Life 11/30/70

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

THE YOUNG NIXON

Sirs: God, what a beautiful story ("The Young Nixon," Nov. 6)! I felt inspired, proud, grateful and happy that this remarkable man is our President.

Sincere thanks to Donald Jackson for this honest portrait.

MRS. EDWARD C. MEYERS
Lambertville, Mich.

Sirs: I was delighted to read that President Nixon is not merely one of those goody-goody Horatio Alger-type characters. With today's stakes it's comforting to know our President is not one to draw to a three-card flush or one to be bluffed, but rather one who can do some bluffing if and when necessary.

JOSEPH C. OLSON
LT. COMMANDER, USN (Ret.)
San Diego, Calif.

Sirs: That lovely boy with the violin on your cover: I ask you, "Where did he go wrong?"

WANITA HOLMES
Hollywood, Calif.

Sirs: I was fascinated to learn that Richard Nixon once broke into the office of the dean of Duke Law School. As I understand it, that constitutes trespassing, breaking and entering, in short —crime. You do not state whether the dean discovered this crime. If so, did he mollycoddle the offenders? Did he, as a permissive administrator, stand between them and the law? Was he soft on students who defy the law?

It just proves, as Vice President Agnew has been saying, that these lawless students will come to no good end.

RUTH BAUERLE
Delaware, Ohio

Sirs: "Nick" Nixon deserves more credit for his service in the South Pacific than published accounts, including LIFE's, have given him.

I served with him for 14 months during his SCAT (South Pacific Air Transport Command) days, about six of which were as his "officer in charge." In SCAT, Lieutenant (j.g.) Nixon was one of a few Navy officers assigned to that Marine-dominated unit, perhaps no small challenge in itself.

Nixon's first assignment, on Espiritu Santo, was as passenger officer, his basic responsibility being to supervise and direct the movement of military passengers to and from the forward area. Most of the returnees were wounded and required particular handling and care; Nixon saw to it that they got the best. Later in his tour he may have found time to play poker, but in the early days he was voluntarily on duty around the clock. None of us prima donna pilots ever found cause to fault him.

As the Solomon Islands campaign progressed from Guadalcanal to Bougainville, Nixon became more restive in the rear areas. In the latter part of 1943, about the time that the battle for Bougainville was under way, he asked me to nominate him to head the SCAT contingent for the next advance, one which all of us felt sure would be a bloody invasion of Rabaul, Japan's "Gibraltar" in the South Pacific. I was glad to do so and he was picked for the job. As it turned out, the target was Green Island, the landing was unopposed and Nixon's desire to serve in an assault was frustrated.

In March of 1944 when I was detached from SCAT, it was my duty to make out a fitness report on Lieutenant Nixon. In addition to giving him "outstanding" marks, I recommended that he be cited for his competency, leadership and devotion to duty. He was that kind of an officer.

CARL J. FLEPS
Brig. General, USMC (Ret.)
Glenview, Ill.

Sirs: As a fighter pilot in the Air Force, I led several strikes against Rabaul in New Britain. We flew P-39s out of Bougainville and refueled at Green Island coming and going. We were also there on D-Day. How much we appreciated Lieutenant Nixon's hamburger stand on Green! As rushed as we were, I would never leave without those refreshments. It meant so much—just a few minutes' relaxation, good sandwiches and the coldest pineapple juice in the islands. I didn't know then who our benefactor was. I'd like to thank him now on behalf of the 347th Fighter Group.

CHANDLER P. WORLEY
Indianola, Miss.

SHOCK ROOM

Sirs: The extraordinary manner in which your Thomas Thompson and Bill Eppridge captured and conveyed the feeling inside the Shock Room in Houston's Ben Taub Hospital (Nov. 6) is a signal journalistic achievement.

PAUL ZIMMERMAN
Managing Editor
Lodi *News-Sentinel*
Lodi, Calif.

Sirs: Policeman Edgar Willis is in shock, bullet wounds in forehead and upper chest, presumably at death's door, and he is asked, "Estimated monthly income?" Beautiful!

MRS. IDA A. ARRAMBIDE
San Antonio, Texas

GUEST PRIVILEGE

Sirs: How refreshingly sane was Derek Wright's commentary on sexual liberation ("The New Tyranny of Sexual Liberation," Nov. 6). It's high time someone put this highly overpublicized pastime in its proper perspective. Pity it takes an Englishman. Can no American write so definitively on the subject, or are they too busy reading *Playboy*?

MRS. J. GLENN TUTHILL
Denver, Colo.

Sirs: Derek Wright's comments are so pedestrian and patronizing. His absurd allusion to Dr. Masters and Mrs. Johnson is uncalled-for. Sex research, like any medical and psychiatric research, is valid, and certain criteria for healthy response and functioning can be helpful. I don't think people are so naïve as to believe that sexual researchers are writing textbooks on how it should be done.

DONALD F. GOTTSCHALK
St. Simons Island, Ga.

Sirs: Has the word "love" been divorced from the word "sex"? Mr. Derek Wright avoids "love" as if it were a four-letter word.

HARRIET KLEIN
San Mateo, Calif.

YOUNG DRUG OFFENDERS

Sirs: As a former social worker, I was shocked and dismayed when I read of the severe penalties dealt out to the youthful drug offenders in the town of Rupert, Idaho ("A Town Deals Sternly with Its Own," Nov. 6). The smug and self-congratulatory attitude of Judge Bellwood and many of the townspeople makes one wonder whether their concern was with the fate of the six teenagers—or whether they were simply proud of having dealt a blow to the nonconformist younger generation.

JANE MASKE
Pocatello, Idaho

Sirs: Even though I am a teen-ager, I agree with Judge Bellwood's decision. I think it really taught most of the people in this community a lesson, particularly the offenders. I think if I had been one of them, I would respect Judge Bellwood for teaching me a lesson.

SHANE HODGES
Rupert, Idaho

Sirs: Mr. Wainwright's article is fair and accurate. Whether the decision in these cases will be right or wrong in the final analysis is difficult to predict. I can only hope that the results will be the best for everyone.

DONALD J. CHISHOLM
Prosecuting Attorney
Minidoka County
Rupert, Idaho

Sirs: "Did it help?" asks Mr. Wainwright. I must answer no. Kids were pretty scared for a while and quite a few parents woke up, but after about two months, when the publicity cooled, drugs were going full force again. Most adults haven't realized that yet.

KATHLEEN JENSEN
Paul, Idaho

ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSES

Sirs: I literally shuddered with horror at the pictures and idea of "learning spaces" for young children ("Stack of One-Room Schoolhouses," Nov. 6). The alienation of man takes a step forward with the methodology of individual "learning spaces." Send your people down here to see us and we'll show you 30 children that form a "society by cohesion" instead of "society by isolation." We'll show you prepared environments that call children to constructive activity, rapid learning and genuine caring for one another.

CHRISTA K. GOVAN
Administrator-Teacher
Little Rock Montessori School
Little Rock, Ark.

BOOK REVIEW

Sirs: So you had to get a Republican to review Mrs. Johnson's *A White House Diary* ("Easier To Do What Lyndon Asks," Nov. 6)! And old Agnew Buckley rides again. I think we have had enough gutter politics. Mrs. Johnson's book turns the spotlight on Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself. It is refreshing and heartwarming.

LA DEAN BINGAMAN
Steward, Ill.

Sirs: Who cares about "*force majeure*" or "social anfractuosities"? I don't even know what they mean. I thoroughly enjoyed Mrs. Johnson's book. At least I could understand what she was writing.

VIRGINIA JOHNSON
Richmond, Va.

PARTING SHOTS

Sirs: I have never encountered a more biased article on any national subject ("Something Is Being Done about Farm Subsidies . . . Or Is It?" Nov. 6). These so-called abuses and disproportionate conditions can be found in any necessary federal program. Maybe this nation can get along without a rural class. If so, it will be the first.

