Moscow sent the appropriate person to Budapest, the huckster Mikoyan, along with the cocky Suslov.

Here in Tirana we did not fail to speak up. I called the Soviet ambassador and told him angrily:

«We are completely uninformed about what

is going on in a number of socialist countries. Tito and company have a finger in the organization of the counter-revolution in Hungary. You are abandoning Hungary to imperialism and Tito. You must intervene with arms and *far piazza pulita** before it's too late.»

I mentioned Tito's aims and condemned the trust Khrushchev had in him, as well as Suslov's trust in Imre Nagy's «self-criticism».

«You see what Imre Nagy is,» I said. «Now blood is being shed in Hungary and the culprits must be found.»

He replied:

«The situation is grave but we shall not allow the enemy to seize Hungary. I shall transmit the opinions you expressed to me to Moscow.»

Every one knows what happened in Hungary and Budapest. Thousands of people were killed. Reaction, armed from abroad, slaughtered communists and democrats, women and children in the streets, burned houses, offices and everything they could lay hands on. The gangsterism prevailed for days on end. Only the security detachments of Budapest put up some slight resistance, while the Hungarian army and the Hungarian Workers' Party were neutralized and liquidated. Kadar published the decree on the liquidation of the Hungarian Workers' Party, an act which showed who

* make a clean sweep (Italian in the original).

he was, and proclaimed the formation of the new party — the Socialist Workers' Party, which Kadar, Nagy and others were to build.

The Soviet embassy was surrounded with tanks and Mikoyan, Suslov, Andropov and who knows who else, continued to intrigue inside.

Reaction, headed by Kadar and Imre Nagy, shut up in the parliament building, where they indulged in idle talk, sent out continuous appeals to the Western capitalist states to intervene with arms against the Soviets. In the end, the frightened Nikita Khrushchev was obliged to give the order. The Soviet armoured forces marched on Budapest and fighting began in the streets. The intriguer Mikoyan put Andropov in a tank and sent him to parliament to bring back Kadar, in order to manipulate matters through him. And this is what occurred. Kadar again changed his patron, again changed his coat, returned to the bosom of the Soviets and, protected by their tanks, called on the people to cease the disturbances and appealed to the counter-revolutionaries to hand in their arms and surrender.

That was the end of the Nagy government. The counter-revolution was put down, and Imre Nagy took refuge in Tito's embassy. It was clear that he was an agent of Tito and world reaction. He had Khrushchev's support, too, but he slipped from his grasp, because he wanted to go further, and did so. Khrushchev quarrelled with Tito for

months about handing over Nagy. Tito refused until they reached a compromise that Nagy should be handed over to the Rumanians. At the time when negotiations over this problem were going on with Tito, Krylov, the Soviet ambassador in Tirana, sought our opinion whether or not we agreed that Nagy should go to Rumania.

«As we have declared previously,» I replied to Krylov, «Imre Nagy is a traitor who opened the doors to fascism in Hungary. Now it is proposed that this traitor, who has killed communists and progressives, who has killed Soviet soldiers and called on the imperialists to intervene, should go to a friendly country. This is a big concession and we do not agree with it.»

After tempers cooled and the victims of the Hungarian counter-revolution, a deed of Tito in particular, as well as Khrushchev, were buried, Nagy was executed. The way this was done was not right, either. Not that Nagy did not deserve to be executed, but not secretly, without trial and without public exposure, as was done. He ought to have been publicly tried and punished on the basis of the laws of the country of which he was a citizen. But of course, neither Khrushchev, Kadar, nor Tito wanted him brought to trial, because Nagy could have brought to light the dirty linen of those who pulled the strings in the counter-revolutionary plot.

Later, when the counter-revolution in Hun-

gary had been suppressed, many facts came to light which proved the complicity of the Soviet leaders in the Hungarian events. We, of course, suspected what role the Soviets played, especially in regard to the removal of Rakosi, the support for Nagy, etc. However, at that time we did not know precisely how the Khrushchev-Tito collaboration had developed and neither did we know about the secret meetings of Khrushchev and Malenkov with Tito in Brioni. These things were revealed later and we adhered to our stand of opposition to these actions of the Soviets.

Some days after order was restored in Hungary, the Soviet leadership informed us of the correspondence which it had exchanged with the Yugoslav leadership over the Hungarian question. The facts which were revealed in those letters disturbed us profoundly, because the problems were serious and critical. At that time, the interests of socialism and the communist movement required that the Soviet Union should be defended from the attacks of imperialism and reaction and our unity preserved. On the other hand, our Party had to have its say about these anti-Marxist actions of the Soviet leadership. Therefore, everything had to be carefully considered and weighed up, bearing in mind the interests of the Party, our country, the revolution and socialism. That is how we judged these problems, we expressed our opinions to the Soviet leaders in a comradely tone,

so that everything would be corrected and kept between ourselves.

During those days, after we received the letters, I summoned Krylov:

«I have called you here,» I said, «to clear up some matters which arise from these letters. First, I want to tell you that the allusions which Tito made to 'certain evil men', clearly implying the leadership of our Party, seem to us unacceptable. Such a thing, on his part, does not surprise us because we are accustomed to Tito's attacks. However, we are extremely surprised about the fact that in the reply of the Central Committe of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union there is no clear-cut stand to be seen in connection with these insinuations of Tito's. Have you anything to say about this question?»

«I have nothing to say about this,» replied Krylov, faithful to his manner of playing dumb.

Then I continued:

«Tito should have been told bluntly that we are not evil men and enemies of socialism, as he says. We are Marxist-Leninists, resolute people, who will fight to the end for the cause of socialism. Tito, on the contrary, is an enemy of the revolution and socialism. There are many facts to prove this.»

Krylov was silent, and continuing the talk, I dwelt in particular on another problem which had attracted our attention in these letters. Khrush-

chev wrote to Tito: «In connection with the removal of Rakosi, you were completely satisfied that the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union tried, as early as the summer of this year, to ensure that Kadar would become first secretary.»

Besides this, the letter clearly indicated their collaboration, not only before the events of October, but also during them, a collaboration which was concretized in the plan hatched up during secret talks in Brioni. These actions of the Soviet leadership were unacceptable to us. In our opinion, the Titoites continued their disruptive secret activity, and this was clearly apparent in Hungary in particular. We had informed the leadership of the Soviet Union of this opinion.

I questioned Krylov about this matter:

«We are not clear about where the Central Committee of the Hungarian Workers' Party was formed, in Budapest or in the Crimea?»

Of course Krylov did not like this question and, biting his words, said:

«This is how matters must stand: the Hungarian comrades have gone to the Crimea and talked with our comrades. There the question has been raised of who should be placed in the leadership. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has said that 'it would be good if Kadar were elected.'»

«Does it mean that the leadership of the Com-

munist Party of the Soviet Union was not for Gerö but for Kadar?» I continued.

«That is what emerges from the letter,» replied Krylov.

«Apart from that,» I said, «the Kadar government has been formed in close collaboration between your leadership and Tito. Is that not so?»

«Yes, it seems to be so,» Krylov was obliged to admit.

Continuing the talk, after informing him of the concern which the events in Hungary aroused in our Party, I pointed out to the Soviet ambassador:

«The unanimous opinion of our Political Bureau is that these actions of the comrades of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, who talk with Tito about the composition of the leadership of the Hungarian party and government, are not correct. The Soviet leadership is well aware of our views on all these matters, because we have expressed them to it. Is that not so?»

«Yes, it is so,» said Krylov.

«Have you transmitted all our views to Moscow?»

«Yes,» he replied, «I have transmitted them.»

At the end of this talk, as though by chance, the Soviet ambassador asked me:

«Will Dali Ndreu be put on trial?»

Of course this question was not accidental.

Apparently, the trial and exposure of the agents of the Yugoslav revisionists, Liri Gega and Dali Ndreu, was not pleasing to the Soviets.

«The trial has been prepared and will be held,» I told Krylov, «because they are traitors and agents. When their attempts to carry out the plot against our Party and state failed, Dali Ndreu and Liri Gega, sensing that they would have to render account for their activity as agents, attempted to flee the country, and were captured near our state border. Their hostile activity has now been completely proved and they themselves have admitted it. And if Tito continues his hostile activity, we shall publish the truth about these agents, with facts and tape-recordings. We think that we can no longer tolerate the Titoites, who want to stab us in the back and to make accusations against us.»

«I understand your situation,» murmured Krylov and went away with his tail between his legs.

The same phenomena as in Hungary developed in Poland, too, almost at the same time, although there the events did not assume those proportions and that dramatic character they did in Hungary. In Poland, too, the dictatorship of the proletariat had been established under the leadership of the United Workers' Party, but, despite the aid which the Soviet Union provided, socialism

did not develop there at the necessary rates. As long as Bierut was at the head and the Polish party was in correct positions, successes were achieved in the socialist development of the country. However, the initial reforms and measures which were taken there, were not carried through to the end and the class struggle was not waged at the proper level. The proletariat increased, industry was developed, efforts were made to disseminate Marxist ideas among the masses, but, de facto, the elements of the bourgeoisie retained many of their dominant positions. The land reform was not carried out in the countryside, and the collectivization went only half-way, until Gomulka declared the cooperatives and state farms unprofitable, and favoured the growth of the kulak strata in the Polish countryside.

As in Hungary, East Germany, Rumania and elsewhere, the Polish party was formed through a mechanical merger of the existing party with the bourgeois parties, so-called workers' parties. Perhaps such a thing was necessary in order to unite the proletariat under the leadership of a single party, but this union should have been brought about through a great deal of ideological, political and organizational work, to ensure that the former members of other parties were not only assimilated, but what is more important, were thoroughly educated with the Marxist-Leninist ideological and organizational norms. But this was not done either

in Poland, Hungary, or elsewhere and all that happened in fact was that the members of the bourgeois parties changed their names, became «communists», while retaining their old views, their old outlook. Thus, the parties of the proletariat were not strengthened, but on the contrary, were weakened, because social-democrats and opportunists like Cyrankiewicz, Marosan, Grotewohl, etc., established themselves and their views in them.

Apart from this, there was another factor in Poland which had an influence in the counter-revolutionary manifestations: the old hatred of the Polish people for Czarist Russia. Through the work which reaction did inside and outside the party, the old hatred, which was completely justified in the past, was now turned against the Soviet Union, against the Soviet people, who, in fact, had shed their blood for the liberation of Poland. The Polish bourgeoisie, which had not been hit as hard as it should have been, did everything in its power to incite the nationalist and chauvinist sentiments against the Soviet Union.

After the death of Bierut, these were expressed more openly, and the weaknesses of the party and the dictatorship of the proletariat in Poland also emerged more openly. Thus, partly from the weaknesses in the work, partly from the efforts of reaction, the church, Gomulka and Cyrankiewicz, and partly from the interference of the Khrushchevites, the disturbances of June 1956

and the events which followed them, came about. Of course, the death of Bierut created suitable conditions for the plans of the counter-revolution. I had met Bierut long before, when I went to Warsaw. He was a mature, experienced comrade, quiet and kindly. Although I was younger than he, he behaved in such a good comradely manner with me that I can never forget him. When I met him at meetings in Moscow, too, it was a special satisfaction to talk with him. He listened to me attentively when I spoke about our people and their situation. He was sincere, just and principled. I remember when we talked in Warsaw he mentioned a discussion he had had with Comrade Mehmet.

«Your comrade spoke to me frankly when he criticized the stand of our prime minister. I like comrades who speak frankly,» said Bierut.

I met him for the last time in Moscow when the 20th Congress of the CPSU was held.

Shortly before his death, Bierut and his wife, as well as Nexhmije and I were in a box together in the «Maly Teatr» to see a play about the revolutionary navy of Leningrad.

In the interval we had a cordial conversation in the small room behind the stage. Amongst other things, we spoke about the Comintern, because at that time the Bulgarian Ganev joined us and he and Bierut reminisced about when they had

met in Sophia, when Bierut had been sent there illegally on a task.

Only a little while after this meeting, we heard the bad news: Bierut had died, like Gottwald,... «of a cold». Great grief and astonishment!

We went to his funeral in Warsaw; it was the beginning of March 1956. Many speeches were delivered by Khrushchev, Cyrankiewicz, Ochab, Zhu De, etc., over Bierut's coffin. Vukmanovic-Tempo, who had come to take part in the funeral as the envoy of Belgrade, also spoke. Even here, the Titoite representative took the opportunity to launch revisionist slogans and to express his satisfaction over the new «possibilities and perspectives» which had just been opened by the 20th Congress.

«Bierut has been taken from us at a moment when possibilities and prospects have been opened for collaboration and friendship between all socialist movements, in order to realize the ideas of October in various ways,» said Tempo, and called for advance on the road opened «through continuous actions». While the speeches were going on, not far from me, I saw Nikita Khrushchev leaning against a tree, exchanging words with Wanda Wassilewska. Without doubt, he was striking deals over the body of Bierut, whom they were putting in the grave.

A few months after these bitter events at the

start of 1956, Poland was engulfed in confusion and chaos which smelled of counter-revolution.

The events which occurred in Poland were almost identical with those in Hungary. The revolts of the Poznan workers began before the outbreak of the Hungarian counter-revolution, but in fact, these two counter-revolutionary movements matured at the same time, in the same situation and with the same inspiration. I am not going to go into a detailed description of them because they are known, but it is interesting to point out the analogy of facts in these countries, the astonishing parallels between the development of the counter-revolution in Poland and that in Hungary.

Both in Poland and in Hungary the leaders were changed: in the one country Bierut died (in Moscow), in the other Rakosi was removed (the work of Moscow); in Hungary, Rajk, Nagy, Kadar were rehabilitated, in Poland, Gomulka, Spychalski, Morawski, Loga-Sowinski and a whole series of other traitors; there Mindszenty came on the scene, here Wyszynski.

Even more significant is the ideological and spiritual identity of these events. Both in Poland and in Hungary, the events took place under the aegis of the 20th Congress, with the slogans of «democratization», liberalization and rehabilitation. The Khrushchevites played an active role, a base counter-revolutionary role, in the development of

events in both these countries. The Titoites also had their influence in Poland, although not so directly as in Hungary, but the ideas of self-administration, «the national roads to socialism», and the «workers' councils», which were taken up in Poland, were certainly inspired by the Yugoslav «specific socialism».

The June events at Poznan were counter-revolutionary movements which reaction inspired, exploiting the economic difficulties and the mistakes which had been made by the Polish party in the development of the economy. These revolts were suppressed and did not assume the same proportions as in Hungary, but they had major consequences in the further development of events. In Poland reaction found its own Nagy: this was Wladyslaw Gomulka, an enemy brought out of prison, who immediately became first secretary of the party. Gomulka, who had been general secretary of the Workers' Party of Poland for a time, had been condemned for his right opportunist and nationalist views, which were very similar to the line followed by the Tito group, exposed at that time by the Information Bureau. When the congress for the uniting of the Workers' Party and the Socialist Party was held in 1948, Bierut and the other leaders and delegates exposed and attacked the views of Gomulka. Our Party had sent its representative to this congress and when he returned to Albania he told us about the arrogant,

stubborn stand of Gomulka in the congress. Gomulka was exposed, but nevertheless, as they said, «he was given a helping hand once again» and was elected to the Central Committee. A Pole who accompanied our comrade, told him that during those days, Gomulka had had a long *tête-à-tête** talk with Ponomarenko, a secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union who attended the congress and, it seems, Ponomarenko had persuaded Gomulka to make self-criticism. However, time showed clearly that he had not relinquished his views and later he was sentenced for anti-state activity, too.

When the rehabilitation campaign began, the partisans of Gomulka exerted pressure on the leadership of the party to proclaim Gomulka innocent. But he was too politically and ideologically discredited, and therefore, there were obstacles to this. Some months before Gomulka was restored to the head of the Polish party, Ochab declared «solemnly» that although Wladyslaw Gomulka had been released from prison, «this in no way alters the correct essence of the political and ideological struggle which the party has waged against the views of Gomulka.»

After he liquidated Bierut, Khrushchev assisted Ochab, Zawadski, Zambrowski and other elements such as Cyrankiewicz, but the seed of

* French in the original.

discord and disruption had been deeply implanted and was germinating. Gomulka and his supporters acted and managed to come to power. The Khrushchevites were worried: they had to have Poland firmly under control *manu militari,* and their policy and ideology were adapted to this imperative need. Khrushchev abandoned his old friends and turned to Gomulka who did not appear to be so obedient to Khrushchev's dictate.

The advent of Gomulka to power convinced us that events in Poland were not developing in favour of socialism. We not only knew Gomulka's sinister past, but we were able to judge him also from the slogans he launched and the speeches he made. He came to power with definite slogans for «the true independence of Poland» and «the further democratization of the country». In the speech he delivered before he was elected first secretary, he did not fail to threaten the Soviets saying, «we shall defend ourselves,» and, as far as we know, there were even clashes between the Soviet and Polish detachments in Poland. In general the events in Poland, as in Hungary, developed under anti-Soviet slogans. Gomulka, too, was anti-Soviet. Of course, he was against the Soviet Union of the time of Stalin, but at the same time he wanted to be free from the yoke which the Khrushchevites were preparing for the countries of the socialist camp. Nevertheless, he did not fail to speak formally in favour of friendship with the Soviet

Union and to «condemn» the anti-Soviet slogans. At the same time, he spoke positively about the stationing of the Soviet army in Poland, and this he did for immediate national interests, because he was afraid of some attack from West Germany, which never accepted the Oder-Neisse border.

The revisionist Gomulka made his moves with such unprecendented arrogance that I pointed out some of his actions to Khrushchev when I met him in Yalta. We were sitting in a pavilion with a stone floor at the edge of the sea, and when he had heard me out, Khrushchev admitted I was right and said to me textually: «Gomulka is a real fascist.» But the two counter-revolutionaries later came to agreement and had only honeyed words for each other. Their contradictions and differences were softened.

The speech which Gomulka delivered at the plenum of the Central Committee which elected him first secretary was a «programmatic» speech of a revisionist. He criticized the line followed up to that time in industry and agriculture, painted a black picture of the situation and proclaimed the cooperativist system in the countryside and the state farms unprofitable. We considered these views anti-Marxist-Leninist. Mistakes may have been made in the direction of collectivization and the development of agricultural cooperatives in Poland, but the cooperativist system was not to

blame for this. It had proved its vitality as the only road for the construction of socialism in the countryside in the Soviet Union, in the other socialist countries and in our country. Gomulka struck out with his sword, right and left, against «violations of the law», against the «cult of the individual», against Stalin, against Bierut (although he did not mention him by name) and against the leaders of socialist countries whom he called satellites of Stalin. Gomulka defended the counter-revolutionary actions in Poznan. «The workers of Poznan,» declared Gomulka at the 8th Plenum, in October 1956, «were not protesting against socialism, but against evils which had spread in our social system. The attempt to present the painful tragedy of Poznan as the work of imperialist agents and provocateurs was politically very naive. The causes must be sought in the leadership of the party and the government.»

The Soviets were worried and frightened about the events in Poland, because they saw that the «new course», which they themselves proclaimed, was taking the Polish leaders further than they desired and that Poland was in danger of escaping from their influence. During the days in which the plenum, that was to restore Gomulka to power, was held, Khrushchev, Molotov, Kaganovich and Mikoyan went urgently to Poland. At the airport Khrushchev shouted angrily at the Polish leaders: «We have shed our blood

to liberate this country, while you want to give it to the Americans.» The concern of the Russians was increased, because the Soviet Marshal Rokossowsky, who was of Polish origin, and other members of the Political Bureau who were considered pro-Soviet, like Minc, etc., were being squeezed out and in fact they were expelled from the Political Bureau. However, the Poles did not submit either to the pressure of the Soviet leaders or to the movement of Russian tanks; they did not even invite them to the plenum. Talks were held, at which Gomulka was present, but nevertheless for the time being Khrushchev and company were left biting their fingers. Pressure was exerted, an article was published in «Pravda» to which the Poles gave an arrogant reply, but, in the end, Khrushchev gave Gomulka his blessing and, after he made a «pilgrimage» to Moscow, Gomulka received credits and spoke about the Soviet-Polish «Leninist friendship».

Gomulka implemented his «program», set up his «workers' councils», «self-administrative cooperatives», and «rehabilitation committees», stimulated private trade, introduced religion in the schools and the army and opened the doors to foreign propaganda; he, too, spoke about the «national road» to socialism.

Gomulka's views and actions were so extremely open and undisguised that many did not accept them, or could not accept them openly.

Even Khrushchev was obliged from time to time to throw some small stone at Gomulka's garden. The Czechs, the French, the Bulgarians, and the East-Germans, who kept one eye and ear on Moscow, likewise adopted stands of reserve or opposition. Obviously we were opposed to Gomulka and his actions and this we had made known to the Soviet leaders with whom we had talked. The Poles did not like this attitude and their press complained openly that the other parties did not understand the changes that were occurring in Poland. An article published in those days mentioned our press and that of some other countries as examples of this «misunderstanding», in contrast to the Italian, Chinese, Yugoslav and other parties which had «properly understood the profoundly socialist character of the changes in Poland».

The Yugoslavs welcomed these «socialist» changes with enthusiasm and shouted that «those forces which fought for political democratization, economic decentralization and the system of self-administration had triumphed» in Poland.

The Soviets did not give us any information about the events in Poland, either, but only sent us a letter in which they told us that the situation was very grave and informed us that a Soviet delegation was to go there. Apart from this nothing more, no news, no information. In the Soviet press we found an occasional article which attacked the events in Poland, but we also found

articles which supported them. As I have said, from the talks with Krylov, the Soviet ambassador in Tirana, we had nothing definite. In one meeting which I had with him I spoke about the question of Poland and our concern about what was occurring there.

«How is it possible,» I asked him, «that we are not kept informed? How is it possible that we are left in the dark about these matters, which concern all of us? This is not right.»

«That is a fair request,» Krylov replied.

«Transmit our view to your Central Committee,» I concluded.

In the context of the events which were taking place, the differences of opinion between us and the Soviets were becoming ever clearer. In connection with this, the stand of our Party was: we must not make these differences public, because this would harm the Soviet Union and the socialist camp, but on the other hand, we must make no concessions of principle, must adhere to our stands and express our views openly to the Soviet leaders.

When I was in Moscow in December of that year, among other things, I talked with the Soviet leaders about the question of Poland. I shall deal separately with the talks of December 1956, but here I want to mention the support which Khrushchev and company gave Gomulka to consolidate himself in power. When we put forward our views

and doubts about Gomulka to Khrushchev and Suslov, they tried to convince us that he was a good man and should be supported, while we were convinced that the disturbances which had occurred in Poland and which were very like the Hungarian counter-revolution, were the work of Gomulka and served to bring this fascist to power, where he remained until he was purged by the Khrushchevites and Gierek. The latter is a ferocious enemy of the Party of Labour of Albania. In Poland all of them fell one after the other. Cyrankiewicz, this old agent of the bourgeoisie, lasted longest and pulled the strings with the Soviet army which had occupied Poland.

The events in Hungary and Poland quite rightly worried our Party and its leadership because they damaged the cause of the revolution and weakened the positions of socialism in Europe and the world.

After these events ended, or more precisely, lost their open and acute form, because now they were carried on in secrecy, the moment came to make the necessary analyses and draw the proper conclusions. Both Khrushchev and Tito made analyses according to their own interests and reckonings and the anti-Marxist views which they held. In essence, the Titoites and the Khrushchevites were united in their «analysis», laying the blame on the mistakes of the leadership of the Hungarian

party and Rakosi, in particular. Kadar, too, as the servant of two masters, sang in harmony with them, declaring that «the revolt of the masses was justified because of the mistakes of the criminal clique of Rakosi and Gerö.»

