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STALIN AND THE SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY
OF THE SOVIET UNION: THE PARTY IN CONFLICT

By

Peter Albert Clement

A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

STALIN AND THE SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION: THE PARTY IN CONFLICT

by

Peter Albert Clement

The Seventeenth Party Congress had long been viewed as the apogee of the Stalin personality cult--in large part because historians were blinded by the God-like adoration of Stalin at that congress. However, an analysis of the congress stenographic record, the media coverage, and the election of party bodies reveals fundamental differences within the party leadership on at least three key policy questions: the growth rates and targets for the Second Five-Year Plan, intra-party governance and related cadre issues, and policy towards Nazi Germany. These differences, when viewed in the context of other developments at the congress--the rise of Sergey Kirov, the omission of the title "General Secretary" next to Stalin's name in the listing of party secretaries, and Nikolai Bukharin's appointment as editor of Izvestiia--indicate that Stalin did not yet enjoy dictatorial powers.

Thus, the congress ended as an ambiguous stalemate. Kirov, Ordzhonikidze, and others were able to prevail in most of the policy debates. For Stalin, the congress represented a personal defeat, as his leadership had come into question and he could no longer be certain of majority backing within the Politburo. Still, through the reorganization of the Central Control Commission, Stalin succeeded in increasing his bureaucratic powers to meet the perceived challenge to his leadership. Stalin and his Politburo colleagues came away from the congress with vastly different agendas. While many Politburo members hoped to use their majority consensus to shape more moderate policies, Stalin's goal was to break that consensus and build the kind of personal power he thought he had achieved in defeating Trotsky, Zinoviev and Bukharin during the 1920s. When the next Party Congress was convened in 1939, there could be no doubt that Stalin had prevailed, as the overwhelming majority of Politburo and Central Committee members elected at the Seventeenth Congress died in the great purge.

Acknowledgements

A number of individuals have contributed their time and energy in support of my dissertation research. I particularly wish to thank my committee chairman, Professor Robert M. Slusser, for the benefit of his time, wisdom and, above all, unwavering support, throughout this endeavor. His rigorous and thorough approach to the analysis and writing of history remains the model to which I aspire. I also benefitted from Professor William O. McCagg's thorough and critical review, as well as an advance preview of his now published work on Stalin in the 1940s. I wish to thank the other members of my committee--Professor Alan Fisher and Professor Donald Lammers--not only for their time and careful review of the dissertation, but for the intellectual challenge afforded in their courses and directed readings. My thanks also to Professors Munir Sendich and Lewis Siegelbaum for their constructive comments on the dissertation draft. In addition, I want to express my gratitude to Professor Myron Rush of Cornell University, who provided access to his correspondence with Boris Nicolaevsky on issues central to the XVII Party Congress, as well as important commentary on early drafts of this study. I must also thank the Earhart Foundation of Ann Arbor, Michigan for its support during the initial phase of my research. Last, but not least, I am grateful to my wife Linda and daughter Kristen for their encouragement and support throughout this endeavor.



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Introduction

The Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union opened on January 26, 1934, and concluded on February 10. Proclaimed as the "Congress of Victors" by Pravda, it took place just months after the crucial, successful harvest of 1933, one which symbolized a new hope that normalcy was returning after the traumatic upheavals wrought by the First Five-Year Plan and forced collectivization of agriculture. Just nine months after the congress, however, the assassination of Sergey Kirov, the first secretary of the Leningrad Party Organization, ushered in a new period of trauma--the Great Purge--which was to climax with the Yezhovshchina of 1937-1938. Indeed, 70% of the Central Committee members present at the XVII Party Congress had died or were imprisoned by the time of the next congress in 1939. In retrospect, then, the Seventeenth Congress is a benchmark of sorts, a brief interlude of calm between periods of tremendous upheaval.

In reviewing the literature about this congress, one is struck by an obvious clash of interpretations which typifies an age-old historians' dilemma: Was the glass half-empty or half-full? Did the congress proceedings signal the "victory" of the party and its past policies, and thus the beginning of a consolidation phase and a return to normalcy? Or, did the congress contain the ominous signs of internal conflict and struggle which portended greater troubles in the

future ? And how does one explain the high percentage of those present at this congress being subsequently purged?

Not surprisingly, these questions have spawned several contradictory interpretations. Early interpretations--clearly influenced by the "totalitarian model" that shaped much thinking in the post World War II years--argued that an all-powerful Stalin was building a new party, shaping the new society, and toward that end utilized an "institutionalized" purge to insure the quality and reliability of party cadre. ¹ Viewed in this context, the Seventeenth Party Congress was a veritable lovefest at which "not a single note of jarring criticism disturbed the monolithic serenity of the congress, as delegates vied with each other in proclaiming their fealty to Stalin." ²

Such views were subsequently disputed by those who found signs of conflict in the party, as well as opposition to Stalin's leadership. ³ The inadequacies of the totalitarian model, as well as the appearance of new data--either from Khrushchev's de-Stalinization revelations or samizdat materials--bolstered the arguments of those who argued that Stalin was indeed a "mortal" who faced the challenges and dilemmas shared by earlier dictators in history.

While one might think the subject closed, yet another new series of interpretations has emerged which minimize or question the new data concerning resistance to Stalin, or incorporates it in such away as to reinforce the earlier view

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of Stalin's supremacy. Thus, for example, Adam Ulam, in his biographical study of Stalin, presents a "plot-by-adulation" scenario in which party moderates did not really seek to oust or challenge Stalin, but rather to elevate him so as to remove him from the mundane day-to-day routine of governing and politics. ⁴ Others have questioned the veracity of the evidence that emerged in the Khrushchev era, and maintain that "pure" primary sources support the view that Stalin's leadership was not under challenge. ⁵ Jerry Hough, in his updated and revised version of the Fainsod classic How Russia is Ruled argues that there was no opposition to Stalin in 1934 and moreover, there was little need for such opposition to arise. ⁶ Thus, things have come nearly full circle, to the original view of Stalin as an all-powerful ruler.

So, what is one to make of all this? Clearly, some questions will remain unanswered until such time as the custodians of party history in Moscow see fit to open their vaults. Even then, there presumably will be naysayers who will challenge any new "documentary" evidence because of the possible political motivations surrounding such revelations.

Given such dismal prospects for "getting to the bottom" of this case, why undertake a study of the Seventeenth Party Congress? For one thing, no one has ever undertaken such a study. Most survey histories or specialized studies of the 1930s make passing reference to the congress, but do not analyze the proceedings. In some cases, authors cite



selectively from a single speech to underscore a point. Those who have taken the time to examine the speeches or one or another Politburo member have not systematically examined all of the key speeches. Indeed, many are mesmerized by the unending references to Stalin, and quite naturally assume that such worshipful references--when viewed against the viciousness and personal attacks that characterized most congresses of the 1920s--reflected the strength and unquestioned authority of Stalin's position.

In short, then, this dissertation represents the first attempt to systematically analyze the Seventeenth Party Congress. Central to this study is a content-analysis--as well as comparative analyses--of the major congress speeches in hopes of identifying the key issues and themes and distinguishing any policy differences that may have existed among the party leaders.

In the belief that historical events can not be viewed as isolated moments in time, and that policy positions and individual views generally are the product of an evolutionary process, the XVII Congress will also be examined in the broader context of the 1930s, particularly the period 1932 to 1936. In this way, one can better understand the XVII Congress as an historical event, reflecting the context of its times and the outlooks of the major participants in the early-to-mid 1930s. Thus, Stalin's 1933 address to a joint plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control



Commission is also analyzed for insights into Stalin's perceptions and tactics prior to the 1934 "Congress of Victors." This approach demonstrates that the XVII Party Congress was a critical turning point in the history of the 1930s, one which determined, in part, the fate of many congress participants during the subsequent great purge. While a study of the Seventeenth Congress is in itself important because it fills a research void, the study also has bearing on broader issues of the nature of historical inquiry and methodology.