LEON A. LAFLER
Mesa, Ariz.

Sirs: I would think that an IQ of 75 or above would be sufficient to realize that any government invasion of the free enterprise system will always produce the mess you describe.

KATHLEEN K. ECKL
Sun Valley, Calif.

A CHRISTMAS PLEA

Sirs: As a Christmas present to the two million people in the armed forces, we would appreciate it very much if you would print the following letter.

To the people of the United States: The most depressing thing for a GI is to stand in the mail line for 20 minutes only to find out there is no mail for him and then to see all his buddies sitting around reading their letters. The Christmas season is coming up fast, and many of you are probably already out buying presents for friends and relatives. We ask, please take a minute and write a letter or mail a Christmas card with just a few lines to a serviceman. It does wonders for a person to know that someone at least cares.

PFC. JOHN KASZULA
PFC. CHARLES HUGHES
Co. C 35th S&S BN (86)
APO New York 09107, N.Y.

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VOL. 69, NO. 22
LIFE
NOVEMBER 27, 1970

historical document

KHRUSHCHEV REMEMBERS

In vivid detail the former Soviet Premier reveals life in Stalin's inner circle

Articles prepared for LIFE by Gene Farmer and Jerrold Schecter

In 53 years the U.S.S.R. has produced no personality like Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev, the peasant who emerged from the coal mines to become master of one of the world's two superpowers. Until now no document like this has ever come out of the Soviet Union. Khrushchev's leading biographer, the British scholar Edward Crankshaw, has written the introduction to the book version of *Khrushchev Remembers*. In it he says that one does not have to read very far to be convinced that this is Khrushchev himself speaking—"quite unmistakably, a voice from limbo, and a very lively voice at that." This is the former Soviet Premier who became one of the genuine personalities of modern times, the man who tried to bully two U.S. Presidents (Eisenhower and Kennedy) and one President-to-be (Nixon).

The central thrust of *Khrushchev Remembers* is a denunciation of Joseph Stalin's abuses, but the manuscript goes far beyond that. In this issue LIFE begins its four-part serialization with Khrushchev's intimate account of what it was like to live and work with Stalin. Next week LIFE readers will see World War II as Khrushchev saw it. The following week Khrushchev describes the death of Stalin and the spectacularly contrived "elimination" of the secret police chief Lavrenti Beria. In the fourth and final installment, Khrushchev tells about his personal dealings with "the world outside," culminating in an astonishingly candid account of the Cuban missile crisis in October 1962.

These are Khrushchev's words—often laced with self-serving motivation and ingenuousness, but still *his* words. Once, in 1960, Khrushchev boorishly pounded the table during a speech given at the U.N. by Britain's Harold Macmillan. Afterwards Macmillan remarked, "You must admit that this is a human fellow. Even when he pounds his shoe, that is at least a *human* thing to do." In these pages LIFE readers will hear a very human voice speaking from the past to the future —and in tones never before heard from inside the Soviet Union.

One of the earliest known pictures of Khrushchev with Stalin was taken in 1932, when Khrushchev was a district Party chief in Moscow. Then about 38, he was heavily involved in Party feuding—on Stalin's side.

This excerpt has been adapted for LIFE *from the forthcoming book "Khrushchev Remembers," to be published in the United States and Canada by Little, Brown and Company in December 1970. The book was translated and edited by Strobe Talbott and carries an introduction and commentary by Edward Crankshaw.*

'Some people still quake before

PART I: LIFE WITH STALIN

I now live like a hermit on the outskirts of Moscow. I communicate only with those who guard me from others—and who guard others from me.

I emphasize now the most striking events of Stalin's rule which damaged the fabric of our Soviet society. There's no point in dwelling on the positive side of Stalin's leadership. If everything positive that has been said about Stalin were diminished by 80%, there would still be enough left over to praise a thousand great men. There are still some people who think that we have Stalin to thank for all our progress, who quake before Stalin's dirty underdrawers, who stand at attention and salute them.

How much of a genius was Stalin? What sort of "Dear Father" was he to us? How much blood shed by our country was Stalin responsible for? The covers over the answers to these and other questions should be ripped away.

Stalin's pretensions to a very special role in our history were well-founded, for he really was a man of outstanding skill and intelligence. He truly did tower over everyone around him, and despite my condemnation of his methods and his abuses of power, I have always recognized and acknowledged his strengths. In everything about Stalin's personality there was something admirable and correct as well as something savage. Nevertheless, if he were alive today I would vote that he should be brought to trial and punished for his crimes.

As early as 1923, Lenin saw clearly where Stalin might lead the Party if he kept the post of General Secretary. He wrote that while Stalin possessed the qualities necessary for leadership, he was basically brutish and not above abusing his power. The Central Committee gave no heed to Lenin's words, and consequently the whole Party was punished.

There was unquestionably something sick about Stalin. People of my generation remember how the glorification of Stalin grew and grew, and everyone knows where it led. I often see films about China on television, and it seems to me that Mao Tse-tung is copying Stalin's personality cult. If you close your eyes, listen to what the Chinese are saying about Mao, and substitute "Comrade Stalin" for "Comrade Mao," you'll have some idea of what it was like in our time. Huge spectacles were organized in Moscow in much the same way that they're organized in Peking today. Apparently men like Stalin and Mao are similar in one respect: they consider it indispensable that their authority be held on high not only to make the people obedient but to make the people afraid of them as well.

We have no choice but to rehabilitate *all* of Stalin's victims. Many were returned to their rightful places in history by the 20th Party Congress [in 1956]; but many more still await rehabilitation and the reasons for their deaths are still hidden. This is shameful—it's absolutely disgraceful! And now they're starting

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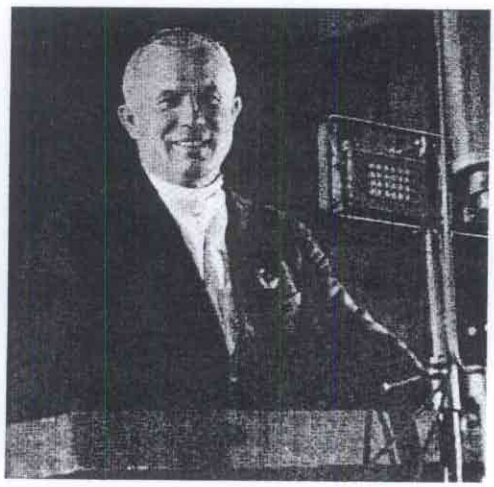
Khrushchev's rise was swift. Here he appears with the top leadership on a Kremlin terrace to review a May Day parade in

In 1923, when he was 29, Khrushchev (seated third from left) was a student at Donets Technical School in Yuzovka, the dismal mining town where he spent his early manhood and became a Communist revolutionary.

Stalin's dirty underdrawers'

1937, when he had been the Moscow Party chief for two years. Standing between Khrushchev and Stalin is the Bulgarian Georgi Dmitrov, then head of the Communist International. At Stalin's left is Molotov; behind him, partly hidden, is Mikoyan.

Khrushchev was soon spending more and more time in Party work at Yuzovka, where he is shown (front row, left) with his fellow proletarians—probably in 1924, the year before he went to Moscow and first met Stalin.



Khrushchev played an important role in superintending construction of the Moscow subway. After its completion in 1935 he received his first Order of Lenin, which he wears here as he beams before microphone.

The path to

In full authority as both Party Secretary and Premier, Khrushchev was photographed in 1958 by LIFE in his Kremlin office, dominated by Lenin.

A rare Party leader who was not afraid to get his boots muddy, Khrushchev considered a problem of Moscow subway construction in 1930s.