To the extent it was acquainted with the development of events and based on the facts which had emerged from the darkness which shrouded the plot, our Party had analysed these events and had drawn its own conclusions. In our opinion, the counter-revolution was provoked and organized by world capitalism and its Titoite agency at the weakest link in the socialist camp, at the moments when the Khrushchev clique had still not consolidated its positions. The Hungarian Workers' Party and the dictatorship of the proletariat in Hungary melted away like snow in the rain at its first stern confrontation with reaction. From all that had occurred, certain facts drew our attention:

In the first place, the events revealed the weak and superficial work of the Hungarian party for the education and leadership of the working class. Despite its revolutionary traditions, the working class of Hungary did not know how to defend its power during the counter-revolution. On the contrary, a part of it became a reserve of reaction. The party itself did not react as a conscious organized vanguard of the class. It was liquidated within a few days, and this gave the

counter-revolutionary Kadar the possibility to bury it once and for all.

The events of October and November 1956 underlined once again the vacillating character of the Hungarian intellectuals and student youth. They became the cat's paw of reaction, and the assault squad of the bourgeoisie. An especially base role in this was played by the counter-revolutionary writers headed by the reactionary and anti-communist Lukacs, who also became a member of the Nagy government.

The case of Hungary proved that the bourgeoisie had not lost its hopes of restoration but, on the contrary, had prepared itself in illegality, even preserving its old organizational forms, which was shown by the immediate formation of clerical and fascist bourgeois parties.

What occurred in Hungary further convinced our Party of the correctness of the stand we had maintained towards the Yugoslav revisionists. The Titoites were the inspirers and main supporters of the Hungarian counter-revolution. Official personalities and the press of Yugoslavia welcomed these events with enthusiasm. The inflammatory speeches delivered in the «Petöfi» Club were published in Belgrade and the «theories» of Tito and Kardelj, together with the theses of the 20th Congress, were the banner of these speeches.

To us these things were neither new nor unexpected. What worried us most was the role

which the Soviet leadership played in these events, its co-ordination of plans with Tito, its backstage deals hatched up to the detriment of the Hungarian people, which had profound and bitter repercussions for them.

The counter-revolution in Hungary was put down by the Soviet tanks because Khrushchev could not fail to intervene (that would have exposed him once and for all), and here the imperialists and Tito did not make their calculations well. However, experience showed that this counter-revolution was suppressed by counter-revolutionaries who restored capitalism, but in a more camouflaged way, retaining their colour and disguise, as the Soviet Khrushchevites did in their own country.

The facts in Hungary increased our doubts about the leadership of the CPSU and worried and saddened us. We had always had great faith in the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Stalin and we had expressed this faith together with our sincere love for it and the land of the Soviets.

With this feeling of doubt and worry I went to Moscow in December 1956, together with Hysni, who supported and assisted me in the difficult talks and discussions with the Khrushchevites, in which the poison was mixed with hypocrisy.

As we had decided earlier in the Political Bureau, we went to the Soviet Union to discuss with the Soviet leaders the acute problems of the

situation, the events in Hungary and Poland, as well as relations with Yugoslavia.

It must be said that at that period Khrushchev and company were not getting along so well with Tito. Their friendship seemed to have cooled off somewhat. Meanwhile, Tito had delivered his notorious speech at Pula, which had aroused a great deal of opposition in many parties of the socialist camp. In this speech, the Belgrade chieftain attacked the Soviet system, attacked socialism, attacked the parties which did not follow the «original Marxist-Leninist» course of Tito and also condemned the Soviet intervention in Hungary. These theses were not to the advantage of Khrushchev and company, or were too open, and they were obliged to take a stand for appearances' sake.

Thus the Khrushchevites had made one or two attacks in the newspapers, although not very strong ones (in order to avoid making Comrade Tito too angry!) and indeed even with some praise, and, as was their custom, they had begun to exert economic pressure on Yugoslavia, a thing which Khrushchev admitted to me in the talks. At that time «Pravda» had also published an article of mine in which Yugoslav «specific socialism» and its spokesmen were attacked in harsh terms.

I am relating all this to explain why the welcome for us at that time was more «cordial» and why our views, especially with regard to the Yu-

goslavs, were not opposed, and indeed, even seemed to be approved by the Soviet leaders.

From the moment we left the ship in Odessa we noticed this atmosphere in the conversation we had with those who came to welcome us and the talks we held with the leaders of the organs of the party and the state in the Ukraine.

We travelled from Odessa to Moscow by train. We still had not recovered properly from the journey, when we were informed that the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had put on a dinner in honour of our delegation. As I have said elsewhere, the Soviet leaders were unrivalled for lunches and dinners that went on for hours on end. We were still tired from the trip, but, of course, we went to this «dinner», which began at about four o'clock in the afternoon. As far as I recall, all the members of the Presidium, apart from Brezhnev, Furtseva and one other, were there. The dinner continued for several hours and Khrushchev and the others strove to create an atmosphere which would seem as friendly as possible. Nearly all who were present proposed toasts (Khrushchev alone proposed five or six) and in the course of the *toasts** fine words were said about our Party and Albania and I was praised especially. Especially zealous in these praises was Pos-

* English in the original.

pyelov who had been at the 3rd Congress of our Party in May.

The toasts proposed were frequently political speeches, especially those proposed by Khrushchev, for whom it was nothing to speak for half an hour in proposing a toast. In any case, from these speeches we got a preliminary signal about the stand they would take in the talks.

That evening Khrushchev did not spare his attacks against the Yugoslav leaders.

«Their positions are anti-Leninist and opportunist,» said Khrushchev among other things. «Their policy is a mishmash. We shall make no concessions to them. They suffer from megalomania,» he continued. «When Tito was in Moscow, he thought that with the majestic welcome put on for him, the people were saying he was right, and that they condemned our policy. In fact we need only have whispered one word to the people and they would have torn Tito and company to pieces.»

Speaking about our attitude to the Titoites, he said, «The Albanian comrades are right but they must keep cool and maintain their self-control.

«Your hair is going gray, but we are bald,» said Khrushchev, concluding his toast.

While the feast continued, «the bald head» told us that Albania was a small country, but had an important strategic position. «If we build

a submarine and missile base there, we can control the whole Mediterranean.» Khrushchev and Malinovsky repeated this same idea when they came to visit our country in 1959. It was the idea which was concretized in the Vlora base, which the Khrushchevites used to put pressure on us, later.

As I said, Khrushchev and the other Soviet leaders showed themselves very «cordial», there was no lack of flattery, and all this was done to soften the just revolt of our Party over their wrong stands. I remember that during the evening we had some discussion about Khrushchev's coming to our country, because although he had left hardly any country unvisited, he had not come to us, either openly or secretly. However, that evening there was a predisposition to reply positively to our request. Not only Khrushchev, but many other members of the Presidium expressed their desire to come to Albania and someone, I don't remember who, jokingly proposed they should hold a meeting of the Presidium or even of their Central Committee in Albania! There was talk there, also, about the «love» which Khrushchev allegedly had for our country (which he displayed later!) and they nicknamed Khrushchev «*Albanyets*»*.

* The Albanian (Russian in the original)

Among many others I remember that Molotov, too, proposed a toast:

«I belong to that category of people who have not given much importance to Albania and have not become acquainted with it,» he said. «Now our people are proud that they have such a loyal, resolute and militant friend. The Soviet Union has many friends, but they are not all the same. Albania is our best friend. Let us drink this toast wishing that the Soviet Union will have friends as loyal as Albania!»

In general our correct line was praised and the Yugoslav revisionists were condemned by all the Soviet leaders that evening. Indeed Marshal Zhukov told us that they had proofs that the leaders in Belgrade had supported the counter-revolution in Hungary not only ideologically, but also organizationally, and that the Yugoslavs were operating as an agency of American imperialism.

In brief, the dinner continued and ended in this spirit. Two or three days later we had a preliminary meeting with Suslov, secretary of the Central Committee, who was considered a specialist in ideological matters and, if I am not mistaken, was also charged with international relations.

Suslov was one of the greatest demagogues of the Soviet leadership. Clever and cunning, he knew how to wriggle out of difficult situations and perhaps that is why he was one of the few

who had escaped the purges carried out time after time in the Soviet revisionist leadership. Several times I have talked with Suslov and I always had a feeling of unease and annoyance from the meetings with him. I had even less desire to talk with Suslov now, following the Hungarian events, after that debate which I had had with him earlier about Nagy, the situation in Hungary, etc., and knowing his role in those events, especially in the decision for the removal of Rakosi. However, the work required this and I met Suslov.

Brezhnev took part in this meeting, too, but in fact, he was merely present, because only Suslov spoke during the whole talk. From time to time Leonid moved his thick eyebrows, but sat so immobile that it was difficult to gather what he was thinking about what was being said. I had met him for the first time at the 20th Congress in intervals between sessions (and then later, on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the October Revolution in November 1957), and from the time of that brief, chance meeting he had impressed me as a conceited, self-satisfied man. As soon as he was introduced to us he immediately brought the conversation around to himself and told us «in confidence» that he was engaged with «special weapons». From the tone in which he spoke and the expression of his face, he implied to us that he was the man in the Central Committee dealing with the problems of atomic weapons.

The 20th Congress elected Brezhnev an alternate member of the Presidium of the Central Committee, and about a year later, the Plenum of June 1957 of the Central Committee of the CPSU, which condemned and purged «the anti-party Molotov-Malenkov group», promoted Brezhnev from alternate to full membership of the Presidium. Apparently he was rewarded for the «merits» which he must have displayed in the elimination of Molotov, Malenkov and others from the leadership of the party.

After these events, up till 1960 I had to go many other times to Moscow, where I met the main leaders of the Soviet party but, just as before the 20th Congress, I never saw Brezhnev or heard him speak anywhere. He always remained or was kept in the background, «in reserve», you might say. After the inglorious end of Khrushchev, precisely this ponderous, stern-faced person was brought out of the shade in place of the renegade, in order to carry on the filthy work of the Khrushchevite mafia, but now without Khrushchev.

It seems that Brezhnev was brought to the head of the party and the Soviet social-imperialist state, not so much on account of his abilities, but as a *modus vivendi*, to balance and even up the opposing groups which were feuding and squabbling in the top Soviet leadership. But let us give him his due: he is a comedian only in his

eyebrows, while his work is tragic from start to finish. Ever since this Khrushchevite took power our Party has continually had its say about him and his aggressive, hostile, anti-Marxist work. But this is not the place to dwell at length on Brezhnev. Let us return to the meeting of December 1956.

At the start Suslov suggested that we should speak briefly about the problems we were going to discuss, especially about the historical aspect, while he gave us an exposition about the events in Hungary. He criticized Rakosi and Gerö, who, with their mistakes, had «caused great discontent among the people», while they left Nagy outside their control.

«Nagy and the Yugoslavs,» he continued, «have fought against socialism.»

«But why did they re-admit Nagy to the party?» I asked.

«He had been unjustly expelled, because his faults did not deserve such a punishment. Now, however, Kadar is following a correct course. In your press there have been some notes critical of Kadar, but it must be borne in mind that he should be supported because the Yugoslavs are fighting him.»

«We are not well acquainted with Kadar. We know that he was in prison and was with Imre Nagy.»

Replying to our complaint that we had not

been informed about the development of events in Hungary, Suslov said that the events took place without warning and there was no time for consultations.

«No consultations were held with the other parties, either. Only when we intervened for the second time we consulted the Chinese, while Khrushchev, Malenkov and Molotov went to Rumania and Czechoslovakia,» he said.

«How was time found to consult Tito over the appointment of Kadar, while we were not informed about anything?» I asked.

«We did not consult Tito about Kadar,» he said. «We simply told him that there was no longer any place for Nagy's government.»

«These are issues of principle,» I stressed. «It is essential to hold consultations, but they are not being held. The Consultative Political Council of the Warsaw Treaty, for example, has not met for a year.»

«A meeting had been set for January, while in those days, every day's delay would cause great bloodshed,» he replied.

Amongst other things I told him that the term which was now being used, the «criminal Rakosi-Gerö gang», seemed astonishing to us and we thought this did not help in uniting all the Hungarian communists.

«The mistakes of Rakosi created a grave si-

tuation and discontent among the people and the communists,» said Suslov.

We asked him to tell us concretely about the mistakes of Rakosi and Gerö, and Suslov listed a number of general things, by means of which he tried to lay the blame on them for all that had occurred. We demanded a concrete example, and he told us:

«For example, the question of Rajk, who was described as a spy without any documentary proof.»

«Were these things discussed with Rakosi? Was he given any advice?» I asked.

«Rakosi did not accept advice,» was the reply.

Likewise, we had opinions quite opposite to Suslov about the attitude towards Gomulka and his views.

«Gomulka removed the communists, the old loyal leaders and officers, and replaced them with others, who had been condemned by the dictatorship of the proletariat,» I told Suslov.

«He relies on the men whom he knows,» said Suslov. «Gomulka must be given time and then we can judge him.»

«But his views and activities can be judged very well already,» I objected. «How can you explain the anti-Soviet slogans he used when he came to power?!»

Suslov scowled and said quickly:

«It was not Gomulka who did these things and now he is stopping them.»

«But what about his stands and statements about the church, for example?»

Suslov went into a long rigmarole, «arguing» that these were «pre-election tactics», that Gomulka was «taking correct stands» towards the Soviet Union, the socialist camp, etc., etc. We parted still disagreeing with each other.

That same day we held the official talks with Khrushchev, Suslov and Ponomaryov. I opened the discussion by presenting the views of our Party in connection with the events in Hungary and Poland, as well as in connection with relations with Yugoslavia. Right at the start I said:

«Our delegation will express the views of the Central Committee of our Party on these matters frankly, even although on a number of issues we have differences with the Soviet leadership. These opinions, whether pleasant or otherwise,» I continued, «we shall state openly, as Marxist-Leninists, and discuss in a comradely way whether or not we are right, and if we are not right, we must be convinced why.»

In connection with Hungary, once again I stressed the lack of information and consultations over this painful problem of the socialist camp.

«We believe the Consultative Political Council of the Warsaw Treaty should have been called together in that situation,» I said. «At such moments, consultations are essential to co-ordinate

our actions and stands. This would demonstrate our strength and unity.»

I continued on the Hungarian problem and conveyed to them our impressions about the Hungarian party, Rakosi and Gerö. Here I stressed in particular, that the assessment which Kadar was making of them, calling them «a criminal gang» seemed to us astonishing. In our opinion the mistakes of Rakosi and Gerö were not of that magnitude to warrant such a description. In regard to the mistakes in the economic development of Hungary, we were not aware that Hungary was in such a serious situation as to justify the «revolt of the masses». Here the Soviets agreed with our opinion and admitted that the economic situation was not grave.

I went on to speak about the stand towards Nagy, Kadar, etc. In regard to Kadar, I expressed the distrust of our Party in him and added that, nevertheless, our stand towards him had been very prudent.

In regard to the events in Hungary, I underlined the role of the Yugoslav revisionists and expressed the disapproval of the Party of Labour of Albania that Tito had been placed in the role of arbiter in connection with those events.

In regard to relations with Yugoslavia, after outlining the history of the problem, as was decided in the Political Bureau, I declared in essence:

«The Yugoslavs have carried out hostile ac-

tivity against our Party and country for a long time and they are continuing to do so now. We believe that the Yugoslav leaders are anti-Marxists, and together with the agencies of American imperialism, are among the main inspirers of the events in Hungary. Our relations with Yugoslavia should be normalized only on a Marxist-Leninist road, without making any concessions such as have been made. The Party of Labour of Albania thinks that the Soviet Union should not fulfil the request for weapons, which Yugoslavia has made through Gosniak. We, for our part, will maintain only state and commercial relations, but will not in any way maintain party relations with the Yugoslavs.»

In particular, in the name of the Central Committee of our Party, I once again expressed our opinion that Khrushchev's visit to Belgrade in 1955 should not have been made without consuling the sister parties and without calling together the Information Bureau, which had condemned Tito as an anti-Marxist.

After I spoke, Nikita Khrushchev took the floor, and began by telling us how he had criticized the Yugoslav leaders over their stand towards our Party and country. Khrushchev posed as though he approved and supported our views and stands, but still did not fail to make criticism and give us «advice». Thus, speaking about my article published in «Pravda», he said:

«Tito was furious about that article. In the Presidium we thought about removing certain parts of it but you had said that no alterations should be made to it, and we published it as it was. However, the article could have been done in a different form.»

In regard to events in Hungary and Poland, Khrushchev continued to harp on his old tune, and apart from other things, «instructed» us that Kadar and Gomulka must be supported. In regard to the latter he said:

«Gomulka is in a difficult situation, because reaction is mobilizing itself. The things which are written in the press are not the views of the Central Committee, but the views of some who have risen against Gomulka. The situation there is gradually being stabilized. Now the elections which will be held in Poland are important. That is why we have to support Gomulka. To this end, Zhou Enlai is to go there and this will greatly assist to strengthen Gomulka's positions. We thought it would be better for the Chinese to speak and not us, because reaction is mobilized against us.»

And Zhou Enlai went to Poland in agreement with Khrushchev and to his aid.

Then Khrushchev «advised» us to keep our tempers with the Yugoslavs, and posing as a «great politician», told us of the difference amongst the Yugoslav leaders.

At the end of his speech Khrushchev tried to

«sweeten» the atmosphere by promising that they would study our economic demands and would help us.

So ended these talks in which we told them of our opinions and the Soviet leaders tried to avoid any responsibility for what had occurred. So ended the discussion of this tragic page in the history of the Hungarian and Polish peoples. The counter-revolution was suppressed, here with Soviet tanks, there with Polish tanks, but it was suppressed by the enemies of the revolution. However, the evil and the tragedy did not come to an end. Only the curtain came down, while behind the scenes Kadar, Gomulka and Khrushchev continued their crimes until they completely consummated their betrayal by restoring capitalism.

10. TEMPORARY RETREAT IN ORDER TO TAKE REVENGE

The Soviets demand «unity». The Moscow Meeting of 1957. Khrushchev's negotiations to bring Tito to the meeting. Khrushchev's short-lived «anger». Debate over the formula: «Headed by the Soviet Union.» Gomulka: «We are not dependent on the Soviet Union.» Mao Zedong: «Our camp must have a head because even a snake has a head.» Togliatti: «We must open new roads», «we are against a single leading centre», «we do not want to use Lenin's thesis 'the party of the new type'». Mao's sophistry: 80 per cent, 70 per cent and 10 per cent «Marxists». The Moscow Declaration and the Yugoslav reaction. Khrushchev disguises his betrayal under the name of Lenin.

The aim of the Khrushchevites, who were restoring capitalism in the Soviet Union, was to make it a great social-imperialist power, and hence, it had to be armed to the teeth, because the storm which they raised would not only destroy

the unity of the socialist camp but would also make the contradictions with American imperialism acute. The Khrushchevites knew that the United States of America had greater strength than the Soviet Union, both in the economy and in armaments.

The demagogic policy of the Khrushchevites about the «new epoch of peace» and «disarmament» was a policy to mislead the *gogos**. The United States of America and world capitalism took advantage of it to deepen the crisis of communism, to avoid the rapid onset of the economic and political crisis which was threatening America itself, and to consolidate their markets and alliances, and especially NATO. For their part, the Khrushchevites struggled for the consolidation of the Warsaw Treaty, to turn it into a strong Soviet means to shackle our countries. Under the disguise of «defence against NATO», they managed to turn the stationing of Soviet troops into a military occupation of many countries of the Warsaw Treaty.

In fact, the imperialist threat had been and still was real, but with the advent to power of the Khrushchevites, our countries were considered as battlefields outside the Soviet borders and our peoples as cannon-fodder for the Soviet revisionists. They tried to put the army, the

* innocents (French in the original).

economy, culture and everything under their control and direction. All the parties of the socialist countries fell into this Khrushchevite trap, with the exception of the Party of Labour of Albania.

However, friction, disagreements and quarrels would inevitably arise, even amongst those who followed and submitted to Khrushchev's line, all of them proceeding from unprincipled aims and an unprincipled policy. The bourgeoisie and international reaction fanned up these disagreements in order to deepen the splits within the «communist bloc».

Khrushchev and Co. saw this process and used all means and ways to restrict and isolate it.

To achieve their strategic aims, the Khrushchevites needed the «friendship» of all, especially of the parties and countries of the socialist camp, therefore, they used various tactics to «consolidate their relations», to smooth over the disagreements, to subjugate the others and establish their leadership over them.

Their method of operation in the service of their aims included meetings and contacts, almost always in Moscow, in order to make Moscow, if not *de jure*, at least *de facto*, the centre of international communism, in this way, always having the advantage of their bugging devices and being able to work on, and keep one or the other under control through their men.

It was clear that things were not going smoothly for the Khrushchevites. The Soviet Union had many different contradictions with Albania, China and even other countries of people's democracy. The line of «freedom» and «democracy» bombastically proclaimed at the 20th Congress, was now boomeranging back on the Soviet leadership itself. The ranks had begun to disintegrate. However, the Khrushchevites needed to preserve the political-ideological «unity» of the socialist camp and the international communist movement at all costs, at least in appearance. In this direction and for this aim, the 1957 Moscow Meeting was organized.

Khrushchev and Co. made feverish efforts not only to ensure that the League of Communists of Yugoslavia would take part in that meeting as a «party of a socialist country», but if possible also, to ensure that Tito would reach agreement with Khrushchev over the platform, the method of procedure and the conclusions of the meeting. In this way, the «unity» dreamed of and urgently sought by the Khrushchevites, would have looked more complete than ever. However, Tito was not one to be easily rounded up with Khrushchev's flock. Many letters were exchanged and several bilateral contacts were organized between the men of Khrushchev and Tito on the eve of the meeting, but just when it seemed

that an understanding had been reached, everything was upset and the gulf became even deeper. Each side wanted to exploit the meeting for its own aims: Khrushchev, to declare «unity», even with painful concessions to satisfy and draw in Tito, while the latter, to urge the others to openly and finally abandon Marxism-Leninism, the struggle against modern revisionism and any principled stand. Ponomaryov and Andropov went to Belgrade, engaged in free bargaining with Tito's representatives, displayed their readiness to retreat from many of their apparently principled former positions, but Tito from afar ordered:

«We shall come to the meeting, but only on condition that no declaration is published, because the international atmosphere will become tense and the imperialists will be angered and accuse us of 'communist menace'.

«We Yugoslavs cannot accept any kind of declaration, because our Western allies will think that we are linked with the socialist camp, and consequently might break off their close relations with Yugoslavia.

«We shall come to the meeting on condition that no mention will be made of the terms opportunism and revisionism there, because, otherwise, we are directly attacked.

«We shall come to the meeting on the condition that the policy of the imperialist powers is not

attacked, because this would not serve the policy of reducing tension,» etc., etc.

In other words, Tito wanted the communists of the world to get together in Moscow to drink tea and swap stories.

However, it was precisely the declaration that Khrushchev needed, a declaration which would confirm «unity» and carry the maximum number of signatures. The discussions came to an end. Tito decided not to go to Moscow. Khrushchev's anger erupted, the terms «were made strong», the smiles and pats on the back for the «Marxist, Comrade Tito», were replaced for a moment with the epithet of the «opportunist», who «has nothing at all to do with Leninism», etc., etc.

However, Khrushchev used these «strong terms» about the chief of Belgrade only in the corridors and chance contacts, whereas in meetings he did not say one word against «Comrade Tito». On the contrary, when he had to speak «against» revisionists and all those who expressed opposition to the Soviet Union, he mentioned only two corpses thrown on the rubbish heap, Nagy and Djilas.

He still hoped that Tito might come to Moscow to confirm the «unity of the 13» as he had promised a little earlier, in Bucharest. But Tito was suddenly «ill»!

«A diplomatic illness!» said Khrushchev

angrily, and asked us and the others what should be done in the situation when the Yugoslavs did not agree even to take part in the first meeting of the communist parties of socialist countries, let alone sign the declaration.

«We have told you our opinion of them long ago, and every day is proving that we were and are right,» we replied. «We should not retreat because the Yugoslavs do not want to come.»

«That is what we think, too,» Suslov told us. And the meeting was held without the 13th, the odd man out.

However, although the Yugoslav revisionists did not take part in the first meeting, the meeting of parties of the socialist countries, they were present at its proceedings, because they were represented by their ideological brothers, Gomulka and Co. They came out openly in favour of Tito's theses and demanded advance from Khrushchev and others in the direction of further corruption and disorganization.