The Issue of Sources and Methodology

A review of the main lines in the historiography of the XVII Party Congress suggests that much of the debate and controversy over the meaning and outcome of the congress stems from the problem of documentation. J. Arch Getty's recent study of the purge offers a stimulating discussion of the issue of sources, which raises some valid--and some not so valid--criticism of secondary and emigre materials. His strong position has elicited some equally strident rebuttals from several leading scholars of this period, including Robert C. Tucker and Robert Conquest. ⁷

While sharing somewhat Getty's view that there is a weak tradition of source criticism in analyzing the first- and second-hand accounts of the thirties, one cannot totally dismiss such accounts, as some of them can be tested and

validated against primary sources. Thus, while Getty may have grounds to challenge some of the points in Boris Nicolaevsky's "Letter of an Old Bolshevik," there clearly are issues raised by Nicolaevsky--for example, that there was debate over policy toward Germany--that can be verified from primary source materials.

Moreover, while Getty's skepticism of memoirs, autobiographies and other "first-hand" accounts, is understandable, such materials, if carefully scrutinized and assessed, can be a valuable adjunct to the analytical process. Such accounts frequently contain important insights into the psychology of the key political actors--a central issue if one is to realistically address the question of human motivation. Indeed, the critical question of "why?" generally requires an understanding of the personalities and motivations of the people who shaped events--factors which can not be addressed through primary sources alone. ⁸

The question of primary vs. secondary sources raises the more fundamental issue of "facts" and "truth" in the writing of history. While statements such as "ten people died in last night's fire" can readily be verified, questions of motive and intent can rarely be pinpointed in such neat fashion. More often than not, the historian who seeks to explain the intellectual origins of a movement or the motivations behind a political decision is much like a courtroom lawyer; the facts can only carry the argument so

far, but the presentation of the overall context into which the facts must readily fit becomes all-important to the interpretation of those "facts." In short, at some point, one must be persuaded by the preponderance of the evidence.

So, for example, when Anton Antonov-Ovseyenko reports that Sergey Kirov's sister-in-law discussed Kirov's growing concern for his life in the months after the Seventeenth Party Congress, it can be viewed in one of several ways: it could be dismissed as a third-hand account whose appearance in the 1980s makes it extremely suspect. At the same time, the weight of the evidence--differences between Stalin and Kirov in 1933-1934, the growing awareness of Stalin's personality problem--acknowledged by Lenin, Bukharin and others already in the 1920s, and the subsequent saturnalia of bloodletting during the purges--lends some credence to Kirov's reported fears. Similarly, some of the assertions in the Antonov-Ovseyenko book--that Kirov was almost killed by an errant tractor in Kazakhstan in the summer of 1934--are theoretically possible in light of the actual "fact" that Kirov did indeed participate in the Kazakh harvest of that summer. So, once again, one comes down to what is believable, credible. While one clearly would not want to rest one's case solely on the basis of such evidence, it should not be dismissed without careful scrutiny. In the case of events at the Seventeenth Party Congress, primary source materials from that period are adequate to sustain the

hypothesis presented in this dissertation. Even so, the various secondary and memoir accounts offer important insights into the psychological context of those events.

Still, one can hardly quibble with Getty's comments on the need to dig into the primary sources:

Such study involves no willing suspension of disbelief nor any blind acceptance of official cant, but only the common contemporary recognition that although Soviet documents are often devilishly selective and full of omissions, they are important indicators of what the leaders believed to be problems and of what they wanted done--considerations of no little importance in such a mystery story. ⁹

NOTES

1. See, for example, Zbigniew Brzezinski, The Permanent Purge: Politics in Soviet Totalitarianism (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1956).
2. Merle Fainsod, How Russia is Ruled (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953), pp.147-148.
3. See, for example, Roy Medvedev, Let History Judge: The Origins and Consequences of Stalinism. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971).
4. Adam Ulam. Stalin: The Man and His Era. (New York: The Viking Press, 1973), pp. 372-375.
5. J. Arch Getty. The Origins of the Great Purges: The Soviet Communist Party Reconsidered, 1933-1938. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
6. Jerry F. Hough and Merle Fainsod How the Soviet Union is Governed (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979).
7. See, for example, Robert C. Tucker's critical commentary "Problems of Evidence," in Slavic Review, Spring 1983, Vol.42, No. 1, pp. 80-86. See also Robert Conquest's review of the J. Arch Getty book in the Times Literary Supplement, May 9, 1986, pp. 503-504.
8. Robert C. Tucker's is indeed correct in noting that Getty's methodology tends to overlook an extremely important factor--Stalin's personality--in analyzing the 1930s. See Tucker, "Questions of Evidence", p. 84.
9. Getty, Origins of the Great Purges, p.8.

Chapter One: A Historiographical Survey of The XVII Party Congress

The Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) opened on January 26, 1934, and concluded on February 10. It took place just months after the crucial, successful harvest of 1933, one which symbolized a new hope that "normalcy" was returning after the traumatic upheavals wrought by the First Five-Year Plan and forced collectivization of agriculture. Just nine months after the congress, however, the assassination of Sergey Kirov, the first secretary of the Leningrad Party Organization, ushered in a new period of trauma--the Great Purge--which was to climax with the Yezhovshchina of 1937-1938. In retrospect, then, the Seventeenth Congress is a benchmark of sorts, a brief interlude of calm between periods of tremendous upheaval.

In reviewing the literature about this congress, one is struck by an obvious clash of interpretations which typifies an age-old historians' dilemma: Was the glass half-empty or half-full? Did the congress proceedings signal the "victory" of the party and its past policies, and thus the beginning of a consolidation phase and a return to normalcy? Or, did the congress contain the ominous signs of internal conflict and struggle which portended greater troubles in the future? Or, was this this a "routine" congress of little import which marked but another year of Stalin's unchallenged

dictatorship of party and nation?

One of the earliest and most controversial accounts of the Seventeenth Party Congress is The Letter of an Old Bolshevik, a lengthy article based in large part on a 1936 conversation between Nikolai Bukharin and Boris Nicolaevsky. It states that this congress was the scene of Sergey Kirov's ascendancy in the top echelons of the party and that many at the meeting were comparing the reception accorded Kirov with that of Stalin. ¹ More importantly, it gives a good sense of the context in which the congress occurred. According to this account, Stalin was adopting a conciliatory position on various issues in late 1933-early 1934, a fact which explains the appearance of important former oppositionists at the congress. ² According to this account, the congress took place against the backdrop of a struggle among Stalin's Politburo colleagues, a struggle for influence with Stalin, not against him. In this struggle, Kirov and those seeking internal party reconciliation and a moderating of the harsh excesses of the First Five-Year Plan (FYP) were pitted against Yezhov and Kaganovich, who opposed this conciliatory approach and the new personnel who would be charged with implementing the new line. ³

Other important accounts of political in-fighting appeared while Stalin was still alive, from Soviet defectors, some of whom had worked in the Soviet security and intelligence services. Their former positions had given them

access to information, which, while not directly focusing on the Seventeenth Party Congress, gave key insights on the issues and individuals central to the policy debates under way during the period of the congress. ⁴ Alexander Barmine, a Soviet diplomat who defected in late 1937, did comment on the congress, noting Kirov's popularity among the assembled delegates and Stalin's apparent decision to go along with Kirov's moderate policies. ⁵

The first Soviet official account of the XVII Congress appeared in the Stalin-directed History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (bolsheviks), Short Course, which was first published in late 1938. Three of the five pages devoted to the congress summarize or quote directly from Stalin's report of the Central Committee, focusing largely on his discussion of "survivals of capitalism in the minds of men" and the consequent need for vigilance; it also notes his comments on problems of ideological-political leadership and the potential for the "revival of the ideology of the defeated anti-Leninist groups." ⁶ The speeches by V.M. Molotov and V.V. Kuibyshev on the Second Five-Year Plan and L.M. Kaganovich's report on organizational questions were briefly noted, as was the adoption by the congress of amended party rules.

In keeping with Stalin's reported emphasis on vigilance, the Short Course also mentioned that N.I. Bukharin, A.I. Rykov, M.P. Tomsy, L.B. Kamenev and G. Ye.

Zinoviev all addressed the congress, but that the delegates detected a "ring of insincerity and duplicity" in their speeches; moreover, this account describes L.B. Kamenev and G. Ye. Zinoviev as presenting "cloying speeches" while in fact they were hatching a "villainous plot" against the life of S.M. Kirov. ⁷ This version remained unchanged through the publication of the 1953 edition of the Short Course.