Acrimonious "kitchen debate" with Richard Nixon at a 1959 Moscow trade exposition probably accounts for Khrushchev's hostility to Nixon.

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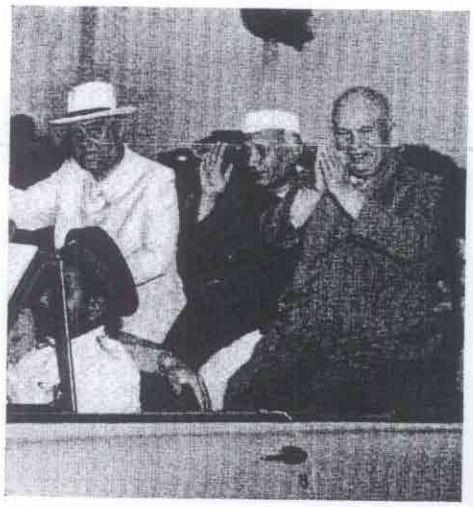
to cover up [again] for the man guilty of all those murders. I wonder particularly about a few of our influential military leaders who, in their speeches and memoirs, are trying to whitewash Stalin and put him back on his pedestal. They're trying to prove that if it hadn't been for Stalin, we would never have won the war against Hitlerite Germany. The reasoning behind this sort of claim is stupid. Just because Stalin isn't around anymore, does that mean we will succumb to German or English or American influence? Of course not. The Soviet people will always be able to produce leaders and to defend our country against invaders, just as we've always defended ourselves in the past.

Even now people say to me, "Comrade Khrushchev, perhaps you shouldn't be telling all these stories about Stalin." The people who say this sort of thing aren't necessarily former accomplices in Stalin's villainry. They're just old, simple folk who became accustomed to worshiping Stalin and who can't give up the old concepts of the Stalinist period. They are the product of defects in the way Party members were trained and conditioned while Stalin was alive. I tell these stories because, unpleasant as they may be, they contribute to the self-purification of our Party.

What I say is not slander, and it's not malicious gossip. I speak as a man who spent his whole life in close touch with the Soviet people and who also stood for many years at Stalin's side in the

total power, lined with famous men



The "B and K act": Party Secretary Khrushchev and Premier Nikolai Bulganin visited India's Nehru and other leaders of the world in 1955.

Talking to cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova in 1963, Khrushchev was flanked by Leonid Brezhnev, who in 1964 grabbed his job as Party chief.

The "troika" of Khrushchev, Molotov and Malenkov ruled Russia for a time, but in 1957 Khrushchev managed to shove the others aside.

leadership. As a witness to those years, I address myself to the generations of the future, in hope that they will avoid the mistakes of the past.

My political education began during my boyhood in the little village of Kalinovka in the Donbas where I was born. My schoolteacher there was a woman named Lydia Shchevchenko. She was a revolutionary. She was also an atheist. She began to counteract the effects of my strict religious upbringing.

My mother was very religious. When I think back to my childhood, I can remember vividly the saints on the icons against the wall of our wooden hut, their faces darkened by fumes from the oil lamps. I remember being taught to kneel and pray in front of the icons. When we were taught to read, we read the Scriptures.

Lydia Shchevchenko set me on a path which took me away from all that. Well before the Revolution I was an avid reader. When I read Emile Zola's *Germinal*, I thought that he was writing not about France but about the mine in which my father and I worked. The workers' lot was the same both in France and in Russia. Mostly I read proletarian and Social Democrat newspapers. I read *Pravda* [then an underground newspaper] as soon as it started coming out regularly in 1915, when I was a metal fitter at the generator plant of the Pastukhov mine.

I'm proud to say that it was my privilege to serve in our glorious

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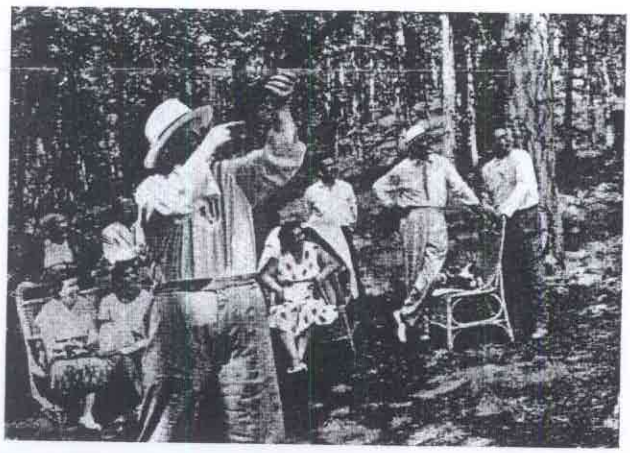
armed forces [with the Red Army against the Whites] from January 1919 until the end of the civil war. When I returned from the front to the Donbas at the beginning of 1922, hard times had set in. My first wife, Galina, died during the famine in 1921. I was left with two children, my son Leonid and my daughter Julia. In 1924 I married again, to Nina Petrovna.

Those first years of Soviet power were years of struggle and hardship, and self-sacrifice. But most of us willingly submitted to privation. It's not like that now. Shrewd people these days manage to get much more out of our society than they put into it.

Subsequently I held various posts in the Yuzovka Party organization, and in December 1925 I was elected as a delegate to the 14th Party Congress in Moscow.

I had my first chance to see Stalin in the flesh. I was very impressed by him. At one point Comrade [Kostyan] Moiseyenko requested that Comrade Stalin permit himself to be photographed with our delegation. The photographer, whose name was Petrov, started giving us instructions on which way to look and how to turn our heads. Suddenly Stalin remarked, "Comrade Petrov loves to order people around. But now that's forbidden around here. No one may order anyone else around ever again." We all took him seriously and were heartened by the democratic spirit he displayed. Most of what I saw and

New pictures of a ruler in his last days of glory



In 1963 the Khrushchev family—his wife Nina Petrovna is seated beside him—sat for an unusual photographer, Cuba's Fidel Castro (kneeling at left). This was at Lake Ritsa in the Caucasus, where Castro visited Khrushchev after the 1962 missile crisis, which Khrushchev discusses in LIFE's issue of Dec. 18.

In 1961 while still Premier, Khrushchev showed off his marksmanship for VIPs at Czar Alexander III's old Crimean palace. Seated in center of picture is Brezhnev's wife. In background, far left: Poland's Party leader Gomulka and East Germany's Ulbricht. At right, leaning on chair: the Presidium's Mikhail Suslov and Leonid Brezhnev.

At Zavidovo, a recreation center near Moscow, Khrushchev relaxed in the winter of 1963. He was ousted in October 1964 and replaced by Aleksei Kosygin and Brezhnev.

heard of Stalin during these early years pleased me very much.

During the 15th Party Congress [in 1927] some delegation presented the Congress Presidium with a steel broom. Rykov, who was chairman, made a speech, saying: "I hereby present this steel broom to Comrade Stalin so that he can sweep away our enemies." He obviously trusted Stalin to use the broom wisely. Rykov could hardly have foreseen that he too would be swept away by this same broom. [Aleksei Rykov, Prime Minister in succession to Lenin, was shot in 1938.]

In 1929, when he was 35, Khrushchev was released from his Party duties in the Ukraine to go to Moscow, ostensibly to study at the Industrial Academy and become a metallurgist, more probably to prove himself in Party work closer to the Kremlin. When Khrushchev arrived in Moscow, the first five-year plan had been launched, and the country stood on the eve of the terrible events which ensued from the forced collectivization of agriculture. Within two years he was able to leave the Academy behind him and start on his swift rise to power as Party chieftain of all Moscow.