«We do not agree that we should speak of 'the socialist camp headed by the Soviet Union',» declared Gomulka. «In practice we have given up the use of this term, in order to show that we are not dependent on the Soviet Union as in the time of Stalin.»

Soviet leaders themselves engaged in a cunning manoeuvre around this problem. In order

to demonstrate their alleged adherence to principles in relations with the other sister parties, they had «proposed» that the term «headed by the Soviet Union» should not be used, because allegedly we are all «equal». However, they made this proposal only tentatively, in order to sound out the others on this, because in essence they were not simply for the term «headed by...», but if possible «under the direction of the Soviet Union,» hence «dependent on the Soviet Union». This was what they intended and fought for, and time fully proved what the aims of the Khrushchevites were.

When Gomulka made his proposal at the meeting, the Soviet representatives scowled angrily and without coming out openly themselves first, urged the others to attack Gomulka.

A lengthy debate broke out around this problem. Although the opinion was being crystallized amongst us more and more clearly each day that the leadership of the Soviet Union was deviating from the road of socialism, we continued to defend the thesis «headed by the Soviet Union» for reasons of principle and tactics. We were well aware that in coming out against this expression, Gomulka and his supporters, in fact, wanted to reject openly and without hesitation everything proven good and valuable from the decades of experience of the Soviet Union led by

Lenin and Stalin, to reject the experience of the October Revolution and the socialist construction in the Soviet Union in the time of Stalin, and to deny the role which it was up to the Soviet Union to play for the triumph and progress of socialism in many countries.

In this way, the revisionists, Gomulka, Togliatti and others, added their voices to the furious attack which imperialism and reaction had unleashed in those years against the Soviet Union and the international communist movement.

To us, the defence of these important Marxist-Leninist achievements was an internationalist duty, therefore we strongly opposed Gomulka and the others. This was a matter of principle. On the other hand, the defence we made of the Soviet Union and the thesis «headed by the Soviet Union», both in 1957 and for two or three years after this, was one of the tactics of our Party to attack Khrushchevite modern revisionism itself.

Although Khrushchev and the others knew our views and stands, at that time we had not yet come out openly before all the parties against the revisionist line which they were crystallizing, therefore, by strongly opposing the revisionist theses of Tito, Gomulka, Togliatti and others in the eyes of all, at the same time, indirectly, we found the opportunity to attack the theses,

stands and actions of Khrushchev himself, which in essence were identical with those of Tito and Co.

For entirely different aims and reasons, alien to Marxism-Leninism, Ulbricht, Novotny, Zhivkov of course, Dej, etc., also attacked Gomulka. They were wooing the favour of the Soviet Union and Khrushchev and, to this end, they left their ideological brother in the minority.

From the place he sat Mao Zedong brought out his «arguments».

«Our camp must have a head, because even the snake has a head, and imperialism has a head,» he said. «I would not agree that China should be called the head of the camp,» Mao went on, «because we do not merit this honour and cannot maintain this role, we are still poor. We haven't even a quarter of a satellite, while the Soviet Union has two. Then, the Soviet Union deserves to be the head because it treats us well. See how freely we are speaking now. If Stalin were here, we would find it difficult to speak like this. When I met Stalin, before him I felt like a pupil in front of his teacher, while with Comrade Khrushchev we speak freely, like equal comrades.»

And as if this were not enough, he continued in his own style:

«With the criticism against the cult of the

individual, it seemed as if a heavy roof, which was pressing down on us and hindered us from understanding matters correctly, was lifted from us. Who lifted this roof from us, who made it easier for all of us to understand the cult of the individual correctly?!» asked the philosopher, who was silent for a moment, and there and then supplied the answer: «Comrade Khrushchev, and we thank him for this.»

This is how the «Marxist» Mao defended the thesis «headed by the Soviet Union» and he defended Khrushchev in the same way. However, at the same time, in order to avoid angering Gomulka, who was opposed to this thesis, Mao, as the equilibrist he was, added:

«Gomulka is a good comrade and must be supported and trusted!»

Very long debates were held, also, in connection with the stand towards modern revisionism.

Gomulka, in particular, supported by Ochab and Zambrowski, in the first meeting of the 12 parties of the socialist countries, and later Togliatti, in the second meeting of 68 parties, in which Tito's envoys also took part, were strongly opposed to the attack on modern revisionism, against defining it as the main danger in the international communist and workers' movement, because, as Ochab said, «with these formulations we alienated the wonderful and

valiant Yugoslav comrades, and now you are alienating us Poles, too.»

Palmiro Togliatti got up in the meeting and proclaimed his ultra-revisionist theses:

«We must go further with the line of the 20th Congress to turn the communist parties into broad mass parties, must open new roads, and bring out new slogans,» he said in essence. «Now we need great independence in working out slogans and forms of collaboration,» he continued, «therefore we are opposed to a single leading centre. This centre would not be advantageous to the development of the individuality of each party and to bringing the broad masses of catholics and others closer around us.»

Jacques Duclos, who was sitting beside me, could not contain himself:

«I am going to get up and attack him openly,» he said to me. «Do you hear the things he is saying, Comrade Enver?!»

«Yes,» I said to Duclos. «He is expressing here what he has been thinking and doing for a long time.»

«In 1945,» continued Togliatti, «we declared that we wanted to create a new party. We say a 'new party' and do not want to use Lenin's thesis, 'the party of the new type' because, if we were to put it in this way, this would mark a great theoretical and political error, would mean to create such a communist party, which would

break with the traditions of social-democracy. If we had built a party of the new type,» continued Togliatti, «we would have alienated the party from the masses of the people and we would never have created the situation we have today, when our party has become a great mass party.»

After these and other theses of Togliatti, tempers flared up. Jacques Duclos rose to speak:

«We listened carefully to Togliatti's speech,» he said among other things, «but we declare that we do not agree in the least with what Togliatti said. His views open the way to opportunism and revisionism.»

«Our parties have been and are hindered by sectarianism and dogmatism,» interjected Togliatti.

At one moment Mao Zedong got up to calm the tempers, speaking in his style of allegories and implications. He said:

«On every... human issue one must go into battle, but also towards conciliation. I have in mind the relations between comrades: when we have differences let us invite each other to talks. In Panmunjon we had negotiations with the Americans, in Vietnam with the French.»

After several phrases of this type, he came to the point:

«There are people,» he said, «who are 100 per cent Marxists, and others who are 80 per

cent, 70 per cent or 50 per cent, indeed there are some who may be only 10 per cent Marxists. We ought to talk even with those who are 10 per cent Marxists, because there are only advantages in this.»

He was silent for a moment, looked around the room as though a little lost, and continued:

«Why should we not gather, two or three of us, in a small room to talk things over? Why should we not talk, proceeding from the desire for unity? We have to act with both hands, with the one we must fight against those who make mistakes, and with the other we must make concessions.»

Suslov got up and was obliged to maintain a «principled» stand, to stress that the struggle against opportunism and revisionism is important, as is the struggle against dogmatism, but «revisionism constitutes the main danger, because it leads to splits, damages unity,» etc., etc.

The whole concern of the Soviet Khrushchevites was «to preserve unity», to keep the socialist countries and the communist parties of different countries in check, therefore if they «accepted» and «defended» a series of correct theses on this occasion, they did this, first of all, because they were compelled by the resolute struggle of the genuine Marxist-Leninists taking part in the meeting, but they did this, also, for the sake of their strategic plan. They retreated,

held back temporarily, in order to gather strength and take their revisionist revenge in the future.

Our delegation had its Marxist-Leninist say about all the problems raised at the meeting, especially in regard to the struggle against modern revisionism, against American imperialism as the main threat to peace and the peoples, the roads of transition to socialism, the preservation of the Marxist-Leninist unity in the communist and workers' movement and the defence of the experience of the October Revolution and the socialist order, etc.

In the face of the struggle which was waged in the meeting against opportunist views on the problems discussed, the revisionists retreated. As a result, the 1957 Moscow Declaration, in general, was a good document.

At this meeting, revisionism, right opportunism, was defined as the main danger in the international communist and workers' movement.

This infuriated the Yugoslavs. They had held long debates with Khrushchev's men before the meeting, especially over this thesis.

«What are you worrying about?» said the Khrushchevites, trying to calm them. «Your name is not mentioned. We shall speak about revisionism in general, without any definition.»

«Yes,» replied the Yugoslavs, «but look at the articles by Enver Hoxha, which you publish even in 'Pravda'! When Enver Hoxha speaks

against revisionism, he has us in mind and mentions us by name. But even when we are not mentioned by name, everybody understands that we are implied, and that is why we do not take part in the meeting or sign the declaration of parties of socialist countries.»

And they did not sign this declaration.

Mao Zedong expressed his deep regret:

«They are not going to sign the 12 parties declaration,» he said. «As a rule, there ought to be 13 countries, but the Yugoslav comrades stood aside. We cannot force them. They are not going to sign. I say that in ten years' time they will sign the declaration.»[1]

The declaration which was worked out jointly and adopted at the meeting, summed up the experience of the international communist movement, defended the universal laws of the socialist revolution and socialist construction, and defined a series of common tasks for the communist and workers' parties, as well as the norms of relations among them.

Thus the adoption of the declaration was a victory for the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist forces. Over all, it constituted a correct program

1 Mao was wrong only in the time he set. In fact, not ten years, but twenty years later a «declaration» was signed with the Yugoslavs in Beijing. The Maoists signed their submission to Tito (Author's note).

of joint struggle for the coming battles against imperialism and revisionism.

Nevertheless, although the modern revisionists were checked, and temporarily drew in their horns, they did not cease their evil work and had no intention of doing so. Khrushchev was to exploit the Moscow Meeting of 1957 as a means to prepare the terrain for the implementation of the diabolical anti-communist plan which he was to carry further.

He did his utmost to disguise his betrayal under the name of Lenin and, therefore, he made use of pseudo-Leninist phraseology, mobilized all the liberal pseudo-philosophers, who were awaiting the moment to adapt to revisionist lines (which they drew from the old social-democratic arsenal) Leninist disguises appropriate to the modern situation of the economic development of «our epoch of the superiority of socialism» and «the attainment, especially in the Soviet Union, of the stage of the construction of communism.»

Khrushchevism distorted Marxism-Leninism, considered it outdated, therefore it was to consider the phase of the dictatorship of the proletariat outdated, too, and would announce its replacement with the «state of the entire people». Consistent in his course of betrayal, Khrushchev, likewise, was to replace the party of the proletariat with the «party of the entire people». Consequently, according to Khrushchev, the Soviet

Union was going over to «a higher phase, communism», at a time when, in reality, that country was still backward in industry and agriculture and its markets were empty. «The Soviet Union was going over to the phase of communism» only in the declarations of the Khrushchevites, because the reality testified to the opposite. Above all, that country especially needed a strong Marxist-Leninist party which would undertake the education of the Soviet man and the Soviet society which was degenerating.

This liberal bluff was trumpeted by Khrushchev and his theoreticians from daylight to dark. In the press, the radio and the whole of the Soviet propaganda, a great hullabaloo was made in this direction; in the streets, on the façades of buildings and the industrial projects, they put placards written in big letters, *«Dognat i peregnat S.SH.A.»** From the tribunes of meetings, the traitor shouted: «We have overtaken America in this or that sector, we shall outstrip it in agriculture (and even set the dates), we are going to bury capitalism,» etc. The revisionist theories were developed, elaborated and spread by the traitorous leaderships of pseudo-Marxist parties and a motley crowd of pseudo-Marxist philosophers, Trotskyites like Serven, Garaudy, Krivin, Fischer, and others, in all the capitalist countries,

* Overtake and outstrip the USA (Russian in the original).

who had been lurking in the ranks of the communist parties, and who sprang up as Khrushchevite revisionists like mushrooms after the rain.

The genuine communists were taken by surprise. In this direction, the unhealthy anti-Marxist sentimentality, which prevented them from raising their voices against their parties which were degenerating, against old leaders who were betraying, against the Soviet Union, which they loved so much, from realizing the catastrophe for which the homeland of Lenin and Stalin was heading, played a negative role.

The capitalist bourgeoisie helped to deepen this confusion as much as possible with all its forces and economic and propaganda means.

In this way, Khrushchev's cunning plan was developed in detail through intrigues, pressure, demagogy, blackmail, false accusations and violation of the treaties, agreements and accords, which had existed between the Soviet Union and China, as well as between the Soviet Union and Albania, until the Khrushchevites arrived at the «famous» Bucharest Meeting.

11. «THE CARROT» AND «THE STICK»

Our Party and Government delegation goes to the Soviet Union. Khrushchev's manoeuvres: the «carrot» in evidence — the Soviet government converts the credits into grants. Leningrad: Pospyelov and Kozlov censor our speeches. «We should not mention the Yugoslavs.» Our official talk with Khrushchev and others. Khrushchev gets angry: «You want to take us back to Stalin's course», «Tito and Rankovic are better than Kardelj and Popovic. Tempo is an ass..., is unstable.» A chance meeting with the Yugoslav ambassador in Moscow, Micunovic. Khrushchev's visit to Albania, May 1959. Khrushchev and Malinovsky ask us for military bases: «We shall control the whole Mediterranean from the Bosporus to Gibraltar.» The adviser on the extermination of dogs. The Soviet Embassy in Tirana, a centre of the KGB.

Our Party and its Central Committee saw the tragic course on which the Khrushchevites were leading the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, as well as the directions which events were taking, and therefore they were in a great

dilemma. The steps that we took had to be carefully measured: we should not be hasty, but neither must we go to sleep. Foreseeing difficult moments, we were greatly interested in strengthening the situation within the country and building up and further developing the economy and strengthening the army. In the first place and above all, we had to keep the Party on the rails of Marxism-Leninism, to fight the penetration of revisionism, and wage this fight by persistently defending the Leninist norms and protecting the unity in the leadership and in the Party. This was the main guarantee to keep us immune from Titoism and Khrushchevism. The Khrushchevites were keeping up their disguise and had no way to attack us openly in this field. Quite correctly, we defended the Soviet Union when all were attacking it. As I have written above, this was another important question of principle and, at the same time, our tactic against the Khrushchevites, who did not find weak spots in our stands.

They could not or did not want to exacerbate the contradictions with us. Perhaps, underrating the strength of our Party and the vitality of the Albanian people, they thought that they would strangle us because we were small, or that they would take the fortress from within by preparing their agency (as time showed, they had acted in this direction with Liri Belishova, Maqo

Çomo, Panajot Plaku, Beqir Balluku, Petrit Dume, Hito Çako, and other collaborators and conspirators, whom we uncovered later). But irrespective of their efforts to «be on good terms» with us and to avoid hot-tempered actions, both they and we saw that the gulf was widening.

As before, the Yugoslav question was one of the main issues that divided us from the Khrushchevites, who did everything in their power to have us reconcile ourselves to the Yugoslav revisionists. Khrushchev wanted our reconciliation with them, because by means of this reconciliation he wanted us to relinquish our resolute Marxist-Leninist course, to relinquish any correct and principled stand on the internal and international planes, that is, to submit to the Khrushchevite line.

We had long understood this and did not give any ground in the face of the demagogy, the blackmail and the threats of Khrushchev. Apart from the instances which I related above, our meeting with the Soviet leadership in Moscow in April 1957 is typical in this direction. It was the period after the events in Hungary and Poland and after the plenum of the Central Committee of our Party, held in February 1957.

At this plenum, we once again made a profound analysis of the bitter events in Hungary and in Poland. We openly expressed our views about the tense international situation at this

period, spoke about the true causes of the disturbances which were occurring in the socialist camp, hit hard at the manoeuvres of imperialism, headed by American imperialism, exposed modern revisionism, and expressed and defended the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism. The whole report, which I delivered at this plenum on behalf of the Political Bureau, opposed many of the theses of the 20th Congress, without mentioning it by name. Immediately after the plenum we made this report public, printed it in «Zëri i popullit» and broadcast it over the radio. Without doubt this infuriated the Khrushchevites. They were unable to oppose our principled theses and stands openly, because they were trying to preserve their disguise. Inwardly, however, they were seething. It was necessary to «settle matters» with us, to clamp down on us. They asked us to send a top level delegation to Moscow in the context of «strengthening our friendship».

We left for the Soviet Union in April 1957. The delegation consisted of Mehmet Shehu, Gogo Nushi, Rita Marko, Ramiz Alia, Spiro Koleka, Xhafer Spahiu, Behar Shtylla, me and others. Great astonishment: as soon as the ship on which we were travelling entered the territorial waters of the Soviet Union, a group of Soviet warships appeared, surrounded us, greeted us with flags, and escorted us to Odessa. The deputy prime mi-

nister of the Ukraine, the deputy foreign minister of the Soviet Union, Patolichev, leaders of the party and the state of Odessa, and hundreds of people with flags and flowers had come to the port to welcome us. We stayed one day in Odessa, looked around the city, they took us to the ballet and that night we left by train for Moscow. At the Kiev station Kirichenko, Kalchenko (the prime minister of the Ukraine) and others were awaiting us. We had a cordial talk with them, they wished us a good trip and we went on our way. The atmosphere at the «Kievsky» railway station in Moscow was even warmer. Thousands and thousands of Moscovites, carrying flowers and flags, had turned out to welcome the arrival of the top level Albanian delegation and to express their sincere love and respect for our people, our Party and our country. I have felt this special love and respect of the Soviet people for us, built up in the years when Stalin was alive, whenever I have had the opportunity to come into contact with the rank-and-file Soviet people in industrial enterprises, collective farms, and the cultural, artistic and scientific centres, which I have visited. In our Party and people the ordinary Soviet people saw their true and sincere friends, saw a party and a people which whole-heartedly loved the Soviet Union and defended it with all their might, and which loved and honoured the names of Lenin and Stalin.

«Comrade Enver,» said Patolichev, «at this station we have welcomed other top level representatives of people's democracies, but a welcome like this, which the Soviet people are putting on for you, I have never seen before.»

Khrushchev, Bulganin, members of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the party, members of the government of the USSR, etc., were on the platform to welcome us. We shook hands and embraced them, and although their expressions of joy came nowhere near and could not be compared with those of the people, who continued to cheer round about us, still we noticed that this time the welcome of the Soviet leaders was several degrees warmer than on other occasions. Both at the station and at the reception to welcome us, they were unsparing with their flattering words.

«We are proud of the friendship we have with you; your Party is a young party but it has shown itself to be very mature; you are playing a very great role...» Khrushchev, Bulganin, Pospyelov and the others hastened to declare.

Very quickly we realized that this was the «carrot». They would bring out the stick a little later.

«We must assist you in a more organized way. We have given you something, but we have not thought well enough about what we have

done,» said Khrushchev, trying to sweeten us up at the first *priyom,* and here, too, he did not forget to repeat his great «desire» that Albania should become an «example for the countries of Asia and Africa, for Greece and Italy.»

After stressing several times «we shall assist you more» and «better», Khrushchev considered it appropriate to test the effect of his promises there and then.

«We roared with laughter in the Presidium,» he said, «when we read Tito's speech at Pula. He abused Comrade Enver there, but Tito's eyes have been blinded.»

«We immediately gave him the reply he deserved,» I said.

«Of course, of course,» said Khrushchev and his smile faded, «but we must restrain our legitimate anger and show ourselves generous towards them, for the sake of the peoples of Yugoslavia and the unity of the camp.

«We shall go among the people and speak to them,» he continued, «we must show ourselves to be reasonable. We should not mention the Yugoslavs by name, but should speak about revisionism, in general, as a phenomenon...»

It was the welcoming reception and I did not oppose him. However, the Yugoslav problem was to pursue us everywhere.

Two days later we went to Leningrad. Kozlov welcomed us with the friendliest words:

«I am crazy about Albania,» he told us. «I have become a great admirer of your country!» (It was this same Kozlov who, two or three years later, in the unforgettable events of Bucharest and Moscow, was to prove that he was such a great «admirer» of our country, that, apart from anything else, he threatened us with the loss of the freedom and independence of the Homeland, saying to us: «One atomic bomb dropped by the Americans would be enough to snuff out Albania and its population.»)

Amongst others we visited the «Lenin» machine-building plant, a big plant of historic importance. There, in the grave conditions of Czarism, Lenin had set up the first communist groups and had many times delivered speeches to the workers.

«No other foreign delegation has visited this plant,» said Pospyelov, who accompanied us on this visit.

The workers had not been prepared, because our visit was a spontaneous one, but they gave us a really warm welcome. One worker, who worked on a turbine for our hydro-power station on the Mat River, gave us some tools which we were to give as a souvenir to an Albanian worker. The workers of the plant to whom we talked, told us that they knew Albania, that they nurtured a special love for the Albanian people and considered them an heroic people, etc.

They immediately organized a rally at the plant, in which 4,000-5,000 people took part, and asked me to speak. I spoke and expressed the profound love and gratitude which the Albanian people and the Party of Labour of Albania nurtured for them and the whole Soviet people. I told them about the struggle of our people and Party against imperialist and revisionist enemies. These enemies were real, had names, had engaged in concrete activities against us. I had to speak openly to the workers, although this was not going to please Khrushchev. At the first reception he had given us his «orientation» on the question of Yugoslavia. But neither I nor my comrades would have had a clear conscience if we had not spoken out, therefore in my speech I told the workers that the Yugoslav leaders were anti-Marxists and chauvinists, that they had done hostile work, etc.

The workers listened to me attentively and cheered with great enthusiasm. However, after the meeting, Pospyelov said to me:

«I think we should tidy up the part about Yugoslavia a little, because it seems to me a bit too hard-hitting.»

«There is nothing exaggerated,» I said.

«Tomorrow your speech will be published in the press,» said Pospyelov. «The Yugoslavs will be very angry with us.»

«It's my speech. You are in order,» I said to him.

«Comrade Enver, you must understand us,» insisted Pospyelov. «Tito says that it is we who incite you to speak openly against them like this. We must soften that bit.»

This dialogue took place in one of the rooms of the «Kirov» Opera Theatre in Leningrad. It was time for the performance to begin, the people were waiting for us to enter the hall.

«Let us postpone this discussion till after the performance,» I said. «Time is getting on.»

«We'll postpone the beginning of the performance,» he insisted, «I'll tell the comrades.»

We argued a bit and in the end we reached a «compromise»: the word «enemy» would be replaced with «anti-Marxist».

The revisionists were jumping for joy as if they had gained the heavens. After a little reflection, Kozlov wanted another «concession»:

«'Anti-Marxist' does not sound too good either,» he said, «how about if we alter it to 'non-Marxist'.»

«All right, then,» I said in an ironical tone. «Do as you wish!»

«Let us go out to the foyer of the theatre,» Kozlov then proposed, and we circled once or twice among the people, so that Kozlov could greet them. Meanwhile the others went to make the «correction» and Ramiz accompanied them.

However, when Ramiz returned, he told me that they had removed all I had said about the Yugoslavs. I instructed him to tell them that we insisted on our opinions, but Khrushchev's men replied:

«It is impossible to make any change now, because we would have to inform the comrades at the top again in order to do such a thing!»

In one of the intervals of the performance I expressed our dissatisfaction to Pospyelov.

«The truth is that they are what you say,» he told me, «but we must not be hasty, because the time will come. . .»

Thus, what I said at the meeting in connection with Yugoslavia, came out differently in «Pravda». Mehmet, too, who had gone to Tashkent with a part of the delegation, was subjected to the same pressures and «operations» on his speeches.

Although the Soviet leaders were very well aware of our stand towards the Yugoslav revisionists, we had decided in advance to raise this problem in Moscow again and to tell Khrushchev and company why we disagreed with them. We met on April 15. Mehmet, Gogo, Ramiz, Spiro, Rita and I were at the talks from our side; from the Soviet side there were Khrushchev, Bulganin, Suslov, Ponomaryov, as well as Andropov. The latter, following the disturbances which occurred in Hungary, was now no longer an am-

bassador, but a top functionary in the apparatus of the Central Committee of the party, I think a director or vice-director in the sector for relations with the parties of socialist countries.

Right from the outset, I told Khrushchev and his associates that I would speak mainly about the Yugoslav problem.

«We have discussed these matters continually in our Party,» I said amongst other things, «and have done our utmost to be as patient, cool-headed and prudent as possible in our opinions and actions towards the Yugoslav leadership.