New interpretations of the congress emerged in the 1950s, as an intellectual preoccupation with the concept of totalitarianism began to shape much of the Western writing on Soviet politics of the thirties. These analyses centered on the role of the Stalin cult and the purge process as natural instruments applied in the refining of a totalitarian structure. The first edition of Merle Fainsod's classic text How Russia is Ruled appeared in 1953 and clearly reflected the influence of the totalitarian model. Fainsod interpreted the events of the thirties as an epilogue to the political struggles of the twenties, in which Stalin physically eliminated his former rivals. Once Stalin had emerged as the unchallenged leader in the late 1920s, the political life of the party had been fundamentally altered: "...colleagues on the Politburo functioned as administrative henchmen and assistants on a high level"; party congresses became rallies of the faithful; and the party apparatus served as the institutionalized projection of his [Stalin's] will." ⁸ In keeping with this view, Fainsod characterized the Seventeenth



Party Congress as one where "not a single note of jarring criticism disturbed the monolithic serenity" as delegates "vied with each other in proclaiming their fealty to Stalin." ⁹

As with the other works built upon the totalitarian construct, this interpretation focused on the "system" and did not refer to the earlier accounts of Nicolaevsky and the various Soviet defectors.

In his highly detailed and well-documented account of the purge process, Zbigniew Brzezinski argued that the purges were part and parcel of a totalitarian process of constant internal movement and change:

The purge is thus inherent in the totalitarian system. The position of the leadership of the system is one of relative isolation, which results in false conception of reality, the accentuation of violence, and the insistence on eliminating all possible challenges to the leadership's monopoly of power. This tendency is sharpened by the totalitarian emphasis on combat as the ultimate form of moral development, and by the necessity of preserving the original revolutionary fervor and ideological purity. Consequently the leadership continually demands new sacrifices for the sake of new goals, and the progress towards them constantly exacts a new toll of victims--even from the movement itself, as its members grow weary or satiated. As the purge begins to penetrate the masses, they respond with mixed reactions of fear, ambition, or enthusiasm, and the purge may develop a momentum of its own, threatening to get out of hand. The police apparatus of the totalitarian state is particularly anxious to magnify the potentiality of subversion, as its own position in the power hierarchy is dependent on the regime's need of it for self-preservation. Finally, the struggles within the regime itself find external expression in the ruthless elimination of fallen idols and their supporters. The continual struggle for power among primary competitors and their second lieutenants results in the increased tendency to settle all conflicts through the total

elimination of the losers. Totalitarianism is, accordingly, the system of the purge--bred both by the existential conditions of the system and by the subjective motivations of its leadership. ¹⁰

Using this framework, Brzezinski views the purge of the 1930s as one in which the party sought to rid itself of unreliable elements and opportunists, as well as those who had become disillusioned during the hardships of collectivization and the First Five-Year Plan. ¹¹ In this interpretation, the Seventeenth Party Congress represented a point at which the leadership was in a position to launch a more intensive effort (in this purge process) because Stalin had already bested his adversaries in the opposition forces. Indeed, "struggle, suffering and opposition had welded the Party together. And a political party engaged in a struggle for survival is not likely to turn against its leadership." Brzezinski does note that while the congress firmly consolidated Stalin's power in such key organs as the Politburo and Orgburo, it did not achieve true homogeneity in the Central Committee, which remained a haven for a number of future victims in the purge trials. Their total elimination marked the final stage in the Hamlet-like tragedy of the opposition--torn between loyalty to the Bolshevik cause and distrust and hostility to the emerging new leadership. ¹² Summing up the thirties, Brzezinski concludes that:

It was only after the opposition, both political and economic, was broken, that the regime was ready to turn against "those who rush on ahead." The alleged careerists and opportunists, the overambitious and the sluggards, both in the Party and in the state apparatus, were now purged.

But in the final analysis, it did not matter too much who the victims were--so long as the purge could liberate the rulers from the Party, so long as it could establish the independence of the dictator from his own system. 13

Khrushchev's revelations concerning Stalin's crimes at the XX Party Congress in February 1956--as well as the XXII Congress in 1961--cast new light on the events of the thirties. This new evidence, the first official Soviet disclosures on the subject, was gradually and selectively incorporated into party histories, journals and books. As regards the Seventeenth Party Congress, Khrushchev's remarks clearly suggested the 1934 meeting as a key turning point in the history of the thirties. During his 1956 secret speech, for example, Khrushchev revealed that, of the 1966 delegates to the XVII congress, 1108 were subsequently arrested during the purge. Moreover, some 70 per cent of the Central Committee members elected at the congress, i.e., 98 of the 139 full and candidate members, were arrested and shot. Khrushchev then acknowledged that most of the charges against these delegates and officials were "absurd, wild, and contrary to common sense." 14

Khrushchev's comments offer a noteworthy periodization



of the 1930s which again underscores the XVII Congress as a pivotal turning point:

What is the reason that mass repressions against activists increased more and more after the 17th Party Congress? It was because at that time Stalin had so elevated himself above the party and above the nation that he ceased to consider either the Central Committee or the party. While he still reckoned with the opinion of the collective before the 17th Congress, after the complete political liquidation of the Trotskyites, Zinovievites and Bukharinites, when as a result of that fight and socialist victories the party achieved unity, Stalin ceased to an ever greater degree to consider the members of the party's Central Committee and even the members of the Political Bureau. Stalin thought that now he could decide all things alone and all he needed were statisticians; he treated all others in such a way that they could only listen and praise him. ¹⁵

While implicitly suggesting that Stalin was still seeking to achieve unchallenged decisionmaking powers at the Seventeenth Party Congress, Khrushchev did not offer details as to who was blocking Stalin. In his 1961 presentation to the XXII Party Congress, Khrushchev again returned to the thirties, discussing Kirov's assassination, and the "accidents" that befell key witnesses in the subsequent investigations, which, he suggested, were effected to cover the tracks of the "organizers of Kirov's killing." He also proposed the rehabilitation of "guiltless" party and state figures, such as "Comrades Chubar, Kosior, Rudzutak, Postyshev, Eikhe, Voznesensky, Kuznetsov, and others." ¹⁶

Khrushchev's de-Stalinization speech in February 1956 ushered in a new period in which changes in the official

party histories were gradually incorporated. ¹⁷ For example, the one-volume History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union issued in 1958 and 1960 presented a more upbeat, factual account of the XVII Congress, which was described as occurring "in an atmosphere of great political and labor enthusiasm." ¹⁸ It acknowledged that J.V. Stalin had delivered the report of the Central Committee, but offered no summary or quotations from that report. It treated the speeches of the former oppositionists in the same fashion as the Short Course, but it did not incriminate Kamenev and Zinoviev in the Kirov assassination. Finally, the three page discussion of the congress noted the presentations on the five-year plan, organizational questions, and the adoption of amended party rules. ¹⁹

The 1962 edition of the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union offered, for the first time, some missing details concerning the XVII Party Congress. This candor was undoubtedly prompted by Khrushchev's renewed assault on Stalin at the 1961 Party Congress, which resulted in the removal of Stalin's body from the Lenin-Stalin mausoleum in Red Square. The most important of the new details was the revelation that "...there was talk among the congress delegates--particularly those familiar with Lenin's testament--that it was time to transfer Stalin from the position of General Secretary to another post." ²⁰ This revelation was repeated in a February 1964 Pravda article



commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of the XVII Party Congress. The author, L. Shaumyan, was a delegate to the congress; he described the proceedings as spirited and enthusiastic, and noted that the former oppositionists delivered "penitent speeches"--with no assertion that they were viewed as "insincere" by congress delegates. ²¹ His description of Sergey Kirov as "the splendid Leninist and favorite of the whole Party," which immediately followed his discussion of removing Stalin suggested that Kirov would have been Stalin's likely successor. ²²

This report of dissatisfaction with Stalin also appeared in a 1964 biography of Sergey Kirov. The author commented that many congress delegates felt it was time to remove Stalin because "he, believing in his infallibility, began to ignore collegiality and, once again, was coarse." ²³

The disclosures of the de-Stalinization process were gradually incorporated in Western analyses of the 1930s. In their pioneering work, The Soviet Secret Police, (1957) Simon Wolin and Robert M. Slusser made the first systematic compilation of data provided by the various defector, emigre and official accounts to present a solid chronological overview of the history of that organization. ²⁴ This in turn provided important evidence concerning the policy differences between Stalin and some leaders in the police, as late as 1936. The annotated citations provided by the authors also attested to the potential for fathoming

difficult political issues in Soviet history, even the state security organs.