Collectivization was begun the year before I was transferred from the Ukraine, but it wasn't until after I started work in Moscow that I began to suspect its real effects on the rural population—and it wasn't until many years later that I realized the scale of

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Now, out of power with time to relax and talk

Alone in retirement, Khrushchev broods in the sun outside his modest *dacha* 15 miles southwest of Moscow. At right, a rare picture taken inside his home last year shows Khrushchev and his wife entertaining American luncheon guests Dr. A. McGehee Harvey, head of medicine at Johns Hopkins Hospital, and Mrs. Harvey.

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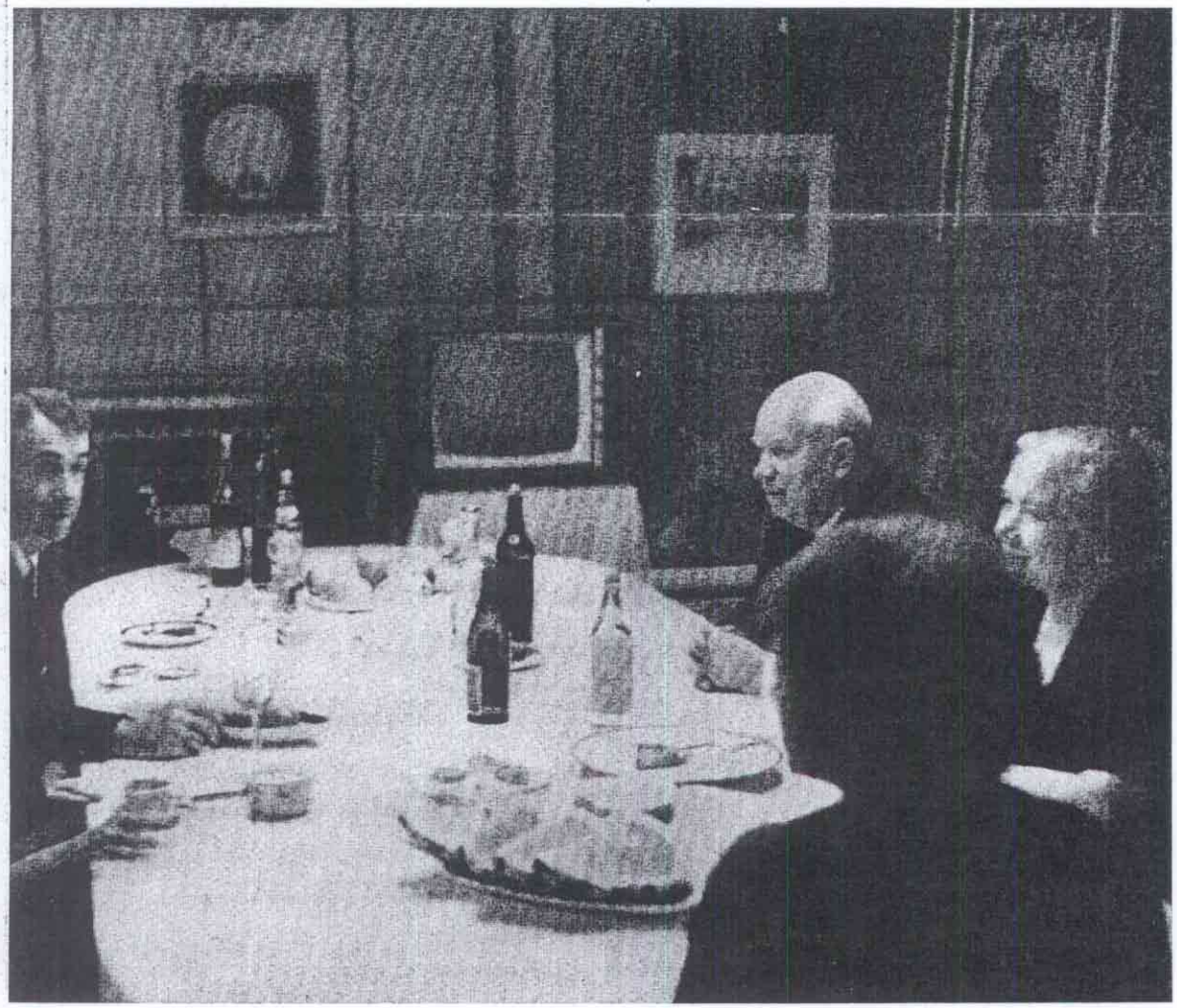
the starvation and repression which accompanied collectivization as it was carried out under Stalin.

My first glimpse of the truth was in 1930, when the Party cell at the Industrial Academy tried to get rid of me by sending me out into the country on a business trip. The Academy sponsored the Stalin Collective Farm in the Samara Region, to which I was supposed to deliver money which we had collected for the purchase of agricultural implements.

We spent only a few days at the collective farm and were appalled at the conditions there. The farmers were starving to death. We called a meeting to present the money which we'd brought them. Most of the workers on this collective farm were drawn from the Chuvash population, so we had to speak to them through a translator. When we told them that the money was allocated for farm equipment, they told us they weren't interested in equipment—what they wanted was bread. They literally begged us to give them food.

I'd had no idea that things were this bad. We'd been living under the illusion promoted by *Pravda* that collectivization was proceeding smoothly and everything was fine in the countryside.

Then, without warning, Stalin delivered his famous speech laying the blame for the excesses of the collectivization on active local Party members. I remember being bothered by the thought: if everything has been going as well on the collective farms



as Stalin has been telling us, what's the reason for the speech?

One of my friends told me that there were strikes going on in the Ukraine, and that Red Army soldiers had to be mobilized to weed the sugar beet crop. I was horrified. You couldn't expect Red Army soldiers, most of whom had never seen a sugar beet and didn't give a damn if they ever saw one again, to do the job right. Naturally the sugar beet crop was lost. Subsequently the word got around that famine had broken out in the Ukraine. I couldn't believe it. I'd left the Ukraine in 1929, when food had been plentiful and cheap.

Years later [Anastas] Mikoyan told me that Comrade Demchenko, who was then First Secretary of the Kiev Regional Committee, came to see him in Moscow. Here's what Demchenko said: "Anastas Ivanovich, does Comrade Stalin—for that matter, does anyone in the Politburo—know what's happening in the Ukraine? A train recently pulled into Kiev loaded with corpses of people who had starved to death. It had picked up corpses all the way from Poltava to Kiev. I think somebody had better inform Stalin about this situation."

You can see that an abnormal state of affairs had developed when someone like Demchenko, a member of the Ukrainian Politburo, was afraid to go see Stalin himself. We had already moved into the period when one man had the collective [leadership] under his thumb and everyone else trembled before him.

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KHRUSHCHEV REMEMBERS

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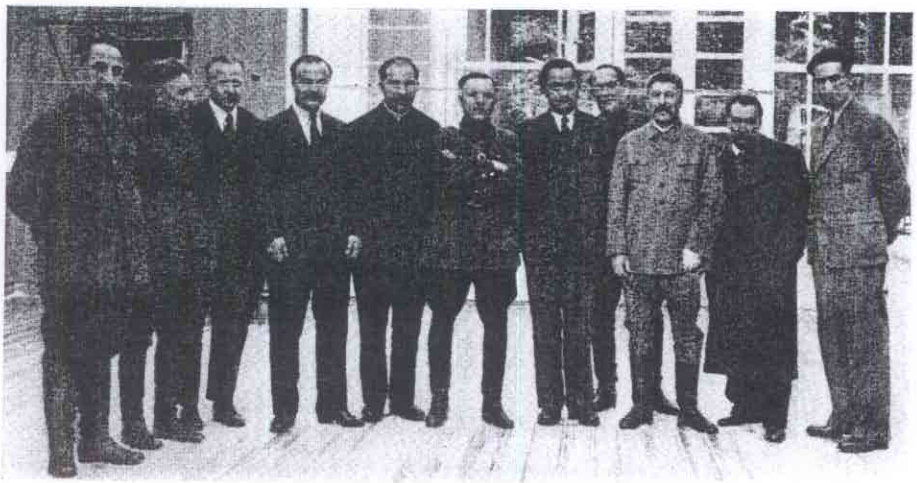

In March 1934, nine months before Sergei Kirov's murder triggered the terrible purges, Stalin and his cronies posed for this picture. Voroshilov, arms folded stiffly, is in the center; at his right is Kaganovich. At extreme left is "Sergo" Ordzhonikidze, who committed suicide in 1937; state planner Valerian Kuibyshev, behind Stalin, was a Kirov ally whose death is still unexplained.