«For their part, the Yugoslav leaders have gone on in the same old way. I do not intend to go over all the bitter history of our relations with them over 14 years, because you know about it, but I want to stress that, even to this day, the Yugoslav leadership is continuing its hostile secret activities against us and permanently maintains a provocative stand.

«We believe that these persistent stands on the part of the Yugoslav leadership, and especially on the part of their legation in Tirana,» I continued, «are intended to completely destroy relations with us in order to put us in a difficult position in regard to our friends, on the pretext that 'we have achieved good relations with all the other parties, while it is not possible to reach agreement with the Albanians'.»

I went on to tell them of new facts in con-

nection with a number of activities of the minister and the secretary of the Yugoslav legation in Tirana, spoke about the underhand work they were doing to organize anti-party elements and activate them against our Party and people and told them of our efforts to make them stop their anti-Albanian activity.

«These activities cannot be done on their personal initiative,» I told Khrushchev, «but are done on the orders of the top Yugoslav leadership. This is the conclusion we have drawn from their actions.»

Further on, I raised the problem of the harmful activity which the Yugoslav leaders continued to carry out in Kosova.

«This is a delicate and important question for us,» I said, «because they are not only organizing intense activity against our country from Kosova, but are also trying to liquidate the Albanian population of Kosova, by displacing them en masse to Turkey and other countries.»

After speaking in detail about the efforts of the staff of the Yugoslav legation in Tirana to organize the internal enemies of our Party and people, about the plot they had tried to organize in the Tirana Conference in April 1956, and about the subsequent hostile activity with Tuk Jakova, Dali Ndreu, Liri Gega, etc., I pointed out:

«All these facts and others, of which we have ample, have convinced us that, to this very day,

the Yugoslav leadership has never given up its aim of overthrowing the people's power in Albania. Thus, the Yugoslav revisionists are a danger, not only to our country but also to all the other socialist countries because, as they themselves have declared and as their activity towards us confirms, they are not reconciled to our socialist system, are opposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat and have totally abandoned Marxism-Leninism.

«We have always wanted to have good relations with Yugoslavia,» I continued, «but to put it bluntly, we do not trust the Yugoslav leaders, because they speak against the social system in our countries and are opposed to the foundations of Marxism-Leninism. In all their propaganda, they do not say one word against imperialism, on the contrary, have joined the chorus of the Western powers against us. In 14 years, we have not seen the Yugoslav leadership make the slightest change that would make us think it has understood any of its grave mistakes and deviations, which have long been under attack. Therefore, we cannot put any trust in this leadership.

«But what stand are we to maintain towards it?» I continued. «We shall keep our temper, we shall be patient and vigilant. But there is a limit to patience. We are not going to take any step which would damage the interests of socialism and Marxism-Leninism, we are not going to wage

war on them and neither will we interfere in the internal affairs of Yugoslavia. We are not and never have been for such actions, but we consider it our permanent duty to defend our correct ideological and political line and to unceasingly expose opportunism and revisionism.

«These were the things I had to tell you,» I said in conclusion. «In regard to our political situation, it is very good. The people stand firmly united around the Party and have mobilized themselves in the work to implement its line. That is all I have to say.»

Khrushchev, who up till now had listened in silence to what I presented, his face flushing red and turning pale alternately, although he managed to maintain his «aplomb», began to speak. Apparently he wanted to show us that «one can remain silent» even when one does not agree with what one's counter-part is saying.

«I wanted to stress our opinion,» he began. «We are in complete agreement with you and support you.»

Immendiately after this phrase, however, Khrushchev showed us how they «supported» us:

«We thought that this party meeting would end more quickly and had no idea that you would present matters in this way.

«You are somewhat touchy in your view of relations with Yugoslavia,» he continued. «When you speak, you present the question of relations

with Yugoslavia as hopeless. The way you speak about the Yugoslav leadership implies that this leadership has betrayed, that it is completely off the rails, that nothing can be done with it, and therefore we should break off relations. I do not think that it has betrayed, but it is true that it has slipped seriously from the course of Marxism-Leninism. According to you, we ought to return to what Stalin did, which caused all these things we know about. If we take things as you present them, it turns out that Yugoslavia is against the Soviet Union, in the first place, and also against you and the others. When I listen to you speaking I see that you are seething with anger against them! The Italians, Greeks and Turks are no better than the Yugoslavs. I would like to ask you: With whom have you the best relations?»

«We have no relations with the Greeks and the Turks,» I replied.

«Let us examine how the Yugoslavs behave towards us,» he continued. «They attack us more than the Greeks, the Turks and the Italians! But there is something specific, proletarian, about Yugoslavia. Hence, can we break off relations with Yugoslavia?»

«We do not say this,» I replied.

«You did not say it but from your words it is obvious that you think it. Certainly Yugoslavia will not become the cause of a war against our camp, like Germany, Italy or any other country.

Do you consider Yugoslavia as the enemy number one?!» he asked me.

«We are not speaking about Yugoslavia. We are speaking about the revisionist activity of the Yugoslav leaders,» I said. «What are we to do after those things which they hatch up against us?»

«Try to neutralize their work. What else can you do? Are you going to war with them?» he asked me again.

«No, we have not made war on them and we are not going to do so. But if the Yugoslav minister goes tomorrow to photograph military objects, then what are we to do?»

«Take the film!» answered Khrushchev.

«They will use such a measure as a pretext to break off relations and put the blame on us,» I said.

«Then what do you want from us, Comrade Enver?» he said angrily. «Our views differ from yours and we are unable to advise you! I do not understand you, Comrade Hoxha! Adenauer and Kishi are no better than Tito, but nevertheless, we are doing everything in our power for rapprochement with them. Do you think we are wrong?»

«This is not the same issue,» I replied. «When there is talk about Tito, the improvement of relations on the party road is implied, while he is an

anti-Marxist. However, the Yugoslav leadership is not correct even in state relations. What stand are we to adopt, if the Yugoslavs continue to hatch up plots against us?»

«Comrade Hoxha,» shouted Khrushchev angrily, «you are constantly interrupting me. I listened to you for an hour without interrupting you once, while you do not allow me to speak even for a few minutes, but interrupt me continually! I have nothing more to say!» he declared and stood up.

«We have come to exhange opinions,» I said. «Then, as soon as you express an idea, you ask my opinion. Are you annoyed that I reply to you?!»

«I have told you and I am telling you again: I listened to you for an hour, Comrade Hoxha, while you did not listen to me even for a quarter of an hour but interrupted me again and again! You want to build your policy on sentiments. You say there is no difference between Tito, Kardelj, Rankovic, Popovic, and so on! As we have told you previously, they are people and differ from one another. The Yugoslavs say that they are all of the same opinion, but we say otherwise: Tito and Rankovic maintain a different, more reasonable, more approachable stand towards us, while Kardelj and Popovic are totally hostile towards us. Tempo is an ass..., is unstable. Let us take Eisenhower and Dulles. They are both reactionaries, but we must not lump the two of them together. Dulles

is a savage war-monger, while Eisenhower is more human.

«We told you at the first meeting: we are not going to attack anyone and not going to provoke any attack. Our attacks and counter-attacks must be made in such a way as to ensure that they are in favour of rapprochement and not alienation.

«We have asked Zhou Enlai to become the intermediary to arrange a meeting between our parties in which the Yugoslavs will take part.[1] He was pleased to undertake this task. Such a meeting can be held. The Yugoslavs have agreed to it. But it should not be thought that everything will be achieved at such a meeting. However, with opinions like yours, why should we go to such a meeting?! I do not understand what you are aiming at, Comrade Enver! Are you trying to convince us that we are not right?! Have you come here to convince us that we, too, should adopt the same stand as you towards Yugoslavia? No, we know what we are doing! Do you want to convince us that your line is right?! This does not lead to any good solution and is not in the

1 The reference is to Khrushchev's efforts, in collaboration with the Chinese leadership, to organize a meeting of all the communist parties of socialist countries in which Tito was to take part, too. This meeting was organized in Moscow in November 1957, but despite the efforts of Khrushchev and Mao Zedong, the Yugoslavs did not take part in it. For more details see this volume pp. 326-329.

interest of our camp. In connection with the counter-revolution in Hungary we have considered the stand of the Party of Labour of Albania correct, but your tactic in connection with Yugoslavia is wrong. I had thought that you should meet Micunovic (the Yugoslav ambassador in Moscow), not to exacerbate relations but to improve them. However, seeing the way you treat the problem, I doubt that anything will emerge from it. You talk about the provocations of the Yugoslav minister in Tirana. In our country, too, the Yugoslav minister has gone in a demonstrative way to photograph military objects. Our militiaman took his camera and bid him good day!

«Let me repeat: we shall follow the line of improving both state relations and party relations with Yugoslavia. Whether or not we achieve it, that is another matter, but the fact is that we shall have a clear conscience and will serve our party and all the other parties well. We must not make matters worse. The Rumanian comrades are right in describing you in 'Scînteia' as 'quarrelsome'.»

«We are opposed not only to this grave insult, but also to the spirit in which a sister party, such as that of Rumania, deals with this problem in its central organ,» I told Khrushchev. «To be quarrelsome means that you make unprincipled attacks. We have never acted with anyone in this way. 'Scînteia' itself and those who wrote that

article are inciting unjust and unprincipled actions. We have our criticisms and reservations about many stands of the Polish comrades, too, but we have not criticized them in the press, because we do not want to become inciters of quarrels and splits. We have had and still have criticisms of the Italians, and certain stands of the Rumanian comrades themselves. But we have displayed prudence, have not criticized them in the press, because we do not want to settle the problems outside the norms and rules governing relations between sister parties.»

Having received his answer for his «agreement» with «Scînteia», Khrushchev continued, but in a somewhat lower tone:

«Take things quietly, comrades, always quietly, and we shall triumph. Do you know what Stalin used to tell us?» he continued. «'Before we take decisions we should take a cold shower, as the Romans did.' This is what Stalin advised us to do, but he never took a shower himself. Let us do what Stalin did not do!»

Having said these things, he was silent for a moment and then launched off into his accusations again:

«You do not take a shower before taking decisions, either,» he said. «You condemned Dali Ndreu and Liri Gega. We consider this action of yours a grave mistake, very grave.»

«We have discussed the question of these

agents on another occasion,» I said. «Nevertheless, if you wish, I can give you endless details about their anti-party and anti-Albanian activity. They have acted continually to the detriment of our country.»

«Nevertheless, nevertheless!» shouted Khrushchev. «They should not have been condemned so severely. The Yugoslavs are furious.»

«Of course! They were their loyal agents,» I said, and I could see that Khrushchev had been just as infuriated by the verdict of our court as the Yugoslavs were.

«When we heard what you intended to do we sent an urgent radiogram to our ambassador in Tirana, Krylov. We told him that the decision of your court must be annulled without fail. Apparently, you did not listen to him. That order was ours.»

«I am hearing this for the first time and I am astonished that you could have given such an order,» I said, trying to control my anger. «However, you ought to know that during the trial the criminal activity of these dangerous agents was proved to the full. Our people would not pardon a soft stand towards them. We do not pat enemies on the head, but give them what they deserve, according to the laws for which the people have voted.»

Khrushchev was squirming in his seat.

«After Tito's speech at Pula,» put in Ponomaryov, «we sent a radiogram to Krylov, that he should tell you to keep cool in your reply, that we would publish an article and it should not appear as an organized action. We also told him what you should do about Dali Ndreu and Liri Gega.»

«He told us about the article,» I replied, «but we could not leave matters without replying to Tito, and therefore we wrote it. As for Dali Ndreu and Liri Gega, I know that your ambassador asked us after we arrested them and we told Krylov about the activity of those agents. He did not mention any kind of order, and it was just as well he did not. However, even if he had told us about it, we could never come out against the decision of the people's court.»

Turning to his comrades, Khrushchev said: «Our ambassador has not carried out his task. That action should have been stopped.»

This individual always openly took our enemies under his protection, imagining Albania as a country in which his orders, and not the laws of our state, had to be applied. I remember that another time he said to me:

«I have received a letter from a person called Panajot Plaku, in which he asked me to help him.»

«Do you know this man?» I asked him. (I knew that he was well acquainted with the traitor and agent of the Yugoslavs, Panajot Plaku,

a fugitive in Yugoslavia, who wanted to go to the Soviet Union.)

«No,» replied Khrushchev, «no, I do not know him.»

He was lying.

«He is a traitor,» I said, «and if you accept him in your country we shall break off our friendship with you. If you admit him you must hand him over to us to hang him publicly.»

«You are like Stalin who killed people,» said Khrushchev.

«Stalin killed traitors, and we kill them, too,» I added.

Since there was nothing else he could do, he retreated. He still hoped to make us submit by using other ways and means. After pouring out all he had to say, he fell silent, laid his hands on the table, softened his stern tone and began his «advice» again.

The tactic of the «stick» was finished. At the discussion table Khrushchev again resorted to the «carrot».

«You must understand us, comrades,» he said, «we speak in this way only with you, because we love you greatly, you are close to our hearts,» etc., etc. And after all this he made a gesture of «generosity»: he excused us from repaying the credits, which the Soviet Union had provided for our country up to the end of 1955 for its economic and cultural development. Of

course, we thanked them, thanked the Soviet working class and the fraternal Soviet people, in the first place, for this aid which they gave a small, but valiant, industrious and indomitable country. However, we all clearly understood what «motives» lay behind this «generosity» of Khrushchev. He wanted to «smooth us over», to relieve the tense atmosphere which had been created during the talk, to some extent, wanted to bribe us with this «aid,» which to Khrushchev was not aid but charity, a bait which he threw us to deceive us and make us submit to him. However, he was soon to be convinced that we were the sort of people who would even accept to eat grass but would never bend the knee to him or any other traitor.

A few days after this «generous» gesture, Khrushchev also invited Micunovic to a big dinner for our delegation. He saw him standing somewhat apart and called to him:

«Come over here! Why do you stand so far off?!»

He introduced us and laughing said to us:

«Try to understand each other!» And off he went, glass in hand, leaving us «to understand each other». We quarrelled.

I reeled off to Micunovic all the things I had told Khrushchev at the meeting and said to him:

«We have been and are ready to improve our state relations and, for our part, have made

every effort, but you must give up your anti-Albanian activity once and for all.»

«You call us revisionists,» said Micunovic. «How can you have relations with revisionists?»

«No,» I said, «we shall never have relations with revisionists, but I am speaking about state relations. We can and should have such relations. In regard to the ideological contradictions which exist between us, you must understand clearly that we will never give up the struggle against opportunism and the revision of Marxism-Leninism.»

«When you speak of revisionism you have us in mind,» said Micunovic.

«That is true,» I said, «whether or not we mention Yugoslavia, the reality is that we are referring to you, too.»

Micunovic stuck to his point of view. The debate was becoming heated. Watching us from a distance, Khrushchev sensed the mounting tension and rejoined us.

Micunovic began to repeat to him what he had said to me previously, and continued to make accusations against us. However, at that dinner we had Khrushchev «on our side».

«When Tito was in Corfù,» he said to Micunovic, «the King of Greece said to him: 'Well, shall we divide up Albania?' Tito did not reply, while the Queen pointed out that they should not talk about such things.»

Micunovic lost his head and said:

«That was only a joke.»

«Such jokes should never be made, especially with the monarcho-fascists, who have been claiming Southern Albania throughout their existence. And you have made similar 'jokes' before this too,» I told him. «We have a document of Boris Kidric in which he has included Albania as the 7th republic of Yugoslavia.»

«This was something done by one individual,» replied Micunovic.

«One individual, true, but he was a member of the Political Bureau of your party and chairman of the State Planning Commission,» said Mehmet.

This was too much for Micunovic and he walked away. Khrushchev took me by the arm and asked me:

«How did this come about? Did you quarrel again?»

«How else could it go? Only badly, as with the revisionists.»

«You Albanians astound me,» he said. «You are stubborn.»

«No,» I said, «we are Marxists.»

We parted displeased with each other. But Khrushchev was versatile in his scheming. As I have said, sometimes he softened the situation with Tito, sometimes he exacerbated it. When things were tense with Tito he was gentle with

us. I remember when Khrushchev spoke at the 7th Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party, he attacked Tito in strong terms and everyone applauded him. When we came out at the interval, all the heads of the delegations went to a room to drink coffee. There Khrushchev said:

«And for all I said about Tito, Comrade Enver Hoxha is still not satisfied.»

«You are right,» I said, «Tito must be exposed more vigorously and ceaselessly.»

However, it was not always like this. Before Khrushchev came to visit Albania in May 1959, the Soviet leadership sent us a radiogram in which it informed us that «for understandable reasons he will not touch on the Yugoslav question in his speeches and hopes that in their speeches the Albanian friends will bear this properly in mind.»

This was a condition which they imposed on us and they were awaiting our reply. We discussed this problem at length in the Political Bureau, where all of us expressed our regret and anger over such a visit with conditions and made a balance of the benefits and evils which would result from our acceptance or non-acceptance of Khrushchev's condition. We knew that the Yugoslavs and all reaction would rub their hands and declare:

«See, Khrushchev went to Albania and shut the Albanians' mouths. And where? In their own home!»

However, the visit to Albania of the chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was of special importance for strengthening the international position of our country.

Therefore we decided unanimously to agree to Khrushchev's condition just for the days that he would stay in Albania and as soon as he left Albania we would continue our unwavering fight as before against the Yugoslav revisionists. Fearing that something might occur as in Leningrad in April 1957, as soon as he arrived in our country on his visit at the end of May 1959, Khrushchev spoke first, without waiting for me to welcome him, saying:

«You must know that I am not going to speak against Tito.»

«We consider a guest a guest and impose nothing on him,» I replied.

I spoke, said what we had to say, naturally in a friendly manner, but he did not fail to grasp the allusions.

Nevertheless we behaved in a friendly way with him and tried to create the best possible impressions about our country and our people. On every occasion he behaved as was his habit: sometimes with jokes and sometimes in a grave tone he poured out all he had in mind.

We talked about our economic problems.

Besides information about the achievements up to date, I was speaking about our prospects for the future. Among the main branches I mentioned oil, and informed him that in recent days we had struck a new gusher of oil.

«Is that so?» he said. «But what quality is it? I know you have bad, heavy oil. Have you calculated how much it will cost to process it? Then, where will you sell it? Who needs your oil?»

I went on to speak about our mining industry and its very good prospects, mentioning our iron-nickel, chromium and copper ores.

«We have ample amounts of these minerals and we think that we should follow the course of processing them at home. We have raised the necessity for building the metallurgical industry in Albania with you last year and several times in the meetings of Comecon,» I said. «Up till now we have received no positive reply, but we are persisting.»

«Metallurgical plants?» he interrupted me. «I agree, but have you considered the matter well? Have you calculated what a ton of smelted metal will cost you? If it is going to cost you dear it is no good to you. I repeat: one day's production in our country will fulfil all your needs for several years.»

This is how he replied to all our requests and problems.

When I finished, Khrushchev began to speak:

«Comrade Enver's exposé made the situation in your country clearer to us,» he said. «However, in regard to your needs, I want to tell you that we have not come to examine them. We have not been authorized by our government to discuss such matters. We have come to get to know you, to exchange opinions.»

Then laughing, he cracked a joke which was not simply a joke:

«We think that things are going well with you. Albania has advanced, and if you offered us a loan we would accept it with the greatest of pleasure.»

«We have ample stones, sea and air,» put in Mehmet in the same tone.

«We have much more of those than you. Have you any dollars?» asked Khrushchev, and then, in a different tone:

«Enough of this,» he said. «The truth is that you have made progress, but you are not satisfied. We gave you a credit last year and now you want another one. But we have a popular saying: 'Cut your coat according to your cloth'.»

«We have the same saying,» I said, «and we know it and implement it well.»

«But,» he said, «you are asking for credits again.» He shrugged his shoulders, was silent for a moment and resumed his jocular tone:

«Or is it that you gave us a good lunch and thought it a fine opportunity to ask us for another

credit? If we had known this we would have brought our own lunch.»

«The Albanians have a special respect for a guest,» I said. «Whether they have plenty and whether they have nothing, they always provide for their guest. They treat him with every respect when he comes to their home and even swallow something that they do not like.»

«I was joking,» he said and burst into a laugh. But it was more a snarl than a laugh. Wherever he went he criticized us. About the big vineyards at Shtoi he said:

«Why do you throw your money away? You will get nothing from this land.»

Regardless of the opinions of this «agricultural expert», however, we continued the work and now the vineyards at Shtoi are marvellous.

He criticized the work to drain the Tërbuf swamp. In Vlora he summoned the main Soviet oil expert in our country and he, no doubt «well prepared» by the Soviet Embassy in Tirana, delivered a report in our presence which was extremely pessimistic, saying that Albania had no oil. However, a group of Albanian oil experts also came there and refuted what the Soviets said with many facts and arguments. They spoke in detail about the history of the oil industry in our country, about the great interest of the foreign imperialist companies in Albanian oil in the past and about the great and encouraging results which had been

achieved in the 15 years of the people's power. Mehmet, for his part, spoke in detail about the great prospects for oil extraction in Albania and also mentioned to Khrushchev the recent discoveries in this field.

«Fine, fine,» repeated Khrushchev, «but yours is a heavy oil and contains sulphur. Have you calculated things properly? You will process it, but a litre of benzine will cost you more than a kilogram of caviar. You must look closely at the commercial aspect. It has not been decreed that you must have everything yourselves. What are your friends for?!»

In Saranda he advised us to plant only oranges and lemons for which the Soviet Union had great need.

«We shall supply you with wheat. The mice in our country eat as much wheat as you need,» he said, repeating what he had said in Moscow in 1957. He also gave us a lot of «advice».

«Don't waste your land and marvellous climate on maize and wheat. They bring you no income. The bay-tree grows here. But do you know what it is? Bay is gold. Plant thousands of hectares of bay because we shall buy it from you.»

He went on with peanuts, tea and citrus fruit.

«These are what you should plant,» he said. «In this way Albania will become a flourishing garden!»

In other words he wanted Albania to be turned into a fruit-growing colony which would serve the revisionist Soviet Union, just as the banana republics in Latin America serve the United States of America.

But we could never allow ourselves to take this suicidal course which Khrushchev advised. He even criticized our archaeological work as «dead things». When he visited Butrint he said:

«Why do you employ all these forces and funds on such dead things! Leave the Hellenes and the Romans to their antiquity!»

«Apart from the Hellenic and Roman culture,» I told him, «another ancient culture, the Illyrian culture, developed and flourished in these zones. The Albanians stem from the Illyrian trunk and our archaeological studies are confirming and providing evidence of our centuries-long history and of the rich and ancient culture of a valiant, industrious and indomitable people.»

However, Khrushchev was truly an ignoramus in these fields. He could see only the «profitability»:

«Why are these things of value to you? Do they increase the well-being of the people?» he asked me. He called Malinovsky, at that time minister of defence, who was always at hand:

«Look, how marvellous this is!» I heard them whisper. «An ideal base for our submarines could be built here. These old things should be

dug up and thrown into the sea (they were referring to the archaeological finds at Butrint). We can tunnel through this mountain to the other side,» and he pointed to Ksamil. «We shall have the most ideal and most secure base in the Mediterranean. From here we can paralyze and attack everything.»

They were to repeat the same thing in Vlora a day or two later. We had come out on the verandah of the villa at Uji i Ftohtë.

«Marvellous, marvellous!» Khrushchev cried and turned to Malinovsky. I thought he was referring to the truly breath-taking landscape of our Riviera. But their mind was working in another direction:

«What a secure bay at the foot of these mountains!» they said. «With a powerful fleet, from here we can have the whole of the Mediterranean, from Bosporus to Gibraltar, in our hands! We can control everyone.»

It made my flesh creep to hear them talk like this, as if they were the masters of the seas, countries and peoples. «No, Nikita Khrushchev,» I said to myself, «we shall never allow you to set out to enslave other countries and shed their peoples' blood from our territory. You will never have Butrint, Vlora, or any inch of the Albanian territory, to use for those evil purposes.»