Subsequent major studies, such as Leonard Schapiro's The Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1960), John Armstrong's The Politics of Totalitarianism: The Communist Party of the Soviet Union From 1934 to the Present (1961) and Robert Conquest's The Great Terror: Stalin's Purge of the Thirties (1968) employed similar methods of analysis, i.e., construction of firm chronologies of facts drawn from a range of sources to show linkages between various developments. ²⁵ Armstrong argued that while the data did not rule out Stalin's temporary defeat--or retreat--in 1934, it did cast some doubt on its likelihood. ²⁶ Still, he did state that regardless of whether the "surface relaxation" concealed conflict at the highest party levels, it did cover a "multitude of conflicting tendencies in the Soviet body politic." ²⁷

Conquest offered a less tenuous interpretation, arguing that the evidence demonstrated significant policy differences between Stalin and his newly ensconced Politburo of "young Stalinists" between 1932 and 1937, and that the XVII Congress was a central turning point in this political struggle. Conquest views the Congress elections as evidence that Stalin had been stalemated by party moderates, and that he was "on the point of being blocked in his drive for unlimited authority." ²⁸ This in turn led Stalin to use new means--

murder--to oust Kirov and set the stage for a purge that would enable him to achieve a position of total, unchallenged power.

Following Khrushchev's fall from power in October 1964, the de-Stalinization process quickly came to a halt. Subsequent official Soviet histories of the party once again became more circumspect in treating controversial issues related to Stalin's cult of personality and abuse of power. Thus, in the 1971 volume of the multi-volume series on the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, there is no hint of dissatisfaction with Stalin, or the suggestion that his removal was discussed by congress delegates. Indeed, the sixteen pages devoted to the XVII Congress give little indication of any debate or dissatisfaction, offering instead a bland, factual account of speakers, subject themes, and statistical data presented in various congress speeches. 29

It did note the participation of various former oppositionists, and noted that their voices seemed to be "out of tune" with the rest of the party. 30 The publication in 1971 of Roy Medvedev's 566 page tome, Let History Judge: The Origins and Consequences of Stalinism represented a landmark contribution to the historiography of Soviet politics during the thirties. 31 This study was begun in 1962, following the reaffirmation of the de-Stalinization process at the XXII Party Congress the previous year; by the

time of its completion in 1968, however, Medvedev was unable to secure official approval for its publication and consequently permitted a Western publisher to issue it. Exploiting a wealth of samizdat manuscripts, unpublished memoirs, interviews with survivors of the thirties (or their relatives), as well as published materials from the Khrushchev era, Medvedev uncovered new evidence and details concerning events of the thirties, including the XVII Party Congress.

Medvedev notes that the Stalin personality cult reached new heights at this congress. He also describes, however, high-level discussions on the eve of the congress which focused on the need to remove Stalin from the post of general secretary. According to these accounts, Ordzhonikidze, Mikoyan, and others approached Kirov and asked him to consider taking the post--a request which Kirov turned down. Stalin reportedly received details on this incident. Medvedev also notes "irregularities" in the voting at the congress; citing a deputy chairman of the congress election commission, he reports that 270 congress delegates voted against Stalin in the Central Committee elections, and that Kaganovich subsequently destroyed all but three of those ballots--thus leaving Stalin and Kirov equal, with both receiving three "no" votes. 32

Despite these developments, however, Medvedev adds that Stalin successfully advanced individuals who were to

prove important in his drive for total domination, such as Yezhov. He concludes his discussion with a comment on the relationship between Stalin and his colleagues in the Politburo:

These are fragments of information, but they allow us to conclude that in 1934 the relations between Stalin and the Party's basic cadres were undergoing certain changes. Stalin's basic usefulness as the Party's leader had long since passed but some of the eminent members of the Central Committee realized this only toward 1934. Stalin himself must have perceived these changes in the mood of the top leaders, for he had the finest possible sensitivity concerning any decline in his influence. ³³

Medvedev's account of the thirties was quickly incorporated into new Western accounts of the period, although not always in keeping with his interpretation of the evidence. In Adam Ulam's 1973 biography of Stalin, for example, a skeptical eye is cast on the notion that Stalin's position was under challenge at the XVII Party Congress. Ulam hypothesizes that Medvedev's reports of a "plot" against Stalin could have been a "plot-by-adulation", in which Stalin's colleagues sought to "kick him upstairs"--much as Mao's adversaries tried to do in the mid-1960s--by transforming him into a national "tutelary-dignitary" and elder statesman--by playing on his egomania. This, Ulam contends, would explain the prostration at Stalin's feet of congress delegates, who hoped to appease him into accepting the status of a national deity, and thereby liberate him from

the "vexing and exhausting work of the Secretariat." 34

This is an intriguing scenario, but Ulam seemingly dismisses it. Rather, he maintains that "Stalin's inordinate suspicion must have been allayed by the extraordinary tribute to him at the congress," and that, at the time, Stalin showed possibly genuine signs of going along with the plans for his transfer. Indeed, in keeping with Fainsod's description of the congress, Ulam speculates that Stalin "must have been almost convinced that the party loved him, as this was the first congress at which there was complete unity." 35

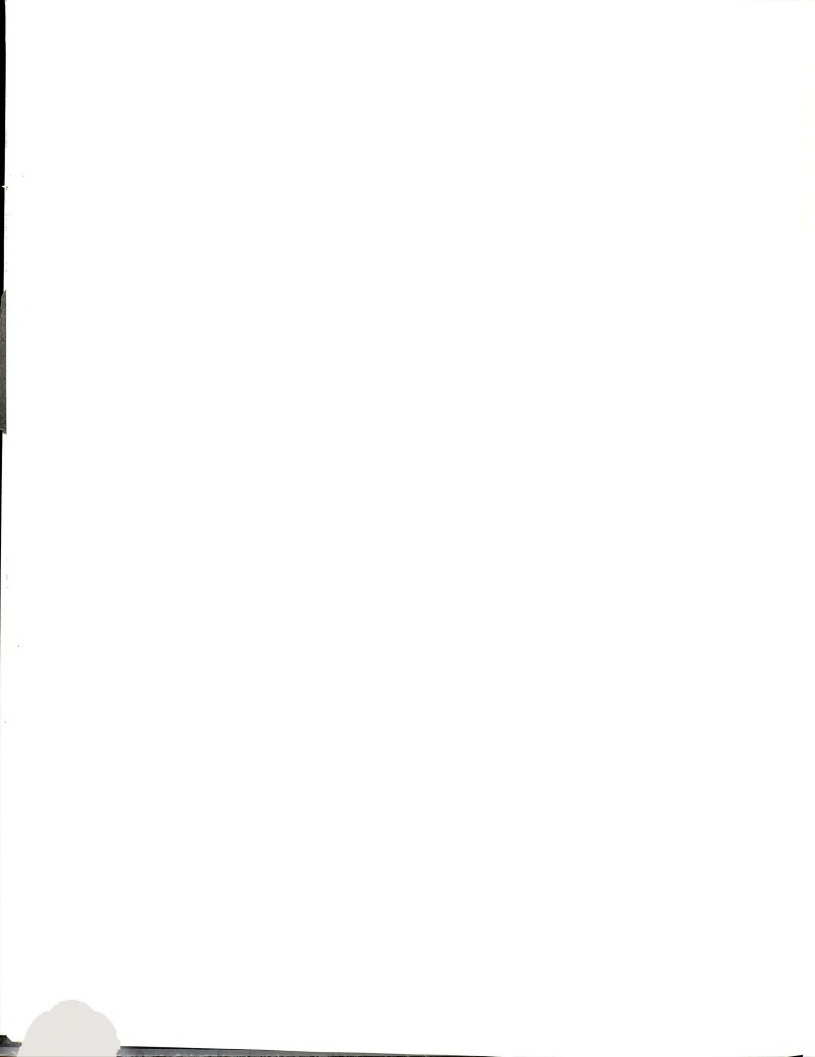
From this point, Ulam logically argues that Stalin himself chose to divest himself of the title, General Secretary, presumably to preclude someone else from using that title in the event of his resignation from Secretariat duties. To underscore Stalin's clear dominance over the party, Ulam points out that the published protocols of the congress listed the Politburo and Secretariat members in order of importance (Stalin being first, of course) rather than alphabetically, as had been the practice at previous congresses. As for Kirov, Ulam states it would have been "quite in Stalin's style" to authorize Ordzhonikidze and Mikoyan to canvass other party leaders about the possibility of Kirov eventually assuming Stalin's duties in the Secretariat. 36