'I drew a lucky lottery ticket'

When the failure of the collectivization became widely known, we were all taught to blame scheming kulaks, rightists, Trotskyites and Zinovievites for what was happening. There was always the handy explanation of counterrevolutionary sabotage.

Perhaps we'll never know how many people perished directly as a result of collectivization or indirectly, as a result of Stalin's eagerness to blame its failure on others. But two things are certain: first, the Stalin brand of collectivization brought us nothing but misery and brutality; and second, Stalin played the decisive role in the leadership of our country at the time. If we were looking for someone to hold responsible, we could lay the blame squarely on Stalin's own shoulders.

But all this is hindsight. We still trusted and believed in Stalin.

In January 1931 I was elected Secretary of the Bauman District Party Committee. My future as a Party worker now looked very bright. At first I thought I had [Lazar] Kaganovich [head of the Party Control Commission] to thank for my advancement, but I soon began to realize that my promotion was due not so much to Kaganovich as to Stalin himself. Stalin had apparently been keeping an eye on me through his wife, Nadezhda Sergeyevna Alliluyeva. She sang my praises to Stalin, and Stalin told Kaganovich to help me along. [Stalin's unhappy second wife, Svetlana Alliluyeva's mother, was a sensitive and cultivated woman whom Stalin drove to suicide in 1932.] Nadezhda Sergeyevna and I were fellow students at the Industrial Academy. She studied chemistry, specializing in artificial fibers. She was a Party group organizer, and I had to give her instructions. I knew that she went home and told Stalin about my performance.

In those days I called her Nadya. It wasn't until I became Secretary of the Moscow City Party Committee and started going regularly to Stalin's for family dinners that I realized how much Nadya had told Stalin about my activities at the Industrial Academy. Sometimes Stalin would remind me of incidents which I had forgotten myself.

During the years that followed I stayed alive while most of my contemporaries, my classmates at the Academy, lost their heads as enemies of the people. I've often asked myself, "How was I spared?" I think part of the answer is that Nadya's reports helped determine Stalin's attitude toward me. I call it my lottery ticket. I drew a lucky lottery ticket when it happened that Stalin observed my activities through Nadezhda Sergeyevna. It was because of her that Stalin trusted me. In later years he sometimes attacked and insulted me; but right up until the last day of his life he liked me. It would be stupid to talk about this man loving anyone, but there's no doubt that he held me in great respect.

I was elected to the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party at the 17th Party Congress in 1934. The election procedure impressed me as being very democratic. Candidates were

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'We used to storm the buffet at the Politburo'

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nominated, and their names were put on a ballot which was passed around. It was only later that I found out that nobody's name was ever put on the ballot without Stalin's approval. In 1935 I was promoted to First Secretary of the Moscow Regional and City Committees [*i.e.*, master, under Stalin, of the city of Moscow and its environs]. At the next plenum of the Central Committee I was elected a candidate member of the Politburo. I still carried with me the tools of my trade—calipers, markers, anglebars, a ruler and a liter measure. I might any day have to return to my career as a fitter.

I started attending Politburo sessions regularly. To be able to sit with the Politburo, to be close to Stalin—this seemed like the crowning opportunity of my career.

Actually, in those days, Stalin never chaired the Politburo sessions himself. He always left that job to Molotov. Molotov was Stalin's oldest friend. They had known each other from the pre-Revolutionary underground. But Molotov impressed me as a strong-willed, independent man who thought for himself.

We often didn't have enough to eat at home. Therefore we used to storm the buffet at the Politburo and gorge ourselves on sandwiches, sausages, sour cream and tea between working sessions.

I started seeing more of Stalin in informal circumstances after I became First Secretary of the Moscow City Committee. Along with [Nikolai] Bulganin, who was Chairman of the Moscow City Soviet, I used to be invited regularly to family dinners at Stalin's apartment. Stalin and Nadezhda Sergeyevna were always host and hostess. Stalin would always seat Bulganin and me next to him and pay close attention to us during the meal. He was fond of saying, "Well, how's it going, City Fathers?" Worshiping him as I did, I couldn't get used to being with him in relaxed surroundings: here was a man not of this world, laughing and joking like the rest of us!

Once I got a message to call a phone number which I immediately recognized as Stalin's apartment. Stalin answered when I called. "Comrade Khrushchev," he said, "rumors have reached me that you've let a very unfavorable situation develop in Moscow as regards public toilets. Apparently people can't find anywhere to relieve themselves. This won't do. Talk this matter over with Bulganin and do something to improve these conditions."

Bulganin and I began to work feverishly. We personally inspected buildings and courtyards. We also booted the militia off their behinds and got them to help. Later Stalin assigned us the task of

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Ordzhonikidze is shown with his old friend Stalin before the purges. Until after the war, Khrushchev says, he did not know that Ordzhonikidze had shot himself.

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installing clean, modern, pay toilets. This episode, trivial as it may seem, shows how Stalin, the leader of the world's working class, wasn't too busy to bother himself over a detail of city life.

Khrushchev was not intimately involved in the worst excesses of the terrible purges of the 1930s, although he certainly knew a great deal of what was going on. The usual estimate of Party members arrested is close to one million, not counting seven times that number of non-Party citizens. There were three spectacular "show trials" in 1936, 1937 and 1938, at which the most prominent victims were old Leninists. Great masses of people simply vanished; the cream of the Red Army high command—between one-fourth and one-half of the officers' corps—was liquidated in 1937 after secret trials. Khrushchev was taken into the Politburo at the height of the purges.

It all started one evening in 1934. The telephone rang. It was Kaganovich: "I'm calling from the Politburo. Come over here right away. It's urgent." I went straight to the Kremlin.

"There's been a terrible tragedy," he said. "Kirov has been murdered in Leningrad [Sergei Kirov headed the Party organization there]. We're putting together a delegation to go to Leningrad —Stalin, Voroshilov, Molotov, plus 60 people from the Moscow Party organization and the Moscow worker class. You'll lead the delegation and then accompany Kirov's body to Moscow."

"Very well."

I left for Leningrad that same night. I didn't see Stalin, Voroshilov and Molotov. They were traveling separately. It seemed to me that the whole city of Leningrad was in mourning, although maybe I was just projecting my own feelings.

We were all completely in the dark. We knew only that Kirov's murderer was someone named Nikolayev, who had been expelled from the Party for taking part in the Trotskyite opposition. We took turns standing around the coffin. I could see that Kaganovich was badly shaken, even frightened. I watched Stalin closely. He had enormous self-control, and his expression was absolutely impenetrable. It didn't occur to me that perhaps he had other things on his mind.

The operation of the NKVD changed drastically after Kirov's murder. Before the murder, the Cheka [secret police, an earlier incarnation of the NKVD—today's KGB] rarely resorted to administrative methods for dealing with people. By administrative methods I mean arrest and trial. All that suddenly changed. Comrade Redens told me he had instructions to "purge" Moscow. [Stanislav Redens was Stalin's brother-in-law and chief of the Moscow office of the NKVD.] A list was put together of the people who should be exiled from the city. I don't know where these people were sent. I never asked. If you weren't told something, that meant it didn't concern you.