The fictitious «peace» was being more and more thoroughly rocked to its foundations. Khrushchev and his followers were seeing our resistance ever more clearly and tried to make us yield by exerting economic pressure, while secretly orchestrating a discrimination against our leadership by means of their specialists who were working in all sectors in our country, such as in oil and the economic enterprises in which we lacked sufficient experience, in the army, where we had advisers, etc. The Soviet Embassy, with its innumerable «councillors», who were diplomats only in name, because in reality they were security officers, maintained contact with all these «experts», and gave them the necessary instructions. The first thing they did was to issue instructions to the Soviet experts in the economy to neglect their work in Albania. To a greater or lesser degree, these experts began to become more interested in buying suit lengths and other things, which they sent to the Soviet Union to sell on the black market, than in working with our comrades.

Those experts who remained sincere with us were removed by the embassy, one after the other, on fabricated pretexts and against their will. When they parted from our people, these specialists expressed their dissatisfaction. Those who remained in Albania, of course, had received orders to sabotage the key sectors of our economy, especially the oil industry and geological prospecting. As was proved later, the Soviet oil «experts» had recruited some agents from the ranks of our geologists and, as they themselves eventually admitted, had charged them with the mission of keeping from our Party and Government accurate data about the discoveries which they made, of hiding the results of these discoveries, of using all the means of sabotage, so as to make us start drilling in the wrong places, of violating the rules of prospecting and extracting technique and wasting hundreds of millions of leks, etc. The Khrushchevite revisionists taught the agents they had recruited in our country various methods of sabotage. And the agents carried out the instructions of their patrons. These oil «experts» and «geologists» made two reports: an accurate one, with exact and positive data on discoveries of different minerals, and a false one, which said that the prospecting had allegedly yielded negative results, i.e., the minerals sought were not discovered. The first report was sent to Moscow and Leningrad through the KGB centre, which was called the Soviet Embassy in Tirana, and the second report was sent to our Ministry of Industry and Mines. This whole vile business was discovered and proved after the Soviets cleared out of Albania. Convinced that there had been sabotage, our Central Committee gave orders that the reports must be studied, that our geological teams must go to all those places where the Soviet saboteurs had said the results

were negative, and begin prospecting. This was done. Precisely in those places where they had declared «there was nothing», we found oil, chromium, copper, iron-nickel, coal, etc.

This was an economic pressure which they exerted on us in order to force us to accept their views. But they broke their heads. Our Party's resistance steadily increased, but still without burning the bridges. The Soviet revisionists also operated prudently to avoid burning the bridges with us. The Soviet ambassador came frequently to sound us out on some international problems on which I would give my opinion frankly, or to learn about some internal matter and I filled him up with reports about the weather, about the planting, about the harvests, and about some general decision of the Party about economic and cultural matters.

Such were the Soviet ambassadors after Khrushchev mounted the throne. They thought we were blind. They never expressed any opinion on the questions we asked them. On these occasions their stand was: «I shall inform you,» or «I shall ask Moscow». Their task was that of the informer. They rarely had any understanding of the problems of our industry and agriculture.

The Soviet ambassador Krylov, who preceded Ivanov in Albania, visited some regions of Southern Albania. When he returned he paid me a visit.

«Are you satisfied with what you saw?» I asked him.

He said nothing concrete, because it was dangerous to tell me about the things he had gone to see there. All he said was something... «colossal».

«I have noticed that you keep many dogs in the villages and in the towns and I have made a calculation that there could be such and such a number of dogs in Albania, which must eat such and such quantity of food..., and if this food is reckoned in grain it comes to such and such a number of quintals.»

«Well, well,» I said to myself. «Look what an ambassador they have sent us!» And I said to him:

«You may be right, but in our country you don't find barber's shops and restaurants for dogs as in Paris. But what measures do you advise, Comrade Ambassador?»

«You should kill them!» he said.

«The 'Society for the Protection of Animals' will protest, as they are accusing us enough already about killing traitors and agents of reaction,» I said.

This same ambassador once told me not to speak in harsh terms about Tito in a meeting of the People's Assembly. I replied:

«Comrade ambassador, I do not take orders from anyone except from my Party.»

«We understand this, but if Tito is going to

be attacked I shall not attend the meeting of the Assembly,» he protested.

«Tito will be exposed even more than from what I have written and the session of the People's Assembly will open even if you do not come,» I said.

And the «famous» Soviet ambassador came to the Assembly and tucked himself away in a corner of the box, behind other ambassadors, which was not his place.

It was clear that this threatening gesture of the ambassador, which we slapped back, came from Moscow.

After a short time the «adviser» on the extermination of dogs in Albania was recalled from Tirana and became a director in the Central Committee of Khrushchev's communist party!

Day by day, Khrushchev and his gang were increasing their pressure on us in the direction of the economy. Not only did they not provide us with all the aid we sought, but even what they did provide was quite insufficient. They supplied only a few cases of tractor spare parts, which they sent by aircraft. In this way they sought to force us to our knees, but in vain, because they had no success. To put pressure on us to accept their conditions, Khrushchev said to us once (while we were talking about our economic problems): «In our relations with the Yugoslavs it has always been our principle to give them half of what they

ask for. When they behave well we act more generously. This is how we act with all those who behave badly towards us.» The implication was quite clear, they were openly putting pressure on us. We quarrelled so fiercely that time that the talks were almost broken off.

All over the country the Soviets began to commit many provocations against our people everyday. Once, a person complained to the head of his office that a Soviet «expert» had made a proposition to recruit him as an agent. Our comrade refused indignantly. Our Ministry of Foreign Affairs protested to the Soviet Embassy about this. Naturally, the embassy denied that there were such people among the Soviet experts, but a few weeks later it removed its exposed agent from the country. This was the first time we had to do with such a denunciation and therefore our Party and Government recommended vigilance, prudence and the greatest cool-headedness. It was quite obvious that with the passage of time the situation was getting worse, although the leadership in Moscow preserved the external forms of «friendship».

For us, the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was finished. Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites were revisionists, traitors. War would be declared. The time of the declaration of war was only a matter of months, while our relations continued to hang on a thread.

12. FROM BUCHAREST TO MOSCOW

February 1960: Mikoyan on the Chinese-Soviet differences. Exacerbation of the situation between Moscow and Beijing. Kosygin pays a «visit» to Mehmet Shehu in Moscow. The Bucharest plot. Hysni Kapo does not bat an eyelid at Khrushchev's pressure. The Soviets set their secret agents in motion and establish the blockade to starve us. The struggle in the preparatory commission for the Moscow Meeting. Our delegation in Moscow. Icy atmosphere. The Soviet Gargantuas. Pressure, flattery, provocations again. The Kremlin marshals. A brief meeting with Andropov. Khrushchev's tactic: «There should be no polemics.» The mercenaries react against our speech. The last talks with the Khrushchevite renegades.

All the representatives of the communist and workers' parties, who were at the Congress of the Rumanian Workers' Party, know the stand of our Party in connection with the diabolical plot which the Khrushchevites had hatched up there. I shall

not go into details here because Volume 19 of my Works tells about the struggle of our Party, which opened fire on the Khrushchevites and fought with revolutionary Marxist-Leninist courage.

Judging from the aims which the Khrushchevites sought to achieve, politically, ideologically and organizationally, the Bucharest Meeting was a Trotskyite, anti-Marxist, revisionist putsch. From the form of its organization too, this meeting was a plot from start to finish.

The revisionist renegades needed another meeting of international communism to gain approval for their old plan for the final legitimization of modern revisionism, which was defeated at the Moscow Meeting in 1957. Therefore they raised the need for the organization of a new meeting of communist and workers' parties, where we would allegedly discuss the «problems of the movement», which had come up since the previous meeting in 1957. To this end, at the beginning of June 1960, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union sent us a letter in which it was proposed that the meeting of the communist and workers' parties of the countries of the socialist camp should be held, taking advantage of the occasion of the 3rd Congress of the Rumanian Workers' Party. We replied to this proposal in positive terms and decided to send a delegation, which I was to head.

Meanwhile we had been informed about the disagreements which had developed between the Soviets and the Chinese. In February that year, Mehmet and I went to Moscow for a consultation of the representatives of parties of the socialist countries about the development of agriculture, as well as for a meeting of the political consultative committee of the Warsaw Treaty. As soon as we arrived at Moscow airport, a functionary of the apparatus of the Central Committee of the Soviet party introduced himself to me.

«I have been sent by Comrade Mikoyan, who wants to meet you personally tomorrow morning about a very important matter,» he told me.

This urgency surprised me, because Mikoyan could have met me later. We were to stay several days in Moscow. Nevertheless I said:

«All right, but I shall bring Comrade Mehmet with me.»

«They told me the invitation was only for you,» replied Mikoyan's *chinovnik*, but I repeated:

«No, I shall come together with Comrade Mehmet.»

I insisted on taking Mehmet with me because I guessed that in this urgent meeting about a «very important problem», Mikoyan would speak to me about complicated and delicate matters. The fact that I was well-acquainted with Mikoyan and his

anti-Marxist and anti-Albanian stands made me all the more determined.

The next day we went to meet Mikoyan in his villa in Leninskie Gori. After the usual greetings, Anastasiy entered directly into the theme of the talk:

«I am going to inform you about the disagreements we have with the Communist Party of China, I stress, with the Communist Party of China. We had decided to tell these things only to the first secretaries of the sister parties. Therefore, I ask Comrade Mehmet, not to misunderstand us, but this is what we had decided and not that we did not trust him.»

«Not at all,» replied Mehmet. «Indeed I can leave.»

No,» said Mikoyan, «stay!»

Then Mikoyan spoke to us at length about the differences with the Chinese party.

Mikoyan spun his tale in such a way as to create the impression that they themselves stood in principled Leninist positions and were fighting the deviations of the Chinese leadership. Amongst other things, Mikoyan used as arguments several theses of the Chinese which, in fact, for us, too, were not right from the viewpoint of the Marxist-Leninist ideology. Thus, Mikoyan mentioned the pluralist theories of «one hundred flowers», the question of the cult of Mao, the «great leap forward», etc.

Of course, we had our own reservations about these things, to the extent that we were acquainted with the activity and concrete practice of the Communist Party of China at that time.

«We have Marxism-Leninism and do not need any other theory,» I told Mikoyan, «while as to the 'one hundred flowers' we have neither accepted this view nor have we ever mentioned it.»

Among other things, Mikoyan spoke about Mao and compared him with Stalin, saying:

«The only difference between Mao Zedong and Stalin is that Mao does not cut off the heads of his opponents, while Stalin did. That is why we could not oppose Stalin,» continued this revisionist. «At one time, together with Khrushchev we had considered organizing a *pokushenie** against him, but we gave up the idea because we were afraid that the people and the party would not understand.»

We made no pronouncement about the problems which Mikoyan raised, and after we had heard him out, I said:

«The major differences which have arisen between you and the Communist Party of China are very serious matters and we do not understand why they have been allowed to reach this point. This is neither the time nor the place to discuss

* assassination attempt (Russian in the original).

them. We think that they should be solved between your parties.»

«That is what we shall do,» said Mikoyan, and just as we were parting he asked us: «Please don't discuss these matters I raised with you, even with the members of your Political Bureau.»

From this meeting we understood that the differences and contradictions had come to a head and were serious. Since we were already acquainted with Khrushchev and Mikoyan, we were quite clear that they did not proceed from principled positions in the accusations they were making against the Chinese party.

As became even clearer later, the differences were over a series of matters of principle towards which, at that time, the Chinese seemed to maintain correct stands. Both in the official speeches of the Chinese leaders and in their published articles, especially in the one entitled «Long Live Leninism», the Chinese party treated the problems in a theoretically correct way and opposed the Khrushchevites. This was particularly damaging to the latter and therefore they were trying to forestall the evil.

We discussed what Mikoyan told us only with the comrades of the Bureau, because the matter was extremely delicate and we had to act with caution and patience. Then there was also the request of the Soviet leadership that this problem should be kept secret.

Thus, on the eve of the Bucharest Meeting we had been informed of the Sino-Soviet differences.

At that time, I think, at the end of May or the beginning of June, Gogo Nushi, who was in Beijing at a meeting of the General Council of the World Federation of the Trade Unions, informed us by radiogram of the contradictions which had erupted in Beijing between the Chinese and the Soviet delegations. The Chinese delegation to the meeting opposed many theses of the report which was to be delivered, because in essence they were nothing but Khrushchev's revisionist theses about «peaceful coexistence», war and peace, the seizure of power in a «peaceful way», etc.

The Chinese invited the heads of several delegations (those who were members of the leaderships of the communist and workers' parties) to a dinner, which they wanted to turn into a meeting, at which they would once again express their views in connection with the erroneous theses of the draft-report of the meeting. Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping spoke first, followed by Zhou Enlai.

Gogo Nushi's stand was that these things should not be discussed at that gathering, but should be settled through party channels, because the delegations had gone to attend the meeting of the General Council of the Trade Unions and not to discuss those matters. Many of the other

delegations were of the same view. As a result, Zhou Enlai retreated and said: «All right, we shall find another occasion.»

All these things, together with what Mikoyan had told us in Moscow in February, as well as the indirect attacks which were being exchanged in the Soviet and Chinese press, showed that matters were being exacerbated in a way which was not at all Marxist-Leninist. The indications were that the joint meeting which was to be held in Bucharest, to which we had agreed to go, might reach an impasse or be a complete failure.

In this situation, a few days after the first letter we received another letter from the Central Committee of the Soviet party, which said that several parties proposed that the meeting of the communist and workers' parties should be postponed and that the parties of the countries of the socialist camp should meet in Bucharest only to set the date and place of the future meeting of all parties. «Apart from setting the date and the place, at this meeting,» said the Soviets, «opinions could be exchanged without taking any decision.» We agreed on this proposal and decided to send a party delegation to Bucharest, headed by Comrade Hysni Kapo, to take part, both in the congress of the Rumanian party and in the joint meeting to set the date and the place for the coming meeting.

Why did I not go to Bucharest? I, personally, and the other comrades of the Political Bureau

who knew about it, suspected that the problem of the differences which had emerged between China and the Soviet Union would be discussed there. We were not in agreement with such a thing because, first, we had heard only of one side of the argument, the Soviet side, and were not acquainted with the objections of the Chinese; second, the differences had to do with cardinal problems of the theory and practice of the international communist movement and we could not go to a meeting of such responsibility and make pronouncements without discussing and deciding our stand in the plenum of the Central Committee. However, we were unable to do this, because such problems could not be put forward in the Central Committee hastily. They had to be thrashed out thoroughly, had to be studied carefully, and time was required for this.

Therefore our Party sent Comrade Hysni Kapo to Bucharest to discuss only the date of the future meeting, as well as to take part in the free exchange of views on problems of the international situation after the failure of the Paris Conference, as our parties had agreed.

As we saw later, the Bucharest Meeting was to be transformed into a plot, which the Khrushchevites had prepared in advance. In our direction, too, intensified efforts were made, sometimes openly, sometimes in disguised form (because the

Khrushchevites knew how our Party adhered to principle), in order to involve us in that plot.

When Comrade Gogo Nushi was returning to Albania from Beijing, in Moscow Brezhnev, who at that time had become chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, sought a meeting with him. Gogo met Brezhnev, who spoke to him at length about the differences with the Chinese.

Four to five days before the meeting in Bucharest began, when Hysni and I were discussing the stand he was to take in the congress of the Rumanian party, we received a radiogram from Mehmet, who had been for some days in Moscow for medical treatment. In the radiogram Mehmet informed us about an unexpected «visit» which Kosygin had paid him. When he saw him come in, Mehmet was surprised and thought it was a courtesy visit, although somewhat late.

«Comrade Mehmet, I have come to talk about a very important matter,» said Kosygin, without even bothering to inquire about his health, although he knew very well that Mehmet had gone there for medical treatment.

«Go ahead,» said Mehmet.

Kosygin spoke for an hour and a half about the contradictions they had with the Communist Party of China. Mehmet listened and listened and then said:

«All these things you have told me are very

grave. We are astonished that they have been allowed to become as serious as this.»

«We are not going to make any concession to the Chinese,» said Kosygin.

«We told Mikoyan, when he informed Comrade Enver and me about this business, that these things should be solved between the two parties,» said Mehmet.

«We are not going to make any concession at all,» repeated Kosygin, and added, «We were very pleased with the courageous, heroic stand of Comrade Belishova in the talks with the Chinese in Beijing. The counsellor of our embassy in Beijing informed us of what she had told him after the talks with the Chinese.»

Mehmet still had no knowledge of these actions and intrigues of Liri Belishova, but he told Kosygin coldly and bluntly:

«I do not know what Liri Belishova has told you because I have been here. I know that when we talked with Mikoyan, he instructed us not to discuss these matters with anyone. Our opinion has been and is that these things should be settled between your two parties. But since they are not being settled in this way, then they should be placed before the meeting of the parties. The stand of our Party will be Marxist-Leninist and not opportunist or sentimental.»

Kosygin got up scowling and when he was about to go out the door, Mehmet dealt him a slap:

«Comrade Kosygin,» he said quietly, «you did not give me the opportunity to ask you — how is your health?»

Kosygin turned back, and, as if to excuse himself, he, too, asked Mehmet how he was feeling.

«I am very well,» said Mehmet, without prolonging the subject, and immediately after this conversation he stopped the treatment and made arrangements to return home by aircraft the following day.

Now everything had been made clear to us: Khrushchev was preparing the Bucharest plot and wanted to manipulate us, to compel us at all costs to agree with his revisionist views and stands.

Here in Tirana, too, the Soviet Ambassador, Ivanov, came almost every other day, sometimes to bring some book catalogue, sometimes for some unimportant information, but in fact, he came to sound us out, to learn whether I would go to Bucharest, what stand we would take, etc., etc. However I sent him off with the usual talk without telling him anything apart from what was known officially.

I remember that in the middle of June, Ivanov came to me in my office to «inform» me of a news item which I had heard two or three hours earlier over the radio. I understood that he was after something else, as usual. It was the period when the Soviets and Khrushchev were giving

great publicity to the Paris Summit Conference, which was to bring «peace» to mankind. If I am not mistaken, Khrushchev had already gone to Paris, although the U-2 incident, in which an American spy-plane was shot down by a Soviet missile, had occurred.

«What is your opinion of the Paris Conference?» Ivanov asked me.

«Since they have gone there let them meet,» I said, «but in our opinion nothing will come out of this conference. The imperialists are what they have always been, aggressive and dangerous to the peoples and the socialist countries. Thus, I do not think that the Paris Conference will yield any result.»

After two days or so the conference burst like a bubble, because the Americans not only did not apologize, but, on the contrary, declared that they would continue their espionage, and Khrushchev was obliged to go home after hurling a few «smoke bombs» against the imperialists. Ivanov came back and said to me:

«Things turned out just as you said, Comrade Enver! Did you read Khrushchev's statements?»

«I read them,» I replied. «And that is how he should always speak against the imperialists, because they have not become 'reasonable' and 'peace-loving', and never can do so.»

Such was the situation on the eve of the Bu-

charest meeting, which, from beginning to end, was to remain a blot on the history of the international communist and workers' movement. The Khrushchevites were organizing it allegedly to set the date of the future meeting, but the setting of the date was a formality. The Khrushchevites had another objective. What was important to them was the taking of a series of decisions to go «as a bloc» to the future meeting of all parties. «As a bloc», according to them, meant to go closely united around the Khrushchevite revisionists in order to give unquestioning support to their betrayal of the Marxist-Leninist theory and the correct revolutionary Marxist-Leninist practice in all international and national problems. In short, Khrushchev thought that the time had come to establish his iron law over the herd he wanted to command.

However, the Khrushchevites were seeing and were convinced that two parties, in particular, the Party of Labour of Albania and the Communist Party of China, were not joining this herd, which they wanted to have completely under their control. What is more, in our resolute and principled stand they saw the danger of the exposure and defeat of their secret counter-revolutionary plans. Therefore Khrushchev had made his calculations like this: in order to make the meeting of all parties a meeting of «unity» and «solidarity», that is, total submission, accounts first had to be settled with Albania and China. Since he was

an inveterate revisionist, Khrushchev's logic went even further: «As to the Party of Labour of Albania,» he deceived himself, «I shall leave it aside for the time being, will not attack it directly, because after all it is a small party of a small country. The Albanians are stubborn,» he thought, «they will get angry and jump up and down, but in the end they will surrender, because they have no one else to turn to. Whatever they do, I have them in my pocket.» This was his revisionist superpower logic. China remained the urgent problem for Khrushchev. This is how he saw things: «Either China will submit and quietly and tamely join the herd, or I shall condemn it and throw it out of the camp forthwith. In this way I condemn China as a splitter, and neutralize the Party of Labour of Albania, and I tighten the screws on any other head-strong element who wants to kick out.» In short, Khrushchev had to have a preliminary meeting to clamp down on the «disobedient», so that the future meeting would be crowned by «unity» without any splits. This is why he wanted and organized the meeting at Bucharest.

All the parties of the European people's democracies sent their first secretaries to Bucharest, therefore Khrushchev was not pleased that I did not go and asked:

«Why hasn't Comrade Enver come? Could you inform him that he should come?»

Hysni told him:

«Comrade Enver is not coming now. He will come to the meeting of parties, the time and place of which we shall decide here.»

At first we knew nothing about what Khrushchev and company were hatching up in Bucharest. However, the first radiograms from Hysni soon arrived. All we had foreseen was being confirmed. The Bucharest Meeting, which set out to decide a date, was ending up in a crusade. Khrushchev insisted that the disagreements between the Soviet Union and China should be raised and discussed at the meeting, of course, in the direction and the way he wanted. «Decisions can be taken» at this meeting, said Khrushchev, and demanded that the other parties speak about the «grave mistakes of China», express solidarity with the Soviets and «come out with a common stand». I was completely convinced that we were facing one of the most perfidious and savage plots and immediately raised the question in the Political Bureau.

These were days and nights of ceaseless, careful, intensive work, well-considered and thrashed out from all angles. The dice had been cast, the «peace» with the Khrushchevites had come to an end. They had opened fire and we would reply to their fire with all our strength. Now there was not and could not be any further conciliation and tactical «agreement» with the Khrushchevites. The great fight had begun. It would be a great and extremely difficult fight,

full of sacrifices and repercussions, but we would carry on to the end with confidence and optimism, because we knew that right was on our side, on the side of Marxism-Leninism.

Everyone knows how the meeting developed: a voluminous material from the Soviets against China was handed out quickly, it was decided that the meeting of the parties of the camp would be held a few hours later, and then all the heads of the delegations of the communist and workers' parties that took part in the congress of the Rumanian party would be brought together and Khrushchev would confront them with his desire that the «Communist Party of China should be condemned as anti-Marxist, as a Trotskyite party,» etc., etc.

In the former meeting which was organized by Khrushchev, Comrade Hysni Kapo, in the name of the Party and on the basis of detailed directives, which we sent him every day and frequently twice a day, attacked Khrushchev and the others for their anti-Marxist aims and the conspiratorial methods which they used, defended the Communist Party of China and opposed the continuation of such a meeting.

Khrushchev did not expect this. In the meetings which were held he talked all the time, stamping his feet and thumping his fist, became angry and spluttered with indignation. But Comrade Hysni Kapo, armed with the correct line

of our Party and the special instructions we sent him continually, and with his charasteristic coolness and courage, not only did not yield, but gave Khrushchev as good as he got with his cutting replies.

In appearance Khrushchev aimed his many speeches at Peng Chen, who was the leader of the Chinese delegation, but always found the occasion to attack our Party and its representative. His aim was not only to attack our resolute stand, but also to say to the representatives of the other parties that the Albanians «are playing the game of the Chinese».

«You, Comrade Peng Chen,» railed Nikita Khrushchev, «made no mention of peaceful coexistence last evening, you did not speak about it at all. Did he, or did he not, Comrade Kapo?»

«I represent the Party of Labour of Albania,» replied Hysni. «There you have Peng Chen, ask him!»

«We cannot agree at all with Mao Zedong and the Chinese, nor they with us. Do you want us to send you, Comrade Kapo, to reach agreement with them?» Khrushchev asked Comrade Hysni on another occasion.