The notion that Stalin was under attack at the XVII Party Congress is also challenged by Jerry Hough, in the



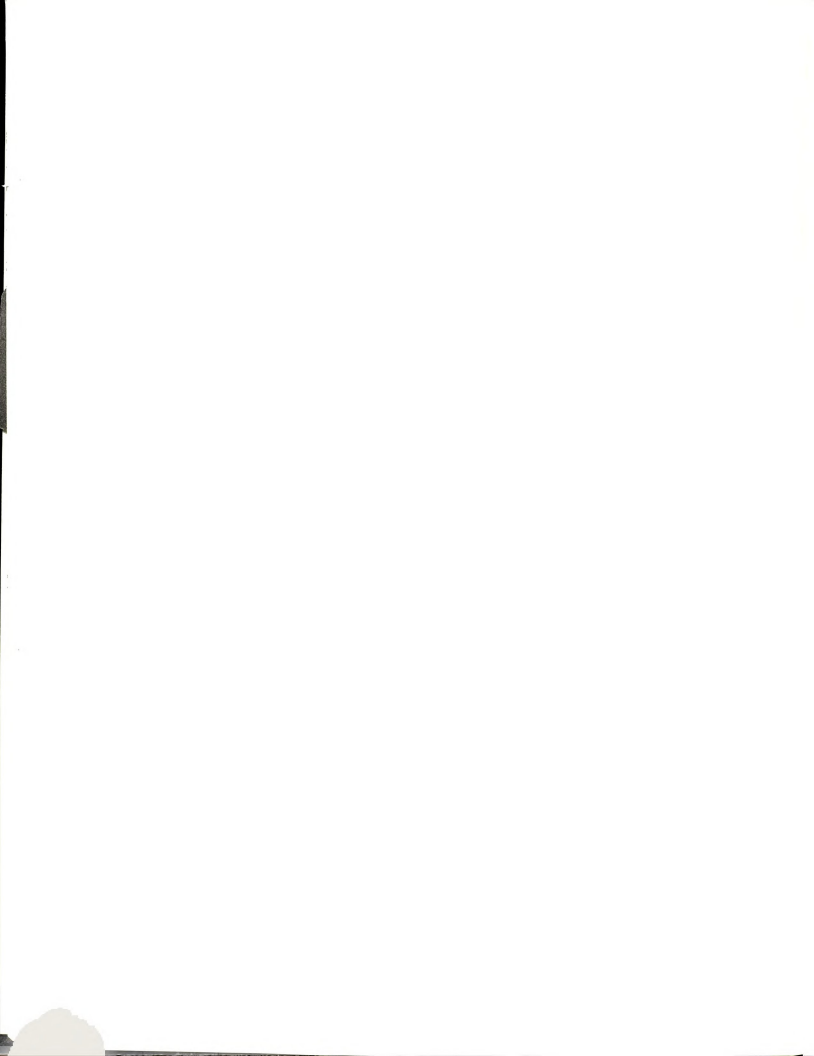
enlarged and revised edition of the Merle Fainsod classic, retitled How the Soviet Union Is Governed (1979).³⁷ The author, a Fainsod student in the 1950s, acknowledges that he and his mentor had parted ways on the question of the XVII Party Congress. According to Hough, Fainsod was considering revisions in his assessment of the Stalin-Kirov relationship, as well as the outcome of the XVII Congress, while he, Hough, retained Fainsod's original interpretation as presented in earlier editions because he found it "convincing."³⁸ Citing a Fainsod seminar presentation at Columbia University in November 1971, Hough does acknowledge in the footnotes that Fainsod then seemed "to associate himself with the view that Kirov posed a challenge to Stalin and that the XVII Congress represented a defeat for the Soviet leader."³⁹

Hough's main argument against the view of a "conciliatory opposition" is that there was little need for such an opposition to arise. The conciliatory policies this group seemed to advocate were already in place--as early as mid-1931--and promulgated by Stalin himself, as the "great retreat" from the "industrial, agricultural, and cultural policies of the first Five Year Plan."⁴⁰ Moreover, Hough contends that accounts of Kirov's rising popularity are overstated, and notes that Kaganovich and Molotov--the reported conservatives--received greater ovations at the congress than did Kirov.⁴¹ As for the elections at the congress, Hough focuses on the rise of various police



officials, including Yagoda, as evidence of Stalin's strengthened position, but makes no reference to the accounts of a move to relieve Stalin of the General Secretary position. 42

Anton Antonov-Ovseyenko's The Time of Stalin: Portrait of a Tyranny (1981) represents another major samizdat account of the Stalin era, comparable in scope to that of Medvedev, though less thorough in its documentation. 44 The author, son of a prominent Old Bolshevik who led the assault on the Winter Palace in October 1917, utilized his family connections to gain access to a number of relatives of leading figures of the Stalin years, as well as various officials privy to sensitive investigations undertaken during Khrushchev's rule. While the book relies heavily on anecdotal reports, it also makes use of memoir literature, as well as unpublished manuscripts, such as that of Sergey Kirov's sister-in-law. A highly detailed report on the Central Committee elections at the XVII Congress--and the alleged talks of removing Stalin as General Secretary--reflect access to individuals who participated in the investigation prompted by Khrushchev, possibly including Anastas Mikoyan. Antonov-Ovseyenko's discussion of the Central Committee elections is the most detailed to date, and is attributed to Vasilii Verkhovyykh, the deputy chairman of the election commission at the 1934 party congress. Verkhovyykh testified that there were 292 negative ballots cast against Stalin, and that this



awkward situation prompted the commission chairman to consult with Kaganovich, who in turn left to consult with someone else (Antonov-Ovseyenko infers it must have been Stalin himself); upon his return, Kaganovich asked how many negative votes Kirov had received, and ordered that Stalin's ballots reflect that number as well; since Kirov had received three such votes, 289 ballots were destroyed. When the 1957 investigation team opened the congress archives, the official summary stated there were 936 voting delegates--289 fewer than the 1225 listed in the 1934 stenographic record of the congress. Still, the wax-sealed ballots were opened and numbered only 936. 45

Antonov-Ovseyenko also offers new details on the move to remove Stalin as General Secretary on the eve of the XVII congress. The dialogue reportedly occurred at Ordzhonikidze's apartment, and included such high level party figures as Stanislav Kosior, Sergey Kirov, Grigoriy Petrovskiy, Boris Sheboldayev, Robert Eikhe, and Mamiya Orakhelashvili. Kirov was asked to consider taking the General Secretary slot, but he refused. 46

New details on the Kirov assassination of December 1, 1934, are revealed for the first time. According to information received from Kirov's relatives, there were at least two attempts made on Kirov's life in 1934, long before the assassin Nikolayev was apprehended in Kirov's Smolny offices. 47 By virtue of interviews with Kirov's relatives,

the author also sheds new light on Kirov's psychological condition in the months following his accession to the Secretariat during the XVII congress. For example, the memoir manuscript of Kirov's sister-in-law notes Kirov's long-abiding premonition of death in the months after the party congress. She also reported on growing tensions in the Stalin-Kirov relationship, with Stalin constantly reproaching an increasingly depressed Kirov to weed out the Leningrad Party Organization of subversive elements. 48

Despite these new revelations, the official Soviet position on the Seventeenth Party Congress remains unchanged. For example, a 1984 Pravda article commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Congress offered little insight into the 1934 congress; indeed, it neatly managed to avoid any mention of Stalin. Rather it mentioned Ordzhonikidze and Kuibyshev and their calls for more quality in worker production--a message in keeping with then General Secretary Andropov's anti-corruption campaign. 49

During the mid-1980s, several new studies of the thirties appeared, offering new perspectives on the events of the period, but shedding little new light on the Seventeenth Party Congress. Both studies, J. Arch Getty's Origins of the Great Purge and Gabor Rittersporn's Phenomenes et Realites Staliniens--Tensions Sociales et Conflits Politiques en URSS 1933-1953 take a broad view of the period, and examine events in the context of a chaotic tension between a bureaucracy

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seeking to impose a new society upon the unruly and recalcitrant masses. More specifically, Getty depicts a struggle between the so-called "center"--the Moscow-based central government and party bureaucracy--and the provincial authorities of the "periphery." 50 In so doing, Getty counters the concept of a well-oiled, efficient totalitarian system with a picture of rambunctious chaos, in which a central administration seeking to "streamline, regularize and ultimately control local political organizations," actually fueled a struggle with those bodies. 51