The flower of our Party was stamped out in the savage violence which erupted shortly. Almost the whole Politburo which had been in office at the time of Lenin's death was purged.

During that period the Party started to lose its authority and to be subservient to the NKVD. During the 1937 Moscow Party conference there was a commissar from the Frunze Military Academy who was a good Communist and a good comrade. Suddenly I got a message from the NKVD. "Do everything you can to bring that man down. He's not to be trusted." We obeyed. The next night that commissar was arrested. Every promotion or transfer of Party personnel had to be made in accordance with directives from the NKVD. It was disgraceful.

In those days it was easy enough to get rid of someone you didn't like. All you had to do was submit a report denouncing him as an enemy of the people; the local Party organization would beat its breast in indignation and have the man taken care of.

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KHRUSHCHEV REMEMBERS

'It was easy enough to get rid of someone'

KHRUSHCHEV REMEMBERS

'Honest, loyal Leninists were the first to go'

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Even the people closest to Stalin were swept up in the frenzy of the hunt. Take ["Sergo"] Ordzhonikidze's fate. Comrade Sergo was a popular figure. The three Caucasians—Stalin, Mikoyan and Sergo—were inseparable for many years. Finally Sergo couldn't stand it anymore. At the beginning of 1937 he shot himself. I didn't find out until after the war, when I was at a dinner with Stalin and just happened to bring up the subject: "Sergo! Now there was a real man. What a shame he died before his time. What a loss!"

I sensed that I had said something wrong. I asked Malenkov [Georgi Malenkov, briefly premier after Stalin's death], "What did I say that I shouldn't have said?"

"You mean you thought Sergo died a natural death? You didn't know he shot himself? Stalin won't forgive him for that. That was pretty careless of you."

Shortly after Sergo's death Stalin struck against the old guard of the Red Army. I can't enumerate all the generals he exterminated, but I would like to single out a few.

Tukhachevsky's arrest came like a thunderbolt out of the clear blue sky [Marshal Mikhail Tukhachevsky, Deputy Commissar for Defense]. At the age of 26 he had commanded the Western front in the civil war. When Tukhachevsky was executed, there was a lot of cackling from men who couldn't reach up to his knees, much less to his navel. I'm convinced that if he hadn't been executed, our army would have been much better trained and equipped when Hitler attacked.

Then there was [Yan] Gamarnik. He was chief of the Red Army Political Directorate, an important political figure as well as a good soldier. They'll tell you Gamarnik wasn't executed. True enough. When they came pounding on his door, he put a pistol to his head and pulled the trigger.

Honest, loyal Leninists, devoted to the cause of the Revolution —they were the first to go when Stalin imposed his arbitrary rule on the Party. All those who perished should not only be given back their names; they should be presented to the people as martyrs of the terror waged by Stalin.

Khrushchev's up-and-down relations with Stalin during World War II belong to the next installment of this series, but by the end of the war Khrushchev knew that his chief in the Kremlin was a brutish, irrational man and probably sick as well. This was manifest during the great Ukrainian famine of 1946–47, when Khrushchev was doing his second stint as viceroy of the Ukraine. The famine, which went almost completely unreported in the West and was not alluded to publicly in the Soviet Union until December 1947, was due largely to drought. But it was drought affecting a ruined agriculture and compounded by the reimposition of collectivization, which had broken down during the German occupation.

In my opinion it was during the war that Stalin started to be not quite right in the head.

The reconstruction of the economy of the Ukraine, especially of agriculture, fell upon those who were left behind the Red Army's advance, old men, invalids, those unfit for military service and particularly women. All possible measures were taken to supply enough grain to the state. We were supposed to supply ourselves

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second. [As in 1930, the peasants were being starved to feed the towns and cities.] We [in the Ukraine] had been assigned an output plan of something like 400 million *pood* for 1946 [7.2 million tons; one *pood* equals 36 pounds]. It had been calculated not on the basis of how much we really could produce, but on the basis of how much the state thought it could beat out of us. The quota system was really a system of extortion.

I was getting heartbreaking letters. A typical one came from the chairman of a collective farm: "Well, Comrade Khrushchev, we have fulfilled our quota. But we've given everything away. Nothing is left for us." There was nothing I could do once the grain had been turned over to the state receiving points. It was no longer in my power to dispose of it.

I could already see that our output plan wouldn't be filled. A group of agricultural experts came up with a figure of somewhere between 100 and 200 million *pood*. Before the war the Ukraine had produced as much as 500 million *pood*. I felt it was best to approach the problem honestly. In the past I had sometimes succeeded in breaking through the bureaucratic resistance of the Moscow apparatus and appealed directly to Stalin. Sometimes the facts would speak for themselves and Stalin would support me. I hoped I could prove I was right this time, too, and that Stalin would understand that this wasn't "sabotage." This term was always on hand for him to justify repression and extortion.

I gave orders for a document to be prepared for the Council of Ministers in which I asked that the state issue ration cards so that we could supply the farm population and organize the feeding of the hungry. I was hesitant to send the document to Moscow because I knew Stalin, his rudeness and his fierce temper. But my comrades persuaded me: "He'll never see it. We've talked to Kosygin, and he has agreed to give us the ration cards we need." [Aleksei Kosygin is now prime minister of the U.S.S.R.]

I hesitated a long time, but finally I signed the document. When the document reached Moscow, Stalin wasn't there. He was holidaying in Sochi. But Malenkov and [Lavrenti] Beria [head of the NKVD] saw a chance to discredit me in Stalin's eyes. This request of mine went straight to Sochi.

Stalin sent me the most insulting telegram. I was a dubious character, he said; I was writing memoranda to prove that the Ukraine was unable to take care of itself, and I was requesting an outrageous quantity of cards. I saw clearly the tragedy which was hanging not only over me personally, but over the whole Ukrainian people. Famine was now inevitable.

Stalin returned from Sochi, and I went to meet him in Moscow. I was ready for the worst dressing-down imaginable. In this situation you could end up on the list of enemies of the people in no time at all. In the blink of an eye you could be thrown into the

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Khrushchev became a member of Party Central Committee in 1934, the year in which this picture shows him reviewing May Day parade with Molotov and Stalin.

KHRUSHCHEV REMEMBERS

'When I dance, I dance like a cow on the ice'

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Lubyanka [secret police HQ and prison in the heart of Moscow].

I insisted that the Ukraine really did need help. My arguments just aggravated Stalin's anger all the more. He flatly turned down our request for ration cards.

By now, as I had predicted, famine was under way. Soon I was receiving official reports about deaths from starvation. Then cannibalism started. A human head and the soles of feet had been found under a little bridge. Apparently the corpse had been eaten. Kirichenko [one of Khrushchev's subordinates in the Ukraine] told me that he had gone to a collective farm. Here is how he described it: "The woman had the corpse of her own child on the table and was cutting it up. She was chattering away as she worked, 'We've already eaten Manechka [little Maria]. Now we'll salt down Vanechka [little Ivan]. This will keep us for some time.' Can you imagine? This woman had gone crazy with hunger and butchered her own children!"

I reported all these things to Stalin, but it only fanned his anger. He would say: "You're being soft-bellied! They're deceiving you. They're counting on being able to appeal to your sentimentality." Apparently Stalin had channels of information which bypassed me and which he trusted more than my reports. Some people were spreading the rumor that I was giving in to local influence, that I was becoming a Ukrainian nationalist myself. And where was this information coming from? From the Chekists, of course.

Stalin's character was brutish, and his temper was harsh, but his brutishness didn't always reflect malice. His was a sort of inborn brutishness. He was coarse and abusive with everyone. More than once, after being rude or spiteful with me, he would then express his goodwill. But God forbid that there should have been any kind of apology! No, apologies were alien to his very nature.