«I do not take orders from you,» replied Hysni, «I take orders only from my Party.»

Nothing could make him budge from the courageous, revolutionary, principled stand of the Party. He never flickered an eyelash at the screams

and the pressure of the charlatan Nikita Khrushchev. Cool, calm and principled, Comrade Hysni Kapo declared in the name of the Party that the Party of Labour of Albania considered the discussion of these questions in the Bucharest Meeting to be out of order, just as it considered misplaced the efforts which the Chinese made in the beginning to discuss these matters with the trade union delegations. «The PLA considers the open or disguised polemic in the press harmful,» he declared. «As to who is right, let us judge this in the forthcoming meeting of the parties.»

The Khrushchevites were alarmed that the plot was going to explode in their own hands. Then the visits back and forth, the «advice», the «friendly consultations and talks» and the pressures disguised with jokes and smiles, began. Andropov, the man of backstage deals and intrigues (that is why they have made him chief of the KGB), was one of the most active and did everything in his power to compel our Party to take part in the plot.

The Soviets did not fail to involve their lackeys in the other parties in this dirty game. Andropov picked up a certain Moghioros and went to Hysni for a «visit». Andropov sat back implying, «I am not going to speak», and Moghioros prattled on and on about the «correctness of the Marxist-Leninist line of the Soviet party».

«What is Albania doing?» asked Zhivkov. «Only you do not agree.»

«What do you mean by that?» asked Hysni.

«Nothing, I was only joking,» said Zhivkov, changing his tune.

«Joking about what? You had something in mind when you said that 'Albania does not agree'.»

While the meeting was going on in Bucharest, here we met almost every day in the Political Bureau, maintained continual contact with Hysni Kapo, instructed him, and followed with attention and concern how events were developing. By now we had reached the unanimous conclusion:

The Bucharest Meeting is an organized plot against Marxism-Leninism; there Khrushchev and company are revealing their faces as rabid revisionists, therefore we are not going to make any concessions to the revisionists even if we remain alone against them all.

Our stand was correct and Marxist-Leninist. The black deed organized by Khrushchev had to be defeated.

It is a publicly known fact that our Party defended China at Bucharest with Marxist-Leninist courage and adherence to principles. We were well aware of the consequences of this stand. Today, so many years after the Bucharest plot, when unfortunately the Chinese party, too,

is skidding irretrievably on the rails of betrayal, revisionism and counter-revolution, I want to stress once again, that the stand of our Party at Bucharest and Moscow was absolutely right and the only correct stand.

As I have written above, we had had reservations about certain views which had been expressed by Mao Zedong and other Chinese leaders, we had reservations about the 8th Congress of the Communist Party of China, but after 1957 it seemed as if a positive change had been made in that party and their former opportunist mistakes had been put aside. Any party can make mistakes, but these can be corrected, and when this is done, the party is strengthened and the work progresses. In China there was no longer any talk about the 8th Congress, the rightist views of Peng Dehuai had been attacked, and the «one hundred flowers» had been dropped. In their official statements and in published articles the Chinese openly attacked Yugoslav revisionism, defended Stalin and maintained theoretically correct stands on war and peace, peaceful coexistence, the revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This is not the place and time to analyse the motives which impelled the Chinese leaders, and to explain whether or not there was something principled in these stands of theirs at that period (I have written about these matters in

my diary), but one thing was clear: at that period the Communist Party of China came out as a defender of Marxism-Leninism.

The Khrushchevites accused us of «breaking with the 200 millions to unite with the 600 millions». In defending China, we did not proceed from any financial, economic, military or demographic motive. If we had proceeded from these anti-Marxist pragmatic motives, then it would have been more «advantageous» for us to have lined up with the Khrushchevites, because the Soviet Union was more powerful and Khrushchev would not have hesitated to give us credits and «aid» immediately (of course, in order to demand the freedom and independence of our people, our Homeland and our Party in recompense later).

Hence, in Bucharest and Moscow, we did not defend China as a big country from which we might get aid, but we defended the Leninist norms and Marxism-Leninism. We did not defend the Communist Party of China because it was a big party, but we defended our principles, we defended Marxist-Leninist justice. At Bucharest and Moscow we would have defended any party or country, be it big or small numerically, provided only that it was with Marxism-Leninism. We proclaimed this loudly at that time, and time has fully confirmed it.

The struggle in defence of Marxism-Leninism against revisionism was the only basis which placed us in the one trench with the Communist Party of China.

These were the motives which impelled us to maintain the stands we did in Bucharest and later in Moscow. Our Party, tempered in struggles and battles, clear about and determined on its Marxist-Leninist course, said «stop» to the Khrushchevite attack, resisted this attack heroically and did not waver in the face of pressure and blackmail of every type.

Khrushchev could not forgive us for what we did to revisionism. But neither could we forgive him for what he had done against Marxism-Leninism, against the revolution, against the Soviet Union, against Albania and the international communist and workers' movement.

The open fight began. The Soviet Embassy in Tirana, through its KGB agents, intensified the pressure, interference and sabotage in the dirtiest forms. The Soviet militarymen and civilians working in Albania committed provocations against our people by attacking the leadership, alleging that we had taken wrong positions, that we attacked the Soviet Union, that we did not keep our word, and other base things. The officials of the Soviet Embassy in Tirana, with ambassador Ivanov at the head, tried to recruit agents and provoked our officers by asking them, «Who is the army with?», and tried to work on certain

elements to put them in opposition to the line of the Party.

This activity had two objectives: on the one hand, to incite our Party and people against the leadership, by hiding behind «all the good things» which the Soviet Union had allegedly done for Albania, and on the other hand, to seize the slightest opportunity to sow confusion by exploiting the sincere love which our Party and people nurtured for the Soviet Union.

At these difficult moments, the steel unity of the ranks of our Party, the loyalty of the members and cadres of the Party to the Central Committee of the Party and our Political Bureau, once again stood out brilliantly. In the Albanian communists, the provocations of the Soviet revisionists ran into an insurmountable barricade, an immovable rock. The only treacherous elements who opposed the monolithic unity of our ranks were Liri Belishova and Koço Tashko, who surrendered to the pressure of the Soviets and, in those moments of severe storms and tests, showed their true faces as capitulators, provocateurs and anti-Marxists. As events confirmed, both these elements had long placed themselves in Khrushchev's service, had become his agents and fought to attack our Party and its leadership from within. The Party and the people unmasked them and condemned them with hatred and contempt.

The provocations which the Soviet Embassy in Tirana organized ceaselessly were now co-ordinated with the external pressures which were exerted on our Party and country by the Soviet revisionist leadership and its allies. These were of many kinds: economic, political and military.

In their efforts to overcome the resistance of the PLA and the Albanian people, the Khrushchevites abandoned every scruple, going so far as to threaten our country with the blockade to starve us. These rabid enemies of socialism and of the Albanian people in particular, refused to supply us with grain at a time when our bread grain reserves would last us only 15 days. At that time we were obliged to use our hard currency to buy wheat in France. The French merchant who came to Tirana sounded us out to find what was the reason that impelled Albania to buy grain from the Western countries when it had the Soviet Union as its «great friend». Of course, we told the bourgeois merchant nothing. On the contrary, we told him that the Soviet Union had supplied us with grain, with maize, but we had «used it for the livestock».

«Why worry yourselves about bread grain,» Khrushchev had said to us. «Plant citrus-fruit. The mice in our granaries eat as much grain as Albania needs.» And when the Albanian people were in danger of being left without bread,

Khrushchev preferred to feed the mice and not the Albanians. According to him, there were only two roads for us: either submit or die. This was the cynical logic of this traitor.

However, the great rift in our relations with the Soviet leadership could not be covered up for long, especially when the Khrushchevites themselves were revealing it more and more each day.

The Soviet and Bulgarian ambassadors in Yugoslavia applauded the hangman Rankovic during those days, when, at a rally in Sremska Mitrovica, he described Albania as «a hell enclosed with barbed wire», the Bulgarians published a map of the Balkans and «by mistake» included our country within the boundaries of Yugoslavia; in Warsaw, Gomulka's men forced their way into the embassy of the PR of Albania and attempted to kill the Albanian ambassador; Khrushchev tolerated and whetted the appetite of the Greek monarcho-fascists, like Venizelos, when they played the worthless card of the annexation of the so-called Northern Epirus, etc., etc. During those days, these and tens of such things occurred from all directions against our Party and country. The hand of Khrushchev, who strove at all costs to force us to yield and submit was apparent, directly or indirectly, in all these anti-Albanian activities.

However, our Party and people stood firm

on the correct Marxist-Leninist line. We told the communists and cadres what was occurring in the communist and workers' movement, told them about the betrayal of the Khrushchevites, and the masses of the Party closed their ranks around the Central Committee to face the storm which was being raised by the Khrushchevites. They found no breaches in this block of steel and the banner of the Party waved and will always wave proud and unyielding in the teeth of any storm.

The Central Committee called on the Party and people to close their ranks, to safeguard and strengthen their unity and patriotism, to keep cool, to avoid falling for provocations, to be vigilant and fearless. We told the Party that this was the way to ensure the triumph of the correct Marxist-Leninist line which we were following. We told the Party that irrespective of the fact that the enemies were many and powerful, we would triumph.

With the provocations which were hatched up in Moscow or the other capitals of vassal countries, as well as through the Soviet Embassy in Tirana and its staff, the Khrushchevites were also pursuing another aim: they wanted to fabricate and gather false facts to have as weapons in connection with the accusation that we Albanians were allegedly ruining the relations and thus counterbalance our well-founded theo-

retical and political arguments. Moscow was terrified of this confrontation, especially if this were to take place at the meeting of the communist and workers' parties of the world. This would be a serious defeat for modern revisionism, headed by Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites; therefore they did not want matters to reach that point. At all costs they needed our submission, or at least, «reconciliation» with us.

To this end, during the time that the Soviet Embassy in Tirana was operating through provocations, Moscow, through Kozlov, wearied itself sending letter after letter to the «Central Committee and Comrade Enver Hoxha». In these letters they demanded that I should go to Moscow so that we could talk and reach agreement as «the friends and comrades we are». «We must eliminate that minor misunderstanding and disagreement which occurred at Bucharest.» «Neither side must allow a small spark to kindle a big conflagration,» etc.

Their aim was clear: to compel our Party to keep quiet, to reconcile itself to them and become collaborator in the betrayal. They wanted to drag us to Moscow and to operate on us in the «workshops» of their Central Committee in order to «convince» us. However, we knew with whom we were dealing and our answer was curt: «Comrade Enver Hoxha cannot go to Moscow except for the meeting of the communist

and workers' parties. We told you what we had to say in Bucharest; we shall state our views and our stand at the coming meeting of the parties.»

The Khrushchevites were more than ever convinced that neither their flattery, their credits, their sickly smiles, nor their blackmail and threats would have any effect on the Party of Labour of Albania.

The other accomplices did not fail to participate in their efforts to persuade the PLA to give up its struggle against the revisionist betrayal. A series of parties of countries of the socialist camp sent us copies of the letters they had sent to the Communist Party of China. The Khrushchevites wanted to threaten us with these letters: «We are all in one flock, therefore consider matters well before you break away.»

Those who danced to Khrushchev's tune also received the reply they deserved from us. «In Bucharest it was you who were wrong and not we. Ours was a correct Marxist-Leninist stand. We did not associate ourselves with you and we will express our opinion in Moscow.»

These letters all arrived at the same time and without doubt this was something suggested and arranged by the Soviets. It was interesting that when they affirmed the alleged «complete unity of all communist and workers' parties» at the Bucharest Meeting, they did not define clearly on what problems this «unity» was displayed. Indeed,

in the letter from the Soviets, this expression did not exist(!). No doubt, the Soviets did not want to appear involved in this manoeuvre but had made a cat's paw of the others. However, the Party of Labour of Albania was not confused by these base and banal tactics. In our letter we gave them a clear-cut reply to these distortions of the truth and we made this reply known to all, so that all the parties which rushed to «bring the Party of Labour of Albania to its senses» would understand clearly that the PLA was not a party which comes to agreement with traitors.

The PLA did not maintain its stand out of spite or any chance caprice. No. The letter referred to, like all the other documents of this period, with their lofty adherence to principle, their sound Marxist-Leninist spirit and the profundity of their judgements and scientific arguments, were not only a blow at the attempts to set our Party on a wrong road, but also a contribution and aid which we gave the sister parties, including the Soviet party, on how the issues should be judged, where the truth lay and how it should be defended with courage and adherence to principles.

Now we were preparing for the Moscow Meeting where we foresaw that a fierce struggle would be waged. Our Party had decided that at the coming meeting of the parties it would openly attack the betrayal of the Khrushchevite revisionists who had put themselves in opposition to

the Marxist-Leninist theory. We would fight against their traitorous practice and policy, would defend the Soviet Union, Leninism and Stalin, would attack the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and hit out at all the vile, anti-Albanian actions of the Khrushchevites and Khrushchev personally.

The battle began in the commission which was to prepare the draft-declaration for the meeting. There the Soviets had Suslov, Pospyelov, Kozlov, Ponomariov, Andropov, and some others. A «solid» delegation this, saturated with «big brains» to impress us. Apart from us and the Chinese, almost all the other delegations were made up of low-ranking, third- or fourth-rate people. It was clear that everything had been co-ordinated and agreement had been reached, so that they had nothing further to discuss.

We understood clearly that the struggle in the commission was only the prologue to the drama. We foresaw that the Soviets and their hangers-on would make concessions, insignificant ones, of course, and would struggle to ensure that the declaration that would emerge from the meeting should be «neither fish nor fowl,» with dubious formulations, with everything smoothed over, with some minor retreats and formulations about the «factions and groupings» in which they classified our Party too. Therefore, the Political Bureau advised our delegation comprised of Com-

rades Hysni Kapo and Ramiz Alia, to fight for a strongly-worded declaration.

That was not all. We also foresaw the other variant, that the Khrushchevites might accept a declaration with correct and accurate formulations, provided that the meeting itself would go smoothly, without struggle or exposure, without any lifting of the piecrust to reveal what lay inside. We foresaw this because we knew they feared debate like the devil fears holy water. They would be ready to make concessions when they felt themselves hard pressed and would say: «You don't like this?! Well, let us make it even stronger. Only there must be no fight. We shall make the declaration and sign it, without any condemnation of Bucharest, without principled struggle» and... what of it? Then, when everything is over, the spokesmen will come out: «Bucharest was *poljezen** our line *pravilna,* the Chinese and the Albanians were condemned for dogmatism but were corrected,» while for them the declaration would be a worthless piece of paper just as it happened in fact.

This was not what we wanted. The declaration must not be a cover for the revisionists' corruption, but must be the result of the debate, struggle and exposure. In the correspondence which we kept up with our delegation in Moscow we cabled: «Our aim and task is not to collect

* useful (Russian in the original).

declarations but to attack and expose the mistakes. We are not short of declarations.»

A stern struggle was waged in the preparatory commission. Suslov directed the whole thing in order to have the revisionist theses of the 20th Congress and approval of the line followed by the Soviet leadership included in the draft-declaration. Our comrades fought hard, exposed these views, and insisted that the formulation in the draft must be precise, Marxist-Leninist, and in unequivocal terms. «No unclarity, no inferred meaning or expression which can be interpreted at will tomorrow can be permitted,» declared the representatives of our Party, Comrades Hysni and Ramiz.

They attacked the theses of the Khrushchevites about the taming of imperialism and told them bluntly that «the tendency to prettify imperialism, which has been observed, is dangerous», and defended Stalin's thesis that peace can be achieved only when the peoples take this question into their own hands. «To say that it is possible to build a world without wars today (Khrushchev's thesis) when imperialism exists,» stressed Comrade Hysni Kapo, «is contrary to the teachings of Lenin.»

Contrary to the desires of the Khrushchevites, our delegation in the commission insisted that the draft-declaration stress that «revisionism is the main danger in the communist movement»

and that Yugoslav revisionism should be mentioned specifically as an imperialist agency. Our comrades pointed out emphatically the danger of the thesis that «revisionism has been defeated ideologically» which Khrushchev and company wanted to impose on all the other parties. «Not only does revisionism exist but its horns are growing today,» said Comrade Hysni Kapo.

The representatives of our Party were faced with virtually a united front of revisionists. The Khrushchevite puppets, directed by Suslov and others, attacked them in order to force them to abandon the correct line which they defended. But Hysni Kapo told them, «Our Party will never agree to speak according to the wishes of this or that person, or as a result of pressures exerted on it.» He routed the accusations and provocations of Khrushchev's lackeys and once again condemned the plot in Bucharest and the efforts to carry it out in Moscow.

When Suslov, this revisionist devoid of any scruple, dared to throw mud at our Party and likened its views to those of the counter-revolutionary Kerensky, Comrade Hysni slapped right back in his face:

«You have got the wrong address, Comrade Suslov, in talking to me about Kerensky. I want to declare that the Party of Labour of Albania was not formed by Kerensky. Kerensky is yours. We have recognized and still recognize Lenin and the

Party of Lenin. Our Party, founded by Enver Hoxha on the basis of the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, is fighting to defend Marxism-Leninism loyally and it will continue to do so.» In conclusion he added:

«Those who were the supporters of the counter-revolutionary traitor, Imre Nagy, cannot accuse the Party of Labour of Albania of being a bourgeois party or the Albanian communists of being Kerenskys.»

«There's a misunderstanding here!» said Suslov trying to somewhat soften the crushing effect of the reply he received.

«Everything is clear to us, although perhaps not to you,» replied Comrade Hysni.

Confronted with incontestable arguments, the Soviets were obliged to retreat during the sessions, but the next day the fight began afresh over matters which had been decided, because Khrushchev had tweaked the ears of Suslov and company,

The Syrian, Baghdash, a very docile lackey of Khrushchev's, got up and made the accusation that our Party, in criticizing the Soviet leadership, was allegedly wanting a «new communism». Hysni Kapo made ready to reply to this base accusation from Baghdash. In a second speech which Hysni wanted to deliver in the meeting of the commission, amongst other things he stressed:

«Our Party sent us here to express its views.

It has not intended and does not intend to formulate any new text-book of Marxism-Leninism, nor is it seeking any other communist movement, as Comrade Baghdash has suggested. Our Party has fought and is fighting courageously for the communism of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin and, because it has done this, it is in power and is successfully building socialism. You, Comrade Baghdash, have apparently made a mistake in the address. Please direct your criticisms about the 'new communism' to those who claim such a thing, the revisionists, and not to us.»

Despite the persistence of Comrade Hysni, however, the presidium of the meeting of the commission, manipulated by the Khrushchevites, did not allow him to read his second speech, the text of which is kept in the archives of our Party.

As usual, besides the attacks and accusations, there was no shortage of expressions of hypocritical «friendship» towards our comrades. One day Kozlov invited Comrade Hysni to lunch, but he thanked him and declined to go.

The struggle of the delegates of the Party of Labour of Albania, the representatives of the Communist Party of China and of some other party, brought about that many of the revisionist theses were left out and Marxist-Leninist formulations were made on many questions. However, there were still unresolved issues, and about these Kozlov wanted to bring out «internal com-

muniqués». Afraid that they were losing the battle, the Khrushchevites were striving to save what they could. This was only the prologue to the fight. The real battle was still ahead of us.

We knew that it would be difficult, stern, and that we would be in the minority. But this did not frighten us. We prepared ourselves carefully for the meeting so that the judgements and analyses of our Party were mature and well-considered, courageous and principled. We discussed the speech which I was to deliver to the Moscow Meeting at a special meeting of the plenum of the Central Committee of our Party, which endorsed it unanimously, because it was an analysis which the Party of Labour of Albania made of the problems of our doctrine and the anti-Marxist activity of the Khrushchevites. In Moscow we were to expound the unwavering line of our Party, and display the ideological and political maturity and the rare revolutionary courage which has characterized our Party throughout its whole heroic existence.

The documents of the Party deal at length with the proceedings of the Meeting of 81 parties, with the speeches and contributions of our delegation at those decisive and historic moments through which the communist world, and especially our country and Party, were passing, therefore it is not necessary to elaborate on these things.

Mehmet, Hysni, Ramiz and I, as well as a

number of comrades assisting the delegation, set out for Moscow to take part in the Meeting of 81 communist and workers' parties. We were convinced that we were going to a country in which the enemies had seized power and where we would have to be very careful because they would behave like enemies and would record every word and every step of ours. We had to be vigilant and prudent. We were convinced, too, that they would try to break the code of our radiograms in order to discover our aims and our slightest tactic.

In passing through Budapest we were met by several of the main «comrades» of the Hungarian party, who behaved correctly with us. Neither they nor we made any allusion to the problems. We boarded the train for the Ukraine. The staff of the train looked at us coldly and served us without speaking at all, while men who were certainly security officers, patrolled the corridors. We had not the least desire to open the slightest conversation with them because we knew who they were and what they represented.

At the Kiev station, two or three members of the Central Committee of the Ukraine had come to meet us. They gave us a cool reception, and we remained as cold as ice, even refusing to drink their coffee. Then we boarded the train and continued the journey to Moscow where Kozlov, Yefremov, member of the Central Committee, and the deputy chief of protocol of the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs had come out to meet us. At the Moscow station they had also brought out a guard of honour, a band played anthems and soldiers paraded with martial step, just to keep up the custom as for all the delegations. No young pioneers came out to welcome us with flowers. Kozlov offered us his cold hand, accompanied with an artificial smile from ear to ear, and in his deep voice bid us welcome. But the ice remained ice.

As soon as the anthems and the parade were over we heard cheering, clapping and enthusiastic calls, «Long live the Party of Labour!» We saw that they came from several hundred Albanian students who were studying in Moscow. They were not permitted to enter the station, but finally they were allowed in to avoid causing a scandal. Paying no attention to Kozlov and Yefremov, who never left us, we greeted our students who were shouting with joy, and together with them, we cheered for our Party. This was a good lesson for the Soviets to see what sort of unity our Party and people have with their leadership. The students did not leave us until we climbed into ZIL cars. In the car Kozlov was unable to find anything to say except «Your students are unruly.»

«No,» I said, «they are great patriots and love the Party and their leadership whole-heartedly.»

Kozlov and Yefremov accompanied us to the

residence which they had allocated to us at Zarechie, some 20-25 km outside Moscow. This was the villa where I had stayed many times with the comrades and with Nexhmije when I came on holiday. They told me once, «We have reserved this villa for Zhou Enlai and you, we put no one else here.» Even in the villa they had united us with the Chinese. As we proved later with the special detector we had brought with us, they had filled the villa with bugging devices.

I knew Kozlov well because I had talked with him many a time before. He was one of those who speak a great deal but say nothing. Quite apart from what we thought of them now, right from the first meeting I had gained the impression that this Kozlov had no brains. He pretended to know things, assumed poses, but his «pumpkin» had no seeds. He did not drink like the others and it must be said he was considered the second man in the leadership after Khrushchev.

I have written above about the quarrel I had with Kozlov and Pospyelov in 1957, in the «Kirov» Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre in Leningrad, over the speech I had made at the «Lenin» machine-building plant.

I remember that that night, when we returned from the theatre, the three of us were in one ZIL. I was in the middle. Kozlov said to Pospyelov, using the affectionate diminutive name, as is the Russian custom:

«You are a great man, one of the greatest theoreticians we have.»

«*Nu njet, nu njet,*»* replied Pospyelov «modestly».

I couldn't understand the reason for all this flattery, but later we learned that this Pospyelov was one of those who formulated the secret report against Stalin. Kozlov continued:

«What I say is right, but you are modest, very modest.»

This conversation continued the whole way, with one flattering the other until we arrived at our residence. This was sickening to me because it is not our way at all.

I was less acquainted with Yefremov.

One Sunday when I was in Moscow with Mehmet at the time of the 21st Congress, Polyansky, then a member of the Presidium of the Soviet party and now ambassador in Tokyo, invited us to lunch at his dacha outside Moscow. We went. Everything was covered in white because snow had fallen. It was cold. The villa, too, was white as snow, beautiful. Polyansky told us:

«This is the dacha where Lenin used to rest.»