Apart from this clash, Getty acknowledges that the party was split by conflict between factions, strata and key personalities. Among these he includes the policy battles between Molotov and Ordzhonikidze over the targets and rates of increase for the five-year plans--a debate which was reflected in the public record at the XVII Party Congress. 52 Nonetheless, Getty sees the discussion of organizational questions at the congress as a reflection of the center-periphery conflict, and dismisses the idea that several major policy differences existed among the ruling leadership. 53 In this context, Getty subscribes to Hough's view that there was little over which the top leaders could fight. Getty then draws on recent studies of power politics during the postwar period--which show Stalin as a mediator standing above competing groups--to suggest that Stalin played a similar role during the 1930s. 54



The question of a Stalin-Kirov rivalry or an attempt to relieve Stalin of his General Secretary post is not analyzed by Getty on the grounds that there are no primary sources available to seriously address such questions, and that all secondary accounts, including official Soviet writings of the Khrushchev era, must be discounted because they are either too far removed from the source or because they are politicized. ⁵⁵ Moreover, Getty cites this lack of adequate evidence to buttress his contention that "there is no good reason to believe Stalin connived in Kirov's assassination. ⁵⁶

Like Getty, Rittersporn sees little evidence of conflict at the top in his scheme of politics in the thirties. He views the recantations of former oppositionists at the Seventeenth Party Congress as evidence of their harmlessness. He reads the congress speeches for evidence of the struggle to make the regional bureaucracies responsive to the directions from the center. Rittersporn's thorough examination of Pravda editorials and party documents indicates there were differences about the extent of damage being perpetrated by "subversive elements" and where these elements were to be found. He contends that outside scapegoats, i.e., former oppositionists and Trotskyites, were needed and implicitly argues that those engaged in the intra-party debate found it difficult to directly attack or accuse each other. ⁵⁷

General Secretary Gorbachev's current "glasnost'" campaign may yet touch upon the events of this congress, as there have been several indications that Stalin may again be the subject of critical reassessment. As of now, however, there has been no new official shift in treatments of the Seventeenth Party Congress.

NOTES

1. Boris Nicolaevsky, Power and the Soviet Elite: The Letter of an Old Bolshevik and Other Essays (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965), p.35.
2. Ibid., p.46.
3. Ibid., pp.47-48.
4. See, for example, Walter Krivitsky, In Stalin's Secret Service, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1939); Alexander Orlov, The Secret History of Stalin's Crimes, (New York: Random House 1953); and Alexander Barmine, One Who Survived, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1945).
5. Barmine, One Who Survived, pp. 245-255.
6. History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), Short Course, (New York: International Publishers, 1939), pp.320-324. (Cited hereafter as Short Course).
7. Ibid., p. 325.
8. Fainsod, How Russia is Ruled, pp.145 and 150.
9. Ibid., pp. 147-148.
10. Brzezinski, The Permanent Purge, p. 23.
11. Ibid., pp.54-55.
12. Ibid., pp.101-102.
13. Ibid., p.64.
14. For the text of Khrushchev's secret speech to the XX Party Congress, see "The Crimes of the Stalin Era", published by the New Leader, New York, 1962. See page S20-21.
15. Ibid., p.S21.
16. Pravda, October 29, 1961, pp. 1-3.

17. For a review of the twists and turns in the Soviet historiography of the Communist Party, see Kenneth A. Kerst, "CPSU History Re-Revised" in Problems of Communism, May-June 1977, pp. 17-32.
18. History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1960), pp. 489-491.
19. Ibid.
20. Istoriya Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuza, (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1962), p. 486.
21. L. Shaumyan, "At a Milestone of the First Five-Year Plan," in Pravda, February 7, 1964, p. 2.
22. Ibid.
23. S. Krasnikov, Sergey Mironovich Kirov: Zhizn' i Devyatelnost', Moscow, 1964, pp. 194-195.
24. Simon Wolin and Robert M. Slusser, eds., The Soviet Secret Police, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1957) pp. 43-46. Some of this data is elaborated in a subsequent article by Slusser, in which he presents a broader interpretation of the 1930s. See Robert M. Slusser, "The Role of the Foreign Ministry" in Ivo J. Lederer, ed., Russian Foreign Policy: Essays in Historical Perspective, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), pp. 197-239. In short, Slusser argues that despite Stalin's political victory over his last rivals in 1929, there existed until 1938 deep splits over basic questions of Soviet foreign and internal policy--not only in the realm of ideas, but in open defiance of Stalin's known policy preferences. In particular, the ongoing debate over the nature of Fascism in Germany and its policy implications for the Soviet Union demonstrated the continued intellectual influence of Bukharin's views, according to Slusser. This, in part, he contends, led Stalin to purge and "re-educate" those individuals affected by such ideas, and to embark on the systematic education of the new generation through texts such as Stalin's own Short Course, which would eradicate the views of his rivals.
25. John A. Armstrong, The Politics of Totalitarianism, (New York: Random House, 1961), Robert Conquest, The Great Terror: Stalin's Purge of the Thirties, (New York: Macmillan Press, 1968), and Leonard Schapiro, The Communist Party of the Soviet Union, (New York: Vintage Press, 1960).

26. Armstrong, Politics of Totalitarianism, p. 16.
27. Ibid., p.19.
28. Conquest, Great Terror, p.38.
29. Istoriya Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuza, Vol. IV, (Book 2), (Moscow: Politizdat, 1971), pp. 261-277.
30. Ibid., pp.276-277.
31. Roy Medvedev, Let History Judge.
32. Ibid., pp. 155-157.
33. Ibid., p.157.
34. Ulam, Stalin, pp.373-375.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid., p.376. It is unclear what Ulam means by the idea that "this would have been in keeping with Stalin's style." If he means it was a ploy to trap the others into revealing their preferred successor, it seems likely that Ordzhonikidze and Mikoyan would have not have played along, since they knew Stalin too well. Indeed, by all accounts, Kirov went out of his way to dispell rumors of his interest in the position, presumably because he feared--correctly--that he would incur Stalin's wrath.
37. Hough and Fainsod, How the Soviet Union is Governed.
38. Ibid., p.viii.
39. Ibid., p.600
40. Ibid., p.161.
41. Ibid., pp.159-160
42. Ibid., p.160.
44. Anton Antonov-Ovseyenko, The Time of Stalin: Portrait of a Tyranny, (New York, Harper and Row, 1981). A shorter, Russian Language version of the work appeared in 1980, originally titled Portret Tirana. Antonov-Ovseyenko's samizdat activities reportedly caught the attention of the Soviet authorities, who arrested him on charges of anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda. See the biographic sketch of



Antonov-Ovseyenko and review of his recent activities in Radio Liberty Research, RL 18/85, 18 January 1985, "The Arrest of Antonov-Ovseenko" by Julia Wishnevsky.

45. Ibid., pp.80-82.

46. Ibid., p.79.

47. Ibid., p. 89. One attempt--outside of Kirov's home--reportedly was aborted when the would-be assassins realized Kirov was entertaining company that evening; Kirov also survived an "accident" while overseeing the harvest drive in Kazakhstan during the summer of 1934. (Official accounts do place Kirov in Kazakhstan at that time.)

48. Ibid., pp.86-87.

49. S. Kolesnikov, "Na puti sozidanii: k 50-letii XVII s'ezda VKP (b)" in Pravda, January 26, 1986, p.2. A listing of forthcoming books in a recent issue of Voprosii Istorii noted that in 1985, XVII S'ezd VKP(b)-Vazhnaya Vekha na Puti Stroitel'stva Sotsialisma was due to be published. As of early 1987, it was not available.

50. Getty, Origins of the Great Purges, pp. 196-199.

51. Ibid., p.198.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid., pp.22-24.

54. Ibid., p.5. These studies include William O. McCagg, Stalin Embattled 1943-1948, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press,1978), Werner Hahn, Postwar Soviet Politics: The Fall of Zhdanov and the Defeat of Moderation, 1946-1953, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press,1983).