In the last year of his life Stalin had invited us all to his dacha to celebrate the New Year. We had a huge dinner and a great deal to drink. Stalin was in high spirits and therefore was drinking a lot himself.

Stalin put on some records of folk music. We all listened and started dancing. Then he put on some dance music. There was one acknowledged dancer among us—Mikoyan. All the steps he did were based on the *lezghinka* [a Caucasian folk dance]. Then we all joined in. When I dance, I don't move my feet. I dance like a cow on the ice. Bulganin was now trying to stomp out something vaguely Russian in rhythm. Stalin danced, too. He shuffled around with his arms spread out at his side. It was too bad that Molotov wasn't with us. He had been a university student and knew how to dance the way students did. He loved music and could even play the violin.

Then Svetlanka appeared. [Khrushchev uses the affectionate diminutive for Svetlana Alliluyeva, Stalin's daughter, who defected to the U.S. in 1967.] She found herself in the middle of a flock of people older than she, to put it mildly. Stalin made her dance. I could see she was tired. She danced for a short time and tried to stop, but her father still insisted. She went over and stood next to the record player, leaning her shoulder against the wall. Stalin was lurching about. He said, "Well, go on, Svetlanka, dance! You're the hostess, so dance!"

She said, "I've already danced, Papa, I'm tired." With that,

Stalin grabbed her by the forelock with his fist and pulled. I could see her face turning red and tears welling up in her eyes. I felt so sorry for Svetlanka. He pulled harder and dragged her back onto the dance floor.

No doubt Stalin loved Svetlanka very much. Stalin was proud and very fond of her. He behaved so brutishly not because he wanted to cause Svetlanka pain. No, his behavior toward her really was an expression of affection, but in a perverse, brutish form which was peculiar to him.

Those last years with Stalin were hard times. The government virtually ceased to function. Stalin selected a small group which he kept close to him at all times, and then there was always another group of people whom he didn't invite for an indefinite period in order to punish them. Any one of us could find himself in one group one day and the other group the next.

We usually got together for bureau meetings in the following way. There were no official sessions as such. When Stalin was coming into town from the dacha where he lived, he would call us together through the Central Committee secretariat. We would meet either in his study at the Kremlin or, more often, in the Kremlin movie theater. Stalin used to select the movies himself. He liked cowboy movies especially. He used to curse them and give them the proper ideological evaluation but then immediately order new ones. We used to watch all kinds of movies—German, English, French, American, and from other countries, too. The films didn't have subtitles, so the Minister of Cinematography, [I.I.] Bolshakov, would translate them out loud. Actually he didn't know any of these languages. He had been told the plots in advance. He would take pains to memorize the plot and then "translate" the movie. We often joked about his translations. Bolshakov would often get the plot wrong, or else he would just explain what anyone could see was happening on the screen: "Now he's leaving the room. . . . Now he's walking across the street." Beria would then chime in and give Bolshakov some help: "Look! He's started running! Now he's running!"

I remember once we saw a gloomy, unpleasant historical movie. It was set in England. Some treasure had to be transported from India to London, and there were Spanish pirates all along the way who were raiding English ships and murdering their crews. The

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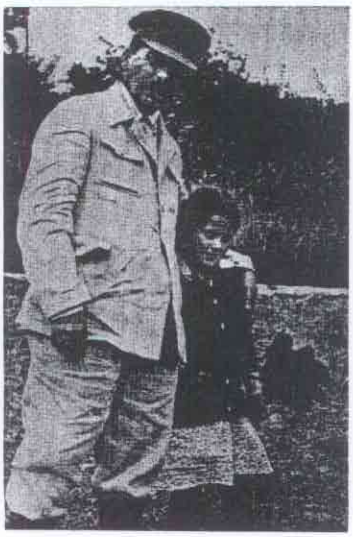
Stalin's daughter Svetlana was photographed in early 1930s with the father who treated her so cruelly. She is now married to an American architect, Wesley Porter.



'Stalin needed people around him all the time'

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English remembered a pirate captain who was in one of their jails. He was a very crafty pirate, a ruffian and daredevil. The English decided to ask him if he would take charge of transporting the treasure from India. The pirate captain said he would do it on condition that he be allowed to choose his own crew from the other pirates in jail with him. The English gave him a ship and he headed for India, where he picked up the treasure. On the way back he started to get rid of his pirate crewmen, one by one. He would put a picture of the next friend he intended to eliminate in his cabin, just to remind himself. After he had eliminated that person and thrown him overboard, he would put up a picture of his next victim. I think in the end the pirate captain was eliminated himself.

They say it was a true story. As we watched the movie we were reminded of how people working around Stalin often disappeared. Weren't the enemies of the people being killed off in just this way?

When a movie ended, Stalin would suggest, "Well, let's go get something to eat, why don't we?" By now it was usually one or two o'clock in the morning. It was time to go to bed, and the next day we had to go to work. But everyone would say, yes, he was hungry too. This lie about being hungry was like a reflex. We would all get into our cars and drive to the dacha.

Beria and Malenkov would usually get in Stalin's car. I usually rode with Bulganin. Our caravan used to make detours into side streets. Apparently Stalin had a street plan of Moscow and worked out a different route every time. He didn't even tell his bodyguard in advance. As for the Kremlin itself, no one was allowed into it in those days. The building where the theater was located was closed off to everyone except those who came with Stalin.

Every time we got to the dacha we used to whisper among ourselves about how there were more locks than the time before. All sorts of bolts were attached to the gate, and there was a barricade set up. There were two walls, and between the walls there were watchdogs. An electric alarm system and all sorts of other security devices were installed. In a way this was all quite proper. Holding the position he did, Stalin was a tempting target for any enemy of the Soviet regime. This was nothing to joke about, although it would have been dangerous for any of us to have tried to imitate him in this respect.

Neither the Central Committee, nor the Politburo, nor the Presidium Bureau met regularly. But Stalin's regular sessions with his inner circle [usually Malenkov, Beria, Bulganin and Khrushchev] went along like clockwork. If he didn't summon us for two or three days, we would think something had happened to him.

He suffered terribly from loneliness. He needed people around him all the time. When he woke up in the morning, he would immediately summon us, either inviting us to the movies or starting some conversation which could have been finished in two minutes. But he stretched it out so that we would stay with him.

He had a deep fear of more than just loneliness and being ambushed by his enemies. Whenever we had dinner with him, Stalin wouldn't touch a single dish or hors d'oeuvre or bottle until someone else had tested it.

"Look, here are the giblets, Nikita. Have you tried them yet?"

"Oh, I forgot." I could see he would like to take some himself but was afraid.

Then he would say, "Look! Here's some herring!" He was always served his herring unsalted and everyone else salted it to his own taste. I would taste it, and then he would have some. And so it was with every dish.

Beria was the only one who didn't have to be a taster. He was exempt because Beria always had his own meal brought over from his dacha. Stalin's old retainer Matryona Petrovna used to serve Beria and say in her thick nasal voice, "Well, Comrade Beria,

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here's your grass." We used to get a big laugh out of that. Beria really did eat greens, just as they do in Central Asia, and sometimes he stuffed them into his mouth with his fingers.

These dinners were frightful. During the day I usually tried to take a nap, because there was always a risk that if you didn't take a nap and Stalin invited you for dinner, you might get sleepy at the table; and those who got sleepy at Stalin's table could come to a bad end. There were often serious drinking bouts, too. I remember Beria, Malenkov and Mikoyan had to ask the waitresses to pour them colored water instead of wine because they couldn't keep up with Stalin's drinking.

Previously unpublished picture shows Stalin in the late 1920s, shortly after death of Lenin.