With this he wanted to tell us, «I am an important person.» Here we found Yefremov and another secretary, from the Crimea, if I am not mistaken. They introduced us to him. It was ten

* Not me, not me. (Russian in the original).

o'clock in the morning. The table was laden as in the fables about the Russian czars.

«Let us sit down and have breakfast,» said Polyansky.

«We have eaten already,» we said.

«No, no,» he said, «we shall sit down and eat again.» (Of course he meant «drink».)

We did not drink but we watched them drinking and talking. What colossal amounts they ate and drank!! We opened our eyes wide as they downed whole tumblers of vodka and various wines. Polyansky, with his intriguer's face, was boasting without the least shame, while Yefremov with the other secretary, and another person who came in later, drank and without the slightest sign of embarrassment from our presence, poured out their sickening praises on Polyansky. «There is no one like you, you are a great man, the pillar of the party, you are the Khan of the Crimea,» etc., etc. The «breakfast» went on in this way until one o'clock. Mehmet and I were bored to death. We did not know what to do. I thought of billiards and in order to get away from this roomful of boozers I asked Polyansky:

«Is there a billiard table in the house?»

«Yes, of course,» he replied. «Do you want us to come?»

«With great pleasure!» I said, and we got up at once.

We went up to the billiard room. We stayed

there an hour and a half or two hours. The vodka, *pertsofka** and *zakuski** were sent up to them in the billiard room. Then we asked permission to leave.

«Where are you going?» asked Polyansky.

«To Moscow,» we replied.

«Impossible,» he said, «we are just about to have lunch.»

We opened our eyes in amazement. Mehmet said to him:

«But what have we been doing up till now? Haven't we eaten enough for two days?»

«Oh, no,» said Yefremov, «what we ate was just a light breakfast, while now the real lunch begins.»

They took us by the arm and led us back to the dining room. What a sight met our eyes! The table had been loaded all over again. The Soviet state of proletarians paid for all this food and drink for its leaders so they could «rest» and enjoy themselves! We told them: «We cannot eat any more.» We declined, but they wouldn't hear of it and begged us to eat and drink without a break. Mehmet had a good idea when he asked:

«Have you got a cinema here? Could we see a film?»

«We have, indeed,» said Polyansky and rang

* peppered vodka and hors-d'oeuvres (Russian in the original).

the bell, ordering the projectionist to prepare to show a film.

After half an hour everything was ready. We went to the cinema and sat down. I remember it was a Mexican colour film. We had escaped from the *stolovaya**. The film had not been running for more than ten minutes, when, in the darkness, we saw Polyansky and the others stealing quietly out of the room back to the vodka. When the film was over we found them sitting there drinking.

«Come along,» they said, «now we shall eat something, because it tastes fine after the film.»

«No,» we said, «we can eat and drink no more. Please allow us to return to Moscow.»

Very reluctantly they allowed us to get up.

«You will have to sample the beautiful Russian winter's night,» they told us.

«Let us sample even the winter,» I said to Mehmet in Albanian, «but let us get away from this drinking den and these boozers.»

We put on our overcoats and went out in the snow. We took only a few steps and a ZIM drew up: two other friends of Polyansky, one, a certain Popov, whom I had known in Leningrad because there he had been *factotum* to Kozlov. who had boosted him to minister of culture of the Russian Republic. We embraced in the snow.

«Please come back,» they said, «just for another hour...,» etc., etc.

* dining room (Russian in the original).

We refused and left. However, I paid a price for this. I took a chill, developed a heavy cold with a temperature and was absent from sessions of the congress. (I related this to open up a corner of the life of the Soviet leaders, those who undermined the Soviet regime and the authority of Stalin.)

Now let us come back again to our arrival in Moscow before the meeting of the parties.

Kozlov, then, accompanied us to the villa. On other occasions, usually they took us to the house and left. But this time Kozlov wanted to show that he was a «friendly comrade». He took off his coat and went straight into the *stolovaya,* which was full of bottles, snacks and black caviar.

«Come along, let us have something to eat and drink,» said Kozlov, but this was not what he was really concerned about. He wanted to talk with us to learn with what opinions and predispositions we had come.

He began the conversation by saying:

«Now the commission has finished the draft and we are virtually all in agreement. The Chinese comrades are in agreement, too. There are four or five matters on which a common opinion has not been reached, but we can bring out an internal communiqué about them.»

Turning to Hysni for his approval he asked, «Isn't that so?»

Hysni replied:

«No, it is not so. The work is not finished.

We have objections and reservations which our Party has presented in the written statement we forwarded to the commission.»

Kozlov frowned, he did not get the approval he wanted. I intervened and said to Kozlov:

«This will be a serious meeting in which all the problems must be put forward correctly. Many questions have been put forward in a distorted way, not just in the draft, but especially in life, in theory and practice. Everything must be reflected in the declaration. We shall not accept internal notes and addenda. Nothing in obscurity, everything in the light. That is why the meeting is being held.»

«It doesn't need a great deal of talk,» said Kozlov.

Mehmet jumped up and said in a derisive tone:

«Even in the UNO we speak as long as we like. Castro spoke there for four hours, while you apparently think you can restrict us!»

Hysni said:

«You interrupted our speech twice in the commission and did not allow us to continue to speak.»

«These things should not occur,» I added. «You ought to know that we do not accept such methods.»

«We must preserve unity, otherwise it is tragic,» said Kozlov.

«Unity is safeguarded by speaking openly, in conformity with the Marxist-Leninist line and norms,» replied Mehmet.

Kozlov got his reply, proposed a toast to me, helped himself to something to eat and left.

The whole period until the meeting of the parties began was filled with attacks and counter-attacks between us and revisionists of all ranks. The revisionists had opened war on us on a broad scale and we replied to their attacks blow for blow.

Their tactic was to do everything in their power to prevent us from speaking out at the meeting and openly putting forward our criticisms about the crimes they had committed. Certain that we would not budge from our correct opinions and decisions, they resorted to slander, alleging that the things we would raise were unfounded, would cause «division», that we were making «tragic» mistakes, that we were «at fault» and should change our course, etc., etc. The Soviets made great efforts to brainwash all the delegations of sister communist and workers' parties which were to take part in the meeting, in this direction. For their own part, they posed as «infallible», «blameless», «principled», and as though they held the fate of the Marxist-Leninist truth in their hands.

The pressure and provocations were exerted against us openly. In the reception put on in the Kremlin on the occasion of November 7, Kosygin

approached me, his face as pale as wax, and began to give me a *sermon** about friendship.

«We shall safeguard and defend our friendship with the Soviet Union on the Marxist-Leninist road,» I told him.

«There are enemies in your party who are fighting this friendship,» said Kosygin.

«Ask him,» I said to Mehmet, who knew Russian well, «can he tell us who are these enemies in our Party?»

Kosygin found himself in a tight spot. He began to mumble and said:

«You did not understand me well.»

«Enough of that,» said Mehmet, «we understood you very well, but you lack the courage to speak openly. We shall tell you openly in the meeting what we think about you.»

We walked away from that revisionist mummy.

(During the whole evening the Soviets acted towards us is such a way as not to leave us alone in peace, but isolated us from one another and surrounded us, according to previously prepared stage directions.)

A little later the Marshals Chuikov, Zakharov, Konev, and others, surrounded Mehmet and me. As instructed, they sang another tune: «You Albanians are fighters, you fought well, you resisted

* French in the original.

properly until you triumphed over Hitlerite Germany,» and Zakharov continued to cast stones at the German people. At that moment Shelepin joined us. He began to oppose Zakharov over what he said about the Germans. Zakharov got angry and disregarding the fact that Shelepin was a member of the Presidium and chief of the KGB, told him: «Go away, why do you butt into our conversation? You want to teach me what the Germans are? When I was fighting them, you were still drinking your mother's milk,» etc.

In the midst of this talk of the haughty marshals, full of vodka, Zakharov, who had been director of the «Voroshilov» Military Academy, where Mehmet and other comrades were sent to learn the Stalinist military art, said to Mehmet: «When you were here you were an outstanding student of our military art.» Mehmet cut short his words and said: «Thank you for the compliment, but do you want to say that this evening too, here in Georgievsky Zal, we are superior and subordinate, commander and pupil?»

Marshal Chuikov, who was no less drunk, intervened and said: «We want to say that the Albanian army should always stand with us...» Mehmet replied there and then, «Our army is and will remain loyal to its own people and will loyally defend the construction of socialism on the Marxist-Leninist road; it is and will remain solely under the leadership of the Party of Labour of

Albania, as a weapon of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Albania. Do you still not understand this, Marshal Chuikov? So much the worse for you!»

The marshals got their reply. One of them, I don't remember, whether Konev or some other, seeing that the talk was getting out of hand, intervened: «Let us end this talk. Come and drink a glass to the friendship between our two peoples and our two armies.»

Along with this feverish anti-Albanian and anti-Marxist activity, Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites attacked us openly in the material which they sent to the Chinese, in which they also attacked them. They distributed this material to all delegations, including ours. As is known, in this material, Albania no longer figured as a socialist country as far as the Khrushchevites were concerned. Apart from this, during a talk with Liu Shaoqi, Khrushchev had said: «We lost Albania, but we did not lose much; you won it, but you did not win much, either. The Party of Labour has always been a weak link in the international communist movement.»

The Khrushchevites' tactic was clear to us. The intention was, first, to threaten us by saying: «It depends on us whether you are or are not a socialist country, and hence, in the document which we hand you, Albania is no longer a socialist country,» and second, to threaten the others that, «The

Party of Labour of Albania is not a Marxist-Leninist party, and whoever defends it as such will be wrong and will be condemned together with the Party of Labour of Albania.» This meant in other words: «You communist and workers' parties that are coming to the meeting should be clear already that the things Enver Hoxha is going to say at the meeting are slanders, are the words of an anti-Soviet element.»

At the meeting, it was quite clear how they had groomed Ibarruri, Gomulka, Dej, etc., well in advance.

A few days before I spoke at the meeting, Khrushchev sought a meeting with me, of course, to «convince» us to change our stand. We decided to go to this meeting in order to make it quite clear to the Khrushchevites once again that we would not budge from our positions. Meanwhile, however, we read the material of which I spoke above. I met Andropov, who during those days was running back and forth as Khrushchev's courier.

«Today I read the material in which Albania does not figure as a socialist country,» I told him.

Without a blush, Andropov, who had been one of the authors of that base document, asked me, «What connection does this letter have with Albania?»

«This letter makes my meeting with Khrushchev impossible,» I replied.

Andropov frowned and murmured:

«That is a very serious statement, Comrade Enver.»

«Yes,» I said, «very serious! Tell Khrushchev it is not he who decides whether Albania is or is not a socialist country. The Albanian people and their Marxist-Leninist Party have decided this with their blood.»

Once again Andropov repeated like a parrot:

«But that is a material about China and has nothing to do with Albania, Comrade Enver.»

«We shall express our opinion in the meeting of the parties. Good-bye!» and I ended the conversation.

The written indictment of China which was distributed was a dirty anti-Marxist document. With this the Khrushchevites had decided to continue in Moscow what they had not achieved in Bucharest. Once again they used a cunning, Trotskyite tactic. They distributed this voluminous material against China before the meeting, in order to prepare the terrain and to brainwash the delegations of other parties, and to intimidate the Chinese, to compel them to take a moderate stand, if they would not submit. This anti-Chinese material did not surprise us, but it strengthened the conviction we had in the correctness of the line and the Marxist-Leninist stands of our Party in defence of the Communist Party of China. The material cast a deep gloom over the participants

in the meeting and would not be welcomed as the Khrushchevites expected. Splits would be created in the meeting and this was in favour of Marxism-Leninism. We could count on 7 to 10 parties which would adhere more to our side, if not openly, at least by not approving the hostile undertaking of the Khrushchevites.

As it turned out, the Chinese delegation had come to the Moscow Meeting with the idea that the tempers could be cooled, and initially they had prepared a material in a conciliatory tone, tolerant towards the stands and actions of the Khrushchevites. Den Xiaoping was to deliver it. As was becoming obvious, they had prepared a stand of «two or three variants». This seemed astonishing to us after those savage attacks which had been made on the Communist Party of China and Mao Zedong in Bucharest. However, when the Khrushchevites launched even more vicious attacks, like those which were contained in the material they distributed before the meeting, then the Chinese were obliged to completely alter the material they had prepared, to put aside the conciliatory spirit and to take a stand in reply to Khrushchev's attacks.

There was a tense atmosphere when the meeting opened. Not without a purpose, they had put us near the speaker's rostrum so that we would be under the reproving finger of the anti-Marxist Khrushchevite «prosecutors». But, contrary to

their desires, we became the prosecutors and accusers of the renegades and the traitors. They were in the dock. We held our heads high because we were with Marxism-Leninism. Khrushchev held his head in his two hands, when the bombs of our Party burst upon him.

Khrushchev's tactic at the meeting was cunning. He rose and spoke first, delivered an allegedly moderate, placatory speech, without open attacks, with phrases put together to set the tone for the meeting and create the impression that it ought to be calm, that we should not attack one another (they made their attacks in advance), that we should preserve unity (social-democratic), etc. With this he wanted to say: «We don't want quarrels, we don't want splits, nothing has happened, everything is going well.»

In his speech Khrushchev expressed the revisionist views completely and attacked the Communist Party of China and the Party of Labour of Albania, as well as those who were going to follow these parties, but without mentioning any names. With this tactic in his speech he wanted to warn us: «Take your pick, either general attacks without any names, but with everybody understanding for whom they are intended, or if you don't like it that way, we shall attack you openly.» In fact, of the 20 puppet delegates who spoke, only 5 or 6 attacked China, basing themselves on the Soviet material.

Khrushchev and his puppets knew that we were going to declare war on Khrushchevite and world modern revisionism, and that is why they insisted, both in the commission and in their speeches, that the question of factions and groupings in the international communist movement as well as the assessments of the 20th and 21st Congresses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and several other points, which we opposed, should be included in the draft. It was clear that Khrushchev, who had abandoned Leninism and the Leninist norms, and who, as he himself claimed, had the «heritage and the monopoly of Leninism», wanted to keep all the communist and workers' parties of the world under his conductor's baton, under his dictate. Whoever came out against his line, defined at the 20th and 21st Congresses, was a factionist, an anti-Marxist involved in groupings. Obviously this is how he prepared the stick for the Communist Party of China and the Party of Labour of Albania, and tried to take the measures to expel us from the international communist movement, which he intended to subject to his anti-Marxist ideas.

After him, 15 or 20 others, carefully brainwashed and prepared, got up one after the other and spoke on Khrushchev's line: «Nothing has occurred, there is no problem amongst us, peace reigns, everything is going well.» What a disgraceful bluff by the Khrushchevites, who manipulated

these hired lackeys in order to pose before us as men of principle! This was the general tone. «They had synchronized their watches,» as Zhivkov had said in one of his speeches, and which Khrushchev cited in Bucharest as an «historic» saying.

While the meeting continued, the Soviets and Khrushchev were terrified of our speech and wanted at all costs to convince us, if not to abandon our ideas, at least to soften our stand. They sent Thorez to mediate when they saw that we refused the meeting with Khrushchev. Thorez invited us to dinner, gave us a lecture about «unity» and advised us to be «cool and restrained». Maurice Thorez certainly knew the issues, because we had discussed them together, but it was clear that now he was acting as Khrushchev's envoy. But he strove in vain.We refused every proposal and he threatened us:

«The meeting will attack you.»

«We fear no one because we are on the right path,» we replied.

When they saw that they had failed with Thorez, the Soviets persisted with requests that we should meet Mikoyan, Kozlov, Suslov, Pospyelov and Andropov. We accepted. At this meeting in the villa in Zarechie, the Soviets presented matters as if nothing had occurred, as if they were not to be blamed at all, but on the contrary, according to them, the blame lay on the Party of Labour of Albania! Allegedly it was we who were

worsening the relations with the Soviet Union and they asked us to tell them openly why we were doing this!

We rejected these accusations and claims and demonstrated to them with incontestable facts that it was not we, but they, with their stands and actions, who had exacerbated the relations between our parties and countries.

For their part, Khrushchev's men, with utter shamelessness, denied everything, including their ambassador in Tirana, whom they called «*durak*»*, when they attempted to lay the blame for their faults on him. They wanted to get on good terms with us at all costs so that we would shut our mouths. They even offered us credits and tractors. But after exposing them, we told them, «If you do not admit and correct your grave errors, all your efforts are in vain.» The following day Kozlov and Mikoyan came back again but they achieved nothing.

The time for our speech was approaching and they made their final effort — they asked that we meet Khrushchev in the Kremlin. Apparently Khrushchev was still kidding himself that he could «convince us», and we accepted the invitation, but not at the hour he set, in order to tell him that «not you, but we decide even the hour of the meeting» let alone other things. Apart from this,

* fool (Russian in the original).

before we met him we wanted to send him an «oral message». We checked the residence they had allocated us with our detector and found that they had bugged us with microphones in every part of it. The only room unbugged was a toilet. When it was cold and we could not talk outside we were obliged to talk in the toilet. The Soviets were intrigued to learn where we talked and, when the idea struck them, they sent someone to put some microphones in the toilet, too. One of our officers caught the Soviet technician when he was carrying out the «operation», allegedly to repair a defect in the toilet, but our man told him: «There's no need because the toilet functions well.»

Our embassy, also, was filled with bugging devices and, knowing this, after we set the time of the meeting, we left the Kremlin and went to the embassy. We set up our apparatus and it signalled that they were bugging us from every direction. Then Mehmet sent Khrushchev and the others «a message» lasting ten to fifteen minutes, describing them as «traitors», saying «you're eavesdropping on us», etc., etc. Thus, when we went to the Kremlin, the revisionists had received our «greeting».

The meeting was held in Khrushchev's office and he began as usual:

«You have the floor. We are listening.»

«You requested the meeting,» I said, «you speak first.»

Khrushchev had to accept. Right from the start we were convinced that, in fact, he had come with the hope that, if he could not avoid, at least, he could soften the criticism that we were going to make at the meeting. Then, even if this meeting did not yield any result, he would use it, as usual, as an «argument» for the representatives of other parties to tell them, «See, we offered our hand to the Albanians once again, but they persisted in their course.»

Khrushchev and the others tried to cast the blame on our Party and feigned astonishment when we related historically how the differences between our parties had arisen.

«I am unaware that I had any conflict with Comrade Kapo in Bucharest,» said Khrushchev without a blush.

«The Central Committee of our Party was not and is not in agreement with Bucharest,» I told him.

«That is of no importance, but the fact is that even before Bucharest you were not in agreement with us and you did not tell us this.»

Of course, the charlatan was lying and lying deliberately. Was it not this same Khrushchev who, in April 1957, wanted to arrogantly break off the talks, and even earlier in 1955 and 1956, had we not told Khrushchev and Suslov of our opposition over Tito, Nagy, Kadar and Gomulka?

Mehmet mentioned some of these facts to them and Mikoyan was obliged to mutter agreement.

But when he saw that he had his back to the wall, Khrushchev hopped from branch to branch, from one theme to the other, and it was impossible to discuss with him the major issues of principle which were in essence the source of the differences. Of course, he was not interested in touching on these things. He wanted the submission of the Party of Labour of Albania and the Albanian people, he was their enemy.

«You are not in favour of putting our relations in order,» said Khrushchev.

«We want to put them in order, but first you must acknowledge your mistakes,» we told him.

The talk with us irritated Khrushchev. Of course, he was not used to having a small party and a small country resolutely oppose his stands and actions. Such was the chauvinist logic of overlords of these anti-Marxists, who, just like the imperialist bourgeoisie, considered the small peoples and countries vassals, and their rights commodities to be traded. When we told him openly of his mistakes and those of his men he jumped up:

«You are spitting on me,» he screamed. «It is impossible to talk to you. Only Macmillan has tried to speak to me like this.»

«Comrade Enver is not Macmillan, so take back your words,» both Mehmet and Hysni snapped back at him.

«Where shall I put them?»

«Stick them in your pocket,» Mehmet said.

The four of us got up and left without shaking hands with them, without falling into their traps, concocted with threats and hypocritical promises.

As we were leaving the meeting room, Mehmet went back and said to Khrushchev: «The stone which you are throwing against our Party and people will fall on your own head. Time will show this!» and he closed the door and joined us.

This was our final talk with these renegades, who still sought to pose as Marxists. However, the struggle of our Party and the genuine Marxist-Leninist parties and their own counter-revolutionary actions would tear the demagogical disguise from them more and more each day.

Thus, these pressures had no result. We did not give way a fraction in our stand and neither did we tone down or change anything in our speech.

I am not going to dwell on the content of the speech which I delivered on behalf of our Central Committee in Moscow, because it has been published and the views of our Party on the problems which we raised are already known world-wide. I merely want to underline the way

in which Khrushchev's followers reacted when they heard our attacks on their boss. Gomulka, Dej, Ibarruri, Ali Yata, Baghdash and many others mounted the tribune and competed in their zeal to take revenge on those who had «raised their hand against the mother party». It was both tragic and ludicrous to see these people, who posed as politicians and leaders «with a load of brains», acting in this way as mercenaries, as *hommes de paille**, as puppets manipulated by the strings behind the scene.

In a break between sessions Todor Zhivkov approached me. His lips and chin were trembling.

«Can we have a discussion, *brat***?» he asked me.

«With whom are we to talk,» I replied. «I said what I had to say and you heard me, I believe. Who has sent you to talk, Khrushchev? I've nothing to discuss with you, go up on the tribune and speak.»

He went waxy pale and said:

«I certainly shall get up and give you your answer.»

When we were coming out of the Georgievsky Zal to go to our residence, Anton Yugov, at the head of the stairs, said to us in a shocked tone:

* men of straw (French in the original).

** brother (Russian in the original).

«Where's this road leading you *bratya*?»*

«Where's Khrushchev's road leading you, because we are on and always will proceed on Lenin's road,» we told him. He dropped his head and we parted without shaking hands.

After I delivered the speech, Mehmet and I left the residence in which the Soviets had put us and went to the embassy, where we stayed for the rest of the time we were in Moscow. When we left their residence a Soviet security officer told Comrade Hysni in confidence, «Comrade Enver did well to go, because his life was in great danger here.» The Khrushchevites were capable of anything and we took our own measures. We sent the comrades of the embassy and the collaborators of our delegation out to the shops to buy food supplies. When the time we decided to leave came, we did not agree to go by aircraft, because an «accident» could happen more easily. Hysni and Ramiz stayed on in Moscow, as they had to sign the declaration, while Mehmet and I left the Soviet Union by train and ate nothing that came from their hands. We arrived in Austria, went down by train through Italy and from Bari returned safe and sound to Tirana on our own aircraft and went directly to the reception organized on the occasion

* brothers (Russian in the original).

of the 28th and 29th of November. We felt a great joy because we had carried out the task with which the Party charged us successfully, with Marxist-Leninist determination. The guests, too, wartime comrades, workers, officers, cooperativists, men and women, old and young were unrestrained in their enthusiasm and united firmly as a fist, as always, and all the more in difficult days.

Khrushchev and all those who followed him tried hard to ensure that the endorsed document of an international character would include the whole line of the Khrushchevite revisionists, which distorted the fundamental theses of Marxism-Leninism on the nature of imperialism, the revolution, peaceful coexistence, and so on. However, in the commissions, the delegations of our Party and the Communist Party of China strongly objected to and exposed these distortions. We managed to get many things corrected, many theses of the revisionists were rejected and many others were put correctly, until the final document emerged and was accepted by all the participants in the meeting.

The Khrushchevites were obliged to accept that document, but Khrushchev had declared beforehand: «The document is a compromise and compromises don't last long.» It was clear that Khrushchev himself would violate the Declaration

of the Moscow Meeting and would accuse us as though it were we who were violating the directives and decisions of that Meeting.

After the Moscow Meeting our relations with the Soviet Union and the revisionists of Moscow grew continually worse until they, unilaterally, broke off these relations entirely.