55. Ibid., pp.1-9. Getty's rigid standards concerning documentation lead him to several conclusions about major events that have already prompted controversy. (See note 7 in Chapter One). Still, his methodology may well prompt a valuable and overdue reexamination of the central events and assumptions of the purge period. For example, his account of the Kirov assassination in Getty, Origins of the Great Purges, pp.207-210 is a new and controversial interpretation which has reopened discussion of a turning point of the 1930s.)

56. Ibid., p. 210.

57. Gabor Rittersporn, "Soviet Politics in the 1930s: Rehabilitating Society," in Studies in Comparative Communism, Vol. XIX, no.2, Summer, 1986, pp. 105-128. See especially pages 106, 111, 114-115.

Chapter Two: The Historical Context of the XVII Party Congress

The Seventeenth Party Congress of 1934 represents the mid-point of a tumultuous decade which began with the First Five-Year Plan and collectivization of the peasantry, and ended with the last gasps of the Great Purge. During that ten-year period, there occurred a social and economic upheaval which radically altered Soviet society. Presiding over this massive transformation was a short and seemingly unassuming man--Josef Stalin--who was once characterized as a "gray blur" by an early chronicler of the 1917 Russian Revolution.

By 1929, this "ordinary" man had become Lenin's heir as leader of the Communist Party, besting a field of better known and formidable opponents, including Leon Trotsky, Nikolai Bukharin, Grigorii Zinoviev, and Lev Kamenev. Stalin's triumph seemed complete; the party supported the forced exile of his chief rival, Trotsky, while Bukharin and his "Rightist" collaborators were publicly recanting the "errors" of their positions on economic policy.

Nonetheless, the consequences of economic policies of rapid industrialization and collectivization of the peasantry prompted new--albeit more circumspect and quiet--debate within the party. This is not surprising, given the scope of these policies. One need only review the production and output statistics for the major categories to appreciate the

magnitude of the industrial transformation that occurred during this period:

	<u>1928</u>	<u>1932</u>	<u>1937</u>
Coal (million tons)	35.5	64.4	128.0
Petroleum (million tons)	11.6	21.4	28.5
Steel (million tons)	4.3	5.9	17.7
Electric power (billion k/w)	5.0	13.5	36.2

Source: Naum Jasny. Soviet Industrialization 1928-1952.
(Chicago:University of Chicago Press, 1961),p.368.

The human costs of this tranformation have been the subject of numerous books and articles. ¹ Most specialists agree that five to five and a half million is a conservative estimate of the peasant deaths attributable to the collectivization and "de-kulakization" campaigns of the late 1920s and early 1930s. ²

It is hardly surprising, then, that the human costs and breakneck growth rates of Stalin's economic policies served as the initial impetus for growing criticism against these policies. One of the earliest manifestations of this internal party criticism was a memorandum circulated by two Central Committee members, S.I. Syrtsov (who was also a candidate member of the Politburo) and V.V. Lominadze in 1930. ³ The

memorandum attacked the regime's "economic adventurism," as well as the behavior of party officials. Such high-level criticism could not be tolerated at this early stage of the economic program; by December 1930, both men had been attacked as a "Rightist-Leftist bloc" and stripped of their Central Committee membership.

The appearance of a 200-page document, the "Riutin platform," in the summer of 1932 proved to be a more controversial and important episode. Penned by a former Central Committee member who was still working in the party's Agitprop department, the paper called for a reduced rate of industrialization, re-opening the debate on agricultural policy, and increased party democracy; it even called for the readmission of Trotsky and other defeated oppositionists of the 1920s. However, the most sensitive portion of the platform was the stinging personal assault on Stalin; in a fifty-page section Stalin was depicted as a power-hungry evil genius who would bring the revolution to ruin, unless he was removed. ⁴ This document, moreover, circulated throughout the party ranks.

The Riutin episode is extremely important, because it revealed, perhaps for the first time, that Stalin's Politburo would not always "rubber stamp" their approval for any and all of Stalin's wishes. In this case, a majority within the Politburo--reportedly headed by Leningrad Party Secretary Sergey Kirov--opposed Stalin's call for imposing the death

penalty on Riutin at two separate Politburo meetings, in September 1932 and January 1933. ⁵ The dissenting majority can hardly be called an "opposition group;" after all, they supported and implemented the ruthless economic policies criticized by Riutin. Still, they may have now become an unanticipated source of unease and suspicion for Stalin.

The fall of 1932 almost certainly was a period of great strain and self-doubt for Stalin. Quite apart from the newfound resistance within his hand-picked Politburo, Stalin had to face an agricultural problem which offered little hope of near-term relief, as a state-imposed devastating famine took its toll on the peasantry. In the industrial sector, some party members argued for a diminution of the breakneck pace of the previous three years and a reduction of production targets.

Stalin's personal life added new strains. His wife, Nadezhda Alliluyeva, had become increasingly critical--and publicly vocal--about the horrors of collectivization. On November 9, 1932, she committed suicide. ⁶ According to one account, Stalin is said to have broken down at a Politburo meeting shortly after his wife's death. He hinted that he might resign, as he had become an obstacle to party unity. After a period of silence, Molotov ended the embarrassment, saying "stop it, stop it. You have got the party's confidence." ⁷

Subsequent rumors circulating through Moscow in December

suggest there may be some truth to this story. The Moscow correspondent of Vestnik Krest'ianskoi Rossii (The Russian Peasant Journal), for example, reported that "Stalin's retirement is considered inevitable and is openly discussed everywhere." The report added that speculation about his successor focused around Lazar Kaganovich, whose Jewish background made him unacceptable, and the "sufficiently clever, supple and popular" Sergey Kirov. ⁸

Against this background, Stalin's speech to the joint plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission in January 1933 assumes some importance as a possible indicator of his frame of mind and his political strategy at one of the most difficult points in his career. As such, it represents a key piece of evidence for analyzing the political situation; moreover, it offers a useful baseline from which to compare the positions and tactics enunciated at the XVII Party Congress just a year later. The report was composed of eight sections:

- I - The International Significance of the Five-Year Plan
- II- The Fundamental Task of the Five-Year Plan and the Path of its Fulfillment
- III- The Results of the Five-Year Plan in Four Years in the Sphere of Industry
- IV - The Results of the Five-Year Plan in Four Years in

the Sphere of Agriculture

- V - The Results of the Five-Year Plan in Four Years in the Sphere of Improving the Material Conditions of the Workers and Peasants
- VI - The Results of the Five-Year Plan in Four Years in the Sphere of Circulation of Commodities Between Town and Country
- VII- The Results of the Five-Year Plan in Four Years in the Struggle Against Remnants of the Hostile Classes
- VIII-General Conclusions

Stalin's oratorical style is visible throughout this speech. It is replete with rhetorical questions and lengthy, ponderous answers.

In "The International Significance of the Five-Year Plan" Stalin stressed the importance of the Five-Year Plan, citing Lenin's statement that the world's toilers and workers have their eyes focused on Soviet Russia.⁹ Stalin then surveyed world opinion on the Five-Year Plan by quoting fifteen items from various foreign newspapers and journals. Following this survey, Stalin concluded that "the successes of the Five-Year Plan mobilise the revolutionary forces of all countries against capitalism."¹⁰ It is interesting to note how Stalin used the foreign press in a supportive fashion. Of the fifteen passages quoted, the last nine were

praiseful and admiring of the Soviet achievement and of the Soviet future. The manipulation of these passages thus constituted a subtle defense of the Five-Year Plan and its corresponding policies.

In the second section, Stalin outlined the socio-economic goals of the plan. The striking part of this discussion was that it was based on statements and political analyses put forth by Lenin. Lenin's famous dictum on the need to overtake and surpass the capitalist countries economically, or perish, was cited. Equally significant was the Lenin quote on the question of the peasants, i.e., that as long as Russia was a small peasant country, it would be a firmer base for capitalism than for communism. Following these quotes, Stalin stated:

These were the propositions that lay at the base of the Party's considerations which led to the drawing up of the Five-Year Plan, which led to the determination of the fundamental task of the Five-year Plan. 11

Thus, Lenin's ideas were portrayed as being at the heart of the Five-Year Plan and collectivization. This exercise in logic is very reminiscent of Stalin's justification of "socialism in one country," in the mid-1920's. Later in this section, Lenin is also quoted on the need for heavy industry as a base and the need to mechanize and transform agriculture.