There had been excessive drinking at Stalin's table since before the war. I'd say that Stalin found it entertaining to watch the people around him get themselves into embarrassing and even disgraceful situations. He found the humiliation of others very amusing. Once Stalin made me dance the *gopak* [a Ukrainian folk dance] before some top Party officials. I had to squat down on my haunches and kick out my heels, which frankly wasn't very easy for me. But as I later told Mikoyan, "When Stalin says dance, a wise man dances."

At these interminable, agonizing dinners, Stalin used to regale us with stories. I've never forgotten how he described his first exile. He was sent somewhere in Vologda Province. Many political and criminal convicts were sent there. Stalin used to say, "I hung around mostly with the criminals. I remember we used to stop at the saloons in town. We'd drink up every kopek we had. One day I would pay; the next, someone else would pay and so on. But there were lots of rats among the political convicts. They once organized a comrades' court and put me on trial for drinking with the criminal convicts, which they charged was an offense."

We just exchanged glances. Only afterwards would we exchange remarks such as, "You see, even in his youth he was inclined to drink too much. It's probably inherited."

Stalin said his father was a simple shoemaker and that he drank a lot. He used to say that his father drank so much that he had to sell his belt for drinking money, and a Georgian has to be in desperate straits before he will sell his belt. "My father sold his belt a number of times," said Stalin, "and when I was still in the cradle, he used to dip his finger in a glass of wine and let me suck on it. He was teaching me to drink even when I was in the cradle!"

As far as his boasts about skill with a gun were concerned, I had seen with my own eyes that Stalin couldn't shoot at all. He once picked up a gun when we were having dinner and went outside to drive away some sparrows. All he succeeded in doing was wounding one of the Chekists in his bodyguard. Another time he was fiddling with a gun, and it went off and just barely missed killing Mikoyan. The shot spewed gravel all over the table and all over Mikoyan. No one said a word, but we were all horrified.

If there was anything worse than having dinner with Stalin, it was having to go on a holiday with him. Stalin must have liked me particularly, because when he left for vacation he would often call me up and say, "Let's go south. You need a vacation, too."

"Good," I'd answer. "I'd be glad to come along." I clearly would have preferred not to go, but to have said no would have been absolutely unthinkable. I once spent a whole month on holiday with him. He put me right next door to him. It was sheer torture, sitting over endless meals. Whenever I was offered up in sacrifice, Beria used to cheer me up by saying, "Someone has to suffer, it might as well be you."

Once I was vacationing by myself in Sochi, and Mikoyan was somewhere else—in Sukhumi, I think. Stalin phoned us from his resort in Borzhomi. He summoned everyone who was vacationing in the Caucasus plus Beria, who was working in Moscow at the time. We all gathered in Borzhomi. The house had previously been

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Stalin: 'I trust no one, not even myself'

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a museum, so there were no bedrooms and we used to sleep all crowded together. It was awful.

One day Stalin called us to him and said, "Rakosi [the Hungarian dictator Matyas Rakosi] has come for a holiday in the Caucasus. He called and asked my permission." So what? But we were silent. "Someone better call Rakosi and tell him to come over here." Someone phoned Rakosi. Then Stalin said, "How does Rakosi know whenever I'm in the Caucasus? Apparently some sort of intelligence network is informing him. He should be discouraged from this." So Rakosi had fallen onto the list of suspects!

When Rakosi arrived he joined us for dinner and took part in our drinking parties. Once Rakosi said, "Listen, what's going on here? Look at all this drunkenness!" None of us wanted to live like this, but nonetheless we took offense at Rakosi's remark. Beria told Stalin that Rakosi had called us a bunch of drunkards. Stalin answered, "All right, we'll see about that."

That very night Stalin started pumping drinks into Rakosi—two or three bottles of champagne and I don't know how much wine. Somehow he pulled through. The next day he left. Stalin was in a good mood all day and joked, "You see what sort of state I got him into?"

I remember a striking incident that occurred when Stalin spent his holiday in Afon. It must have been in 1951 because in 1952 he didn't go anywhere for vacation. And when Stalin didn't go on vacation, nobody went on vacation. Stalin summoned me from Sochi and Mikoyan from Sukhumi. One day Stalin came out onto the porch of the house. He seemed not to notice Mikoyan and me. "I'm finished," he said to no one in particular. "I trust no one, not even myself."

This was a shocking admission. All of us around Stalin were temporary people. As long as he trusted you to a certain degree, we were allowed to go on living and working. But the moment he stopped trusting you, Stalin would start to scrutinize you until the cup of his distrust overflowed. Then it would be your turn to follow those who were no longer among the living. Stalin's admission at Afon gave us a glimpse behind the curtain which had hidden some of the reasons for the tragedy which was played out during the years when he led the Party and the country.

Every year it became more and more obvious that Stalin was weakening mentally as well as physically. This was particularly evident from his eclipses of mind and losses of memory. Once he turned to Bulganin and started to say something but couldn't remember his name. Stalin looked at him intently and said, "You there, what's your name?"

"Bulganin."

"Of course, Bulganin! That's what I was going to say."

Stalin became very unnerved when this kind of thing happened. He didn't want others to notice.

We were in the South—in Afon, I think—when it suddenly came into Stalin's head that Molotov was an agent of American imperialism. It seemed that when Molotov was in the United States, he traveled from Washington to New York by train. Stalin reasoned that Molotov must have had his own private railway car. Where did he get the money? We explained to Stalin that Molotov couldn't possibly have owned a railway car while he was abroad. Nevertheless Stalin sent a telegram to [Andrei] Vyshinsky, who was then working in the U.N. Of course Vyshinsky answered immediately that Molotov did not have, and could not have had, a private railway car.

Molotov and Mikoyan were put on ice [by Stalin] after the 19th Party Congress. I personally took their removal from the inner circle very much to heart. Continuing an old practice, Mikoyan and Molotov used to come along when we got together with Stalin. They were always allowed in, but it was obvious Stalin wasn't

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'I feared Stalin's death. What would happen?'

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very glad to see them. They were trying to stay close to Stalin because they wanted to stay alive. Then one day Stalin said, "I don't want these two coming around anymore." Afterwards Molotov and Mikoyan had a talk with Beria, Malenkov and me. We agreed to try to soften Stalin's attitude toward them. For a while, whenever we went to the movies with Stalin, Molotov and Mikoyan showed up too. Then Stalin noticed our maneuverings and figured out that we were acting as their agents. One day he raised an uproar. He was looking mostly at Malenkov as he stormed: "You think I don't see how you let Molotov and Mikoyan know when we're going to the movies? Stop telling them where I am! I won't tolerate it!"

We saw it was useless to persist. I'm convinced that if Stalin had lived much longer, Molotov and Mikoyan would have met a disastrous end.

My own anxiety was growing. Stalin was at an age [just past 70] which put the rest of us in a difficult position. Far from looking forward to Stalin's death, I actually feared his death. What would happen to the country? In the late 1940s I was convinced that, when Stalin died, we would have to do everything possible to prevent Beria from occupying a leading position in the Party.

In the last years of Stalin's life Beria used to express his disrespect for Stalin more and more baldly. This always offended me and put me on my guard. The way I looked at it, Beria's apparent disrespect toward Stalin was probably a provocation designed to pull me into making similar remarks or even just agreeing with him so that he could then go and denounce me to Stalin as an enemy of the people. He used this trick on Bulganin, too, but Bulganin knew what Beria was up to as well as I did.

Bulganin once described very well the experience we all had to live with in those days. We were leaving Stalin's after dinner one night and he said, "You come to Stalin's table as a friend, but you never know if you'll go home by yourself or if you'll be given a ride —to prison!" Bulganin was fairly drunk at the time, but what he said accurately depicted how precarious our position was from one day to the next. ■

NEXT WEEK: PART II

'THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR'

- *Stalin's fear and cowardice*
- *Khrushchev's narrow escape from execution*
- *An unexpected tribute to the Allies*