On November 25, in the final meeting which Mehmet and Hysni had in Moscow with Mikoyan, Kosygin and Kozlov, the latter made open threats. Mikoyan said to them: «You cannot live a day without economic aid from us and the other countries of the socialist camp.» «We shall tighten our belts and eat grass,» Mehmet and Hysni told them, «but will not submit to you. You cannot conquer us.» The revisionists thought that the sincere love of our Party and people for the Soviet Union would play a role in favour of the revisionists of Moscow. They hoped that our many cadres who had been trained in the Soviet Union would return united as a block to split the Party from the leadership. Mikoyan expressed this, saying: «When the Party of Labour hears of your stand it will rise against you.» «Come and attend some meeting of our Party when we raise these problems,» Mehmet told him, «and you will see what sort of unity exists in our Party and around its leadership.»

These threats of the revisionists were not just words. They acted. The economic sabotage from Moscow and their experts mounted to a crescendo.

13. THE FINAL ACT

Steel unity in the Party and our people. The Soviets want to occupy the Vlora base. Tense situation at the base. Admiral Kasatonov goes off with his tail between his legs. The enemies dream of changes in our leadership. The 4th Congress of the PLA. Pospyelov and Andropov in Tirana. The Greek and Czechoslovak delegates get the answer that they deserve to their provocations. Khrushchev's envoys to Tirana fail in their mission. Why do they «invite» us to go to Moscow again?! Khrushchev's public attack on the PLA at the 22nd Congress of the CPSU. The final breach: in December 1961 Khrushchev cuts off diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of Albania.

The whole Party and the people were informed of the events and the situation created especially after the Moscow Meeting. We knew that the attacks, provocations and blackmail would be increased and intensified as never before, we were

convinced that Khrushchev's anger would be poured upon us, our Party and people, to force us to submit. We spoke to the Party and people with open hearts, explained everything that had occurred, and made the dangerous activity of the Khrushchevite revisionists clear to them. As always, the Party and the people displayed their high level of maturity, their brilliant revolutionary patriotism, their love for and loyalty to the Central Committee of the Party, and the correct line we had always followed. They thoroughly understood the difficult situation we were going through, therefore they strained all their mental and physical energies to the maximum, mobilized themselves totally, further tempered their unity, and the Soviet revisionists found themselves up against a concrete wall. The year 1961 was turned into a year of glorious tests. Everywhere, in every sector, the provocations, insinuations and sabotage of the Khrushchevites were fearlessly and resolutely repelled. Nothing was allowed to pass. Moscow, followed immediately by the capitals of its satellites, began economic pressure on us. As the first serious pressure, the revisionists suspended action on the signed contracts and agreements of every kind, and later tore them up in Hitlerite style. They began to withdraw their experts, thinking that everything in our country would come to a standstill. But they were gravely mistaken.

The question of the Vlora base was the pretext for a quarrel. There was no doubt that the base was ours. We would never allow even an inch of our territory to be under the control of foreigners. By clear official agreement signed by the two governments, without leaving the slightest ground for equivocation, the Vlora base belonged to Albania and, at the same time, was to serve the defence of the camp. It was stated in the agreement that the Soviet Union would provide twelve submarines and a number of auxiliary ships. We were to train the cadres and we trained them, were to take over the ships and we did so, as well as four submarines. Our crews were trained and were waiting ready to take over the remaining eight.

However, the ideological differences between the two parties had begun, and with Khrushchev, they were bound to have repercussions on such a sensitive spot as the Vlora naval base. He and his men would distort the official agreement for two aims: first, to put pressure on us, to make us submit, and second, if we did not bend the knee, they would try to seize the base themselves, as a powerful starting point from which to occupy the whole of Albania.

Especially after the Bucharest Meeting, the Soviet experts, advisers and other militarymen at the Vlora naval base stepped up the frictions, quarrels and incidents with our sailors. The

Soviet side stopped all supplies of the materials they were supposed to provide for the base according to the agreement concluded; all the work commenced was suspended unilaterally and the provocations and blackmail were increased. The staff of the Soviet Embassy in Tirana, as well as the main representative of the General Command of the Armed Forces of the Warsaw Treaty, General Andreyev, placed themselves at the head of this savage anti-Albanian and anti-socialist activity. Countless acts of the filthiest vandalism were carried out by the Soviet personnel at the base on orders from above, and despite this, «to be in order», they tried to accuse our people over the acts of hooligans they committed themselves. Their shamelessness and cynicism reached the point that the «chief representative», Andreyev, sent a note to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Albania in which he claimed that «unpleasant acts were occurring at the base» from the side of the Albanians. And what were these «acts»? «Such and such an Albanian sailor threw his cigarette butt on the deck of the Soviet ship», «the children of Dukat tell the Soviet children 'Go home'», «the Albanian waiter in a club told our officer, 'I am in charge here and not you'», etc. General Andreyev even complained to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Albanian state that an unknown child had allegedly relieved

himself secretly near the building used by the Soviets.

With completely just indignation one of our officers answered Andreyev:

«Comrade General,» he said, «why do you not take up the key problems, but involve yourself with such trifles, which do not come within the authority even of the ships' commanders, but of the boatswains and the volunteers of the Front organization in charge of the residential blocks?!»

Keeping cool, we vigilantly watched the development of the situation and continually instructed our comrades to act cautiously and patiently, but never to submit and never fall for the provocations of Khrushchev's agents.

«In order to avoid disorder and incidents, the Vlora base should be placed completely under the command of the Soviet side!» proposed the Soviets.

We would never, never accept such a solution. It would be signing ourselves into slavery. We firmly opposed them and referred them to the agreement, under which the base was ours and ours alone.

In order to give their proposal the colour of a joint decision, in March 1961, they exploited a meeting of the Warsaw Treaty, at which Grechko insisted that the Vlora base should be left entirely in Soviet hands, and placed «under the

direct command» of the General Commander of the Warsaw Treaty, that is, of Grechko himself.

We firmly and indignantly opposed this proposal and, although the decision was adopted by the others, we declared:

«The only solution is that the Vlora base must remain in the hands of the Albanian Army. We will not permit any other solution.»

Then the Khrushchevites decided not to hand over to us the eight submarines and other ships which, according to the agreement, belonged to Albania. We insisted that they were ours and demanded that the Soviet crews should be withdrawn and everything handed over to our sailors, as had been done with the first four submarines. Besides the «chief representative», Andreyev, the Soviet revisionists also sent a certain rear-admiral to Tirana. This whole team was comprised of officers of the Soviet security service, sent to organize disturbances, sabotage and diversion at the Vlora base.

«We shall not give you the ships,» they said, «they are ours.»

We confronted them with the state agreement and they found another pretext.

«Your crews are not ready to take them over, they are not completely trained.»

These were all pretexts. Our sailors had gone through the respective schools, had been training for years and had always proved they

were completely capable of taking over the submarines and the other ships. Just a few months before the situation became tense, the Soviets themselves had declared that our crews were ready to take over the vessels that belonged to us.

On this, too, we gave them the answer they deserved. Our officers and sailors at the base carried out all the orders we gave them coolly, with determination and iron discipline. The Soviet provocations at the base were stepped up, especially at the time when we were in Moscow at the Meeting of the 81 parties. The comrades of our Political Bureau kept us informed from Tirana about everything that occurred, and from Moscow we gave them guidance and advice to keep cool, to guard against provocations and to strengthen their vigilance, as well as on the military measures they had to take in Vlora and throughout the whole country to ensure that the army was in full readiness.

The orders to the Soviet officers in Albania on how they should behave came from Moscow, where we were holding fierce debates with Khrushchev, Mikoyan, Suslov, etc., during those days.

At the first meeting we had with Mikoyan and his colleagues in Moscow, on November 10, as soon as he started speaking, he tried to frighten us:

«Your officers are behaving badly with ours

at the Vlora base. Do you want to leave the Warsaw Treaty?»

We immediately gave Mikoyan the reply he deserved. After years of filling us up to the neck with his «criticisms» and «advice», now he was threatening us. We mentioned the unworthy behaviour of Soviet officers at the Vlora base, especially the villainous actions of one of the Soviet «rear-admirals», who, I told Mikoyan, «might be anything, but certainly not a rear-admiral»; I mentioned the statements of Grechko and Malinovsky, who had also threatened that they would expel us from the Warsaw Treaty, etc.

My reply made him wriggle and squirm, trying to dodge any responsibility, but two days later Khrushchev made the same threat.

«If you like, we can dismantle the base,» he shouted, while we were talking about the major disagreements created.

«Are you trying to threaten us with this?» I said.

«Comrade Enver, don't raise your voice,» Khrushchev interrupted, «the submarines are ours.»

«Yours and ours,» I said, «we are fighting for socialism. The territory of the base is ours. We have a signed agreement about the submarines, which recognizes the rights of the Albanian people. I defend the interests of my country. Therefore, take good note that the base is ours and will remain ours.»

When we returned from Moscow, the provocations at the base were increased and in order to exert pressure on and impress us, the Soviet deputy foreign minister, Firyubin, came to Tirana with two other «deputies»: the first deputy-chief of the General Staff of the Soviet Army and Navy, Antonov, and the deputy chief of the Supreme Staff of the Soviet Navy, Sergeyev.

They came allegedly «to reach agreement», but in fact they brought us an ultimatum:

The Vlora base must be put completely and solely under Soviet command, which was to be subordinate to the commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces of the Warsaw Treaty.

«We are the masters here,» we told them clearly and bluntly. «Vlora has been and is ours.»

«This is the decision of the Command of the Warsaw Treaty,» threated Firyubin, the former Soviet ambassador in Belgrade, at the time of the Khrushchev-Tito reconciliation.

We gave him the reply he deserved and, after trying to frighten us by saying, «We shall take the ships and the imperialists will gobble you up,» he left, accompanied by the two other generals.

After them, the commander of the Black Sea Fleet, Admiral Kasatonov, came to Tirana with the mission of seizing not only the eight submarines and the floating dock with Soviet crews,

which were also the property of the Albanian state, but even the submarines which we had taken over earlier. We told him bluntly: Either you hand the submarines over to us according to the agreement, or within a short time (we set the date) you must withdraw immediately from the bay, with only those ships on which your crews serve. You are violating the agreement, you are stealing our submarines, and you will pay for this stand.

The admiral wriggled and tried to soften us, but in vain. He did not hand over the submarines, but went to Vlora, boarded the command submarine and lined up the others in fighting formation. We gave orders to close the Sazan Narrows and to train the guns on the Soviet ships. Admiral Kasatonov, who had wanted to frighten us, was frightened himself. He was caught like a rat in a trap and if he attempted to implement his plan he might find himself at the bottom of the sea. In these conditions the admiral was obliged to take only the submarines with Soviet crews, and he sailed out of the bay back home with his tail between his legs. A great evil was removed from our land, once and for all.

In the last year in particular, the Soviets at the Vlora base committed innumerable vile and revolting acts. However, at those delicate moments the group of our officers at the base capably and intelligently defended the Party against the plotters, provocateurs and chauvinists, who corrupted

the feelings of the Soviet sailors to the ultimate degree. They holed the reservoirs, smashed the beds and windows in the buildings where they lived and worked, etc. They tried to take away everything, down to the last nut and bolt, but did not succeed in their aims. We took a stern stand, defended our rights properly and replied to the attacks and provocations with cool tempers, while they lost their heads.

The Soviet revisionists were furious. They committed every act of sabotage and broke the agreements. They were compelled to recall ambassador Ivanov and sent a certain Shikin in his place. He was to try to prepare the final act of the hostile work of the Soviet revisionists — to split the Party. The Khrushchevites hoped to bring about the split at the 4th Congress which we were preparing. They deceived themselves that what they had failed to achieve in other ways, might occur at our congress. They expected that the congress would denounce the line pursued by the leadership of our Party in Bucharest and Moscow. At that period, the bourgeoisie and reaction, informed and directly and indirectly incited by the Khrushchevites, Titoites and their agents, had launched a campaign of slanders against our country and Party. They hoped that the revisionist cataclysm would occur in Albania, too. «Enver Hoxha chief of the Albanian Communist Party will soon be relieved of his post, as a result

of the conference of communist leaders of the world which was held last month in Moscow,» reported a Western news agency, in a commentary stemming from Belgrade, on the eve of the opening of our 4th Congress.

«Observers of Eastern Europe say that Moscow will use its influence to bring about changes in the Communist Party of Albania, which took a hard line at the Moscow Conference,» said the imperialist news agencies during those days, and continued: «Although even communist China accepted the Soviet line, the Albanians have persisted in their stand.»

We read these reports of the sooth-sayers of imperialism with scorn and knew very well who had a hand in compiling them.

At the meeting which was organized on November 25, 1960, between the delegations of the PLA and the CPSU, Mikoyan personally, told Comrades Mehmet and Hysni:

«You will see what difficult situations will come about within your Party and people with this change you are making in your relations with the Soviet Union.»

We heard such threatening statements, sometimes open, sometimes camouflaged, from all directions.

Nevertheless we calmly continued our course: we invited delegations from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and from other communist

and workers' parties. From the Soviet Union came Pospyelov and Andropov, from Czechoslovakia a certain Barak, who was minister of the interior and was later jailed as a thief, etc. Let them come and see with their own eyes what the Party of Labour of Albania and the Albanian people were, let them try to achieve their secret aims. They would catch their own fingers in the trap.

The congress opened in an atmosphere of indescribable enthusiasm and unity of the Party and our people. The opening day was turned into a real people's celebration. The people, singing, dancing and carrying flowers, escorted the delegates to the entrance of the building where the congress was to be held and while the work began within, the celebration continued outside. This was the initial reply which the Khrushchevite, Titoite and other revisionists received right at the start. They would continue to receive other crushing blows inside.

It had never crossed the minds of Pospyelov, Andropov and their lackeys that they would find themselves in the midst of such a fire, which warmed and strengthened our hearts and seared and blinded them. Throughout all the days of the congress, the steel unity of our Party around its Central Committee, the high degree of maturity and keen Marxist-Leninist sense of the delegates, the vigilance, keen-wittedness and readiness of every delegate to give the proper reply to any

provocation on the part of revisionist «friends», were outstanding.

Pospyelov's speech, with which the revisionists hoped to create the split in our congress, was not applauded at all. On the contrary, it was received with silence and contempt by the delegates to the congress. From his box, Andropov openly directed his puppets as to when they should clap, when they should remain seated, or rise to their feet. It was a ludicrous spectacle. They discredited themselves completely, both with the stands they adopted and with the base things they did.

The representative of the Communist Party of China at the congres was Li Xiennien, who sat in stony silence through the sessions when he saw the enthusiasm of the delegates. From the tribune he said some good words addressed to our Party, but «advised» us to be patient and cautious and not break off the talks with Khrushchev. We went about our own business.

When they saw that our ranks were very solid, without any sign of a breach, the Khrushchevites intensified their interference, pressure and blackmail. They provoked us everywhere.

«What is this?!» Andropov angrily asked one of our comrades, a functionary at the apparatus of the Central Committee of our Party who was accompanying him. «Why do the delegates cheer so much for Enver Hoxha?!»

«Go and ask them!» said our comrade. «But tell me,» he continued, «for whom should they cheer, apart from Marxism-Leninism, the Party and its leadership?! Or do you intend to propose that we should put someone else at the head of the Party?!»

The blow went home and Andropov pulled in his horns. The Greek delegate and Rudolph Barak of Czechoslovakia were brought into action. Apart from other things, the Greek delegate considered incorrect the reply which we had given to the anti-Albanian talk which Sophocles Venizelos had held with Khrushchev about «Northern Epirus». «Venizelos is not a bad man, he is a progressive bourgeois democrat,» the Greek delegate told our comrade accompanying him. Our comrade replied that the views of the «democrat» Venizelos about «Northern Epirus» were no different from those of the rabid chauvinist and anti-Albanian, Eleutherios Venizelos. Apart from other acts, even the speech which the Greek delegate was to deliver at our congress was in an openly provocative spirit, and Mehmet, becoming angry, gave the Greek the reply he deserved in front of everybody, by describing him with this true name: provocateur.

Khrushchev's other agent, Barak, also exploited the occasion along with others, who, through actions worthy of the dirtiest scoundrels, tried to vent their spleen, but only discredited

themselves and those who had sent them even more. They operated from the boxes, or in the intervals between sessions. In the meantime, the Soviet journalists had also gone into «action».

What did they and those who commanded them not do in order «to discover» some shortcoming at which they could grasp to launch their attack! But they achieved nothing. The congress went like clock-work. With a profound sense of responsibility, the Albanian communists drew up the balance of the past and defined the tasks for the future. However, the revisionists could not go away entirely «empty-handed», because they would have to render account to their masters. And they found the «shortcoming»:

«There are many ovations and consequently the sessions go on for more than one hour and a half,» an alleged journalist of TASS, just arrived from Moscow to follow the proceedings of the congress, «protested» angrily.

«What can we do? Should we tell the delegates not to applaud?!» asked our comrade accompanying him, in a sarcastic tone.

«The time-table should be respected, an hour and a half and *tochka**,» said the «journalist».

«However, it's not the journalists, but the elected presidium that presides over the congress,» replied our comrade. «Nevertheless, if you consider it reasonable, make some protest against ovations...»

* full stop (Russian in the original).

Before they departed after the congress, Pospyelov and Andropov sought a meeting with us.

«We want to talk about some matters which have to do with our mutual comradely relations,» said Pospyelov, who spoke first. «We want to strengthen the friendship between us, to have a strong friendship.»

«This is what we have always wanted, too,» I said, «but don't think that this close friendship will be strengthened through the 'holy spirit'. This friendship can be achieved by applying the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism correctly and consistently.»

I went on to list to Pospyelov some of their anti-Marxist and anti-Albanian actions, and I stressed that there could never be friendship on the course which the Soviet leadership was following.

«You are interfering in the internal affairs of the Soviet leadership,» he said.

I told Pospyelov: «To say that this or that view or action of this or that leader is not right, is not in any way interference in the internal affairs of a leadership. We have never intended to interfere in your internal affairs. However, you must understand clearly that neither have we permitted, nor are we going to permit the Soviet leadership to interfere in the internal affairs of

our Party in any way. Every party is master of its own house.

«It is true,» I continued, «that there are major ideological differences between our two parties. We told you of our opinions abouf these things openly and according to all the Leninist norms. You reacted angrily to this, and apart from other things, extended these ideological differences to other fields. Mikoyan wanted to frighten us with 'the difficult situations' which would emerge for us in the Party and this was a threat. You have seen our situation,» I said, «therefore tell Mikoyan what you saw at the 4th Congress of our Party and tell him to what degree our Party is 'split'!»

The aim of these scoundrels was to tell us that, among other things, all the agreements and protocols on credits, which they had accorded us for the five-year plan, would have to be re-examined. To this end they demanded that I should go to Moscow.

We resolutely rejected these hostile demands, which concealed sinister plans.

«The economy is another field to which you have extended the ideological differences which exist between us,» we told Pospyelov and Andropov. «This is not Marxist, nor is it befitting a party and state such as yours.»

«We do not understand you,» interrupted Pospyelov. «In what do you see this?»

«There are scores of facts,» we said. «But let us look at your stand towards our economic delegation, which went to the Soviet Union last November. This delegation was kept hanging around in Moscow for months on end. No one received it, no one listened to it. Apart from other attempts, our economic delegation sent more than 20 letters and telegrams to the respective organs of your side, just during the days of its stay there, but no reply came, nothing was discussed and nothing was signed. Do you think that we don't understand these stands of yours, which have the smell of blackmail?»

«When the Yugoslavs go there you finish the talks with them in 10 days,» said Mehmet.

«The war minister of Indonesia went to Moscow and agreements were signed immediately. You gave him big credits for armaments,» I said, «while you neglected little socialist Albania, with which you have agreements.»

«You must come to Moscow for talks,» they said, repeating Khrushchev's constant demand that I should go there.

«We have replied to you in writing,» I told them. «There is no reason for me and Mehmet to go to Moscow to discuss problems which have been discussed and decided long ago. As you are well aware we have discussed and jointly drafted the agreement on credits for our coming five-year plan, not just in principle, but giving details of all

the projects. On the basis of this agreement, Soviet experts came here, drew up the designs, etc. While now you want us to go back there to re-examine the agreements! Why?! We cannot agree to remove one comma from all those very detailed documents, which have been signed at the top level by the two sides,» I replied to the revisionists, and went on:

«There is no reason for me to go to Moscow and I do not want to go. As for the agreements, there are two ways open to you: either you respect them or you violate them. It depends on you which way you choose. If you violate the agreements and continue your hostile anti-Marxist course, the world will judge you and condemn you. We told you openly, like Marxists, everything we had against you. Now you must choose: either the road of Marxist-Leninist friendship or the road of hostility.»

As was natural for them, the Khrushchevites chose the road of hostility to the People's Republic of Albania and the Party of Labour of Albania. They became more furious and more shameless in their actions. As is known, at that period we discovered and smashed the plot of several imperialist and revisionist foreign powers, which, in collaboration with their agents in our ranks, wanted to launch a military aggression against our country and people. At the 4th Congress of the Party we announced that the plot had been dis-

covered and that the conspirators, Teme Sejko and others, would render account to the people's court. The conspirators admitted everything with their own mouths.

Precisely at this time, our «friends», members of the Warsaw Treaty, headed by Khrushchev, apart from their threats, declared to us: «A special commission of the Warsaw Treaty should come to Albania to verify how well-founded were the things you said about the plot»! Their perfidy had gone as far as this. They wanted to come to Albania to achieve what the others were unable to achieve. For this, too, we gave them the reply they deserved.

Khrushchev was left without another move. He tried all his manoeuvres, cunning, traps and blackmail on us and none of them yielded results. Then he came out openly against us. At the 22nd Congress of his party, in October 1961, Khrushchev publicly attacked and slandered the Party of Labour of Albania.

We replied at once, openly, to his base anti-Albanian attacks and through the press made known to the Party and the people both Khrushchev's accusations against us and our stand towards those accusations and attacks.

Khrushchev immediately received not only our reply but also that of the whole Albanian people: in thousands of thousands of telegrams and

letters which came to our Central Committee from all corners of the country, from the most varied strata of the population, the communists and our people, while expressing their profound and legitimate indignation at the treacherous actions of Khrushchev, supported the line of the Party with all their strength and pledged that they would defend and apply this correct line to the end in the face of any test or sacrifice.

Then Khrushchev undertook his final act against us — the only thing left undone — unilaterally, he broke off diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of Albania. This was his final desperate gesture of revenge: «Since they did not want to stay under my wing, let the imperialists gobble them up,» he thought. But he was terribly wrong, just as he had been wrong all his life. We gave a resolute reply to his hostility and that of the Khrushchevite lackeys. Heroically and with Marxist-Leninist maturity, the Party of Labour of Albania resisted the attacks of modern revisionism led by Khrushchev and counter-attacked hard, with exemplary solidarity, with great Marxist-Leninist clarity and with indisputable and undeniable arguments and facts.

The revolutionary words and opinions of the Party of Labour of Albania were listened to with respect everywhere in the world. The proletariat saw that this small party was successfully and gloriously defending Marxism-Leninism against

the revisionist cliques that were in power. Modern revisionism, headed by Soviet revisionism, was exposed and is still being exposed with revolutionary courage by our Party.

The revisionist Soviet Union has suffered colossal defeats in every field. Its pseudo-Marxist disguise was torn from it and it lost the prestige and authority which had been forged by Lenin, Stalin and the Bolshevik Party which they led. The communists, the revolutionaries and fighters for people's liberation were not to be deceived by the demagogy of the Khrushchevite revisionists. Our Party has made, is making and always will make its contribution to this revolutionary work.

Thus the relations of socialist Albania with the revisionist Soviet Union came to an end. However, our struggle against the treacherous, fascist, social-imperialist activity of the Khrushchevite and Brezhnev revisionists did not cease and will not cease. We have attacked them and will go on attacking them until they are wiped from the face of the earth, until the joint struggle of the peoples, revolutionaries and Marxist-Leninists all over the world triumphs everywhere, including the Soviet Union.

One day the Soviet people will sternly condemn the Khrushchevites and will honour and love the Albanian people and the Party of Labour

of Albania, as they loved us in better times, because our people and Party fought unflinchingly against the Khrushchevites, who are our common enemies.

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