Stalin opened the section on the Five-Year Plan in industry with a series of short rhetorical statements:

Formerly, we did not have an iron and steel industry, the basis of the industrialization of the country. Now we have such an industry.
 We did not have a tractor industry. Now we have one.
 We did not have an automobile industry. Now we have one.
 We did not have an engineering industry. Now we have one.
 We did not have a big and modern chemical industry. Now we have one.
 We did not have a real, solid industry for the production of modern agricultural machinery. Now we have one.
 We did not have an aviation industry. Now we have one.
 In the production of electric power, we were last in the list. Now we are among the first.
 In production of oil products and coal, we were last in the list. Now we are among the first in the list.
 We had only one single coal and metallurgical base, the Ukraine, which we could barely manage. We have not only succeeded in improving this base, but we have created a new coal and metallurgical base--in the east, which is the pride of our country.
 We had only one single textile industry base--in the north of our country. In the very near future we will have two new bases of the textile industry--in Central Asia and Eastern Siberia.
 And we have not only created these new enormous branches of industry, but we have created them on such a scale and on such dimensions that make the scale and dimensions of European industry pale into significance.

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This lengthy repetition of achievements served to reinforce Stalin's point, namely, that his policies had produced major, essential results. Stalin later pointed out another achievement - the creation of a national defense that could withstand an attack from without. All these arguments, however, were not adequate, in Stalin's mind, for he

proceeded to a new tack in the justification of his policies. What would have happened, he queried, if we had not pursued the policy of rapid industrialization? The following scenario was then produced:

But then, those who say this [abandon the policy of industrialization] should know and take into account what a policy of pushing the task of industrialization into the background would have brought us to. Of course, out of the one and a half billion rubles in foreign currency that we spent on purchasing equipment for our heavy industry, we could have set apart a half for the purpose of importing raw cotton, hides, wool, rubber, etc. We would then have had more calico, boots, and clothes. But then we would not have had a tractor and automobile industry, we would not have had anything like a big iron and steel industry, we would not have had metal for the production of machinery - and we would have been unarmed with modern technique... we would have deprived ourselves of all the modern means of defense without which the political independence of the country is impossible... Our position would then have been more or less analagous to the present position of China, which has no heavy industry, has no war industry of its own, and which is pecked at by everybody who cares to do so.

In a word, in that case we would have had military intervention, not pacts of non-aggression, but war, dangerous and fatal war, sanguinary and unequal war; for in that war we would have been almost unarmed in the face of the enemy, who has all the modern means of attack at his disposal. ¹³

That Stalin had to raise an unassailable argument--namely, that insuring the country's national security was the underlying goal behind his economic program--demonstrates the great lengths to which Stalin felt compelled to go in defending his position. He even raised the spectre of a terrible war, in which the Soviets would have been beaten.

That he had to go to such lengths after citing all the achievements suggests that many people had still to be convinced. What is more noteworthy is the fact that Stalin followed these arguments with compromises, or concessions. This did not mean that the party had been wrong, as Stalin noted, before making his concessions:

Was the party right in pursuing the policy of securing the speediest possible rates of development? Yes, it was absolutely right. We could not refrain from whipping up a country which was a hundred years behind, and which owing to its backwardness was faced with mortal danger... Furthermore, we could not know on what day the imperialists would attack the U.S.S.R. and interrupt our work of construction; but that they could attack us at any moment, taking advantage of the technical and economic backwardness, of that there could not be any doubt. That is why the Party was obliged to whip up the country. ¹⁴

The concessions that follow this line of thinking mark an unexpected about-face:

Can it be said that exactly the same policy of securing the speediest rates of development will have to be pursued in the period of the second Five-Year Plan? No, it cannot.

First of all...we have in the main, already fulfilled...the transfer of industry, transport, and agriculture to a new, modern technical base. After this, will it be worth while to whip up, to spur on the country? Clearly, this is no longer necessary.

Secondly...we have already succeeded in raising the defenses of the country...(Emphasis given) Is it worth while after this, to whip up and spur on the country? Clearly, this is no longer necessary.

...the mastery of the new enterprises and new technique presents much greater difficulties...That requires more

time. Is it not clear, after this, that even if we desired, we could not in the period of the second Five-year Plan, particularly in the first two or three years...carry out a policy of securing the speediest possible rates of development?

That is why I think that in the second Five-Year Plan we will have to adopt less speedy rates of growth of industrial output.¹⁵

Proof that this reduction in the growth of annual industrial output was a concession is borne out by the debate on this very issue at the Seventeenth Party Congress. (This issue will be discussed in conjunction with Molotov's report on the Five-Year Plan.) Stalin's concession to slow things down, to "not whip up the country," may have represented a response to the various criticisms heard in party circles. While this was a tactical retreat, however, it was not a major admission of error.

The next section, on agriculture, was strikingly similar to the sections immediately preceding it. Lenin's views on agriculture were quoted in five different instances, leading to the remarkable conclusion that:

It was from these propositions of Lenin that the Party started out in carrying out its program of the collectivization of agriculture, the program of the Five-Year Plan in agriculture.¹⁶

So, once again the audience was told that the current Party

policy was Lenin's policy. In a tactic identical to that which introduced the concession on growth rates, Stalin led up to similar concessions in agriculture:

Was the Party right in pursuing the policy of securing an accelerated rate of collectivization? Yes, it was absolutely right, although certain excesses were committed....

Does this mean that we must pursue the policy of securing accelerated rates of collectivization in the Second Five-Year Plan? No, it does not mean that.¹⁷

Here too Stalin had agreed to slow things down somewhat. (Of course, he could do so because some of the formal goals had indeed been achieved)

Although there was no section entitled "The Party," the subject was broached in the section, "The Results of the Five-Year Plan in Four Years in the Sphere of the Struggle Against the Remnants of the Hostile Classes." Discussion focused on the activities of "has-beens" (manufacturers, ex-nobles, priests, White officers, Tsarist policemen, bourgeois intellectuals) who had crept into positions in industries, government organizations, transport, collective farms, and in some cases, even into the party. Their alleged wrecking, sabotage, and plundering activities were denounced, as Stalin stressed the need for a strong dictatorship of the

proletariat.

In this connection, Stalin noted that "certain comrades" interpreted the abolition of classes as justification for laziness and complacency. Such people were either degenerates or double-dealers, "who must be driven from the Party." ¹⁸ Stalin later expressed the need for revolutionary vigilance in dealing with theft and plunder of public property, urging comrades to "expel from their practice this smug, petty-bourgeois attitude toward plunder of public property. ¹⁹

Stalin ended by saying that the activities of the "has-beens" might give grounds for the revival of defeated groups:

Of course, there is nothing terrible in this. But we must bear this in mind if we want to put an end to these elements quickly, and without great loss. That is why revolutionary vigilance is the quality that Bolsheviks particularly require at the present time. ²⁰

The "General Conclusions" section reiterates the gains of the First Five-Year Plan, and, in contrast to the conclusion section of the Seventeenth Congress speech, acknowledges the "firm leadership of the party" which "urged the masses forward." ²¹

In summarizing Stalin's 1933 report to the joint

plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission, two themes are readily apparent: a defense of the Five-Year Plan in industry and the collectivization of agriculture, and a spirit of reconciliation and concession. Much of the speech revolved around the first theme. The most significant part of this defense was Stalin's unabashed reliance upon Lenin. Statements from Lenin appear no less than ten times, and were always used at critical junctures, such as when Stalin sought to justify the collectivization policy. The use of Lenin served a two-fold purpose. First, it linked Lenin with the five-year plan in industry and agriculture so that Stalin was portrayed as only acting as Lenin's faithful executor. Secondly, the fact that these policies were allegedly Lenin's meant that any criticism of them was a criticism of Lenin.

It may be argued that the use of Lenin was not so unusual or uncommon. While that may be true of the period before Stalin's ascendancy, it should be noted that after the Sixteenth Party Congress of 1930, Stalin referred to Lenin less and less. In reviewing the Seventeenth Party Congress, Lenin's name and his statements were seldom mentioned. Similarly, at the Eighteenth Party Congress (1939), when Stalin's position was beyond question, the use of Lenin's name was very infrequent. Thus, Stalin's obvious reliance on Lenin at the 1933 joint plenum suggests that he must have been on the defensive in that he felt the need to invoke the

ghost of Lenin to justify the policies in question.

That Stalin was on the defensive was also suggested by the unusually conciliatory tone and the concessions offered in an effort to stave off criticism within the party. ²² In stating that the worst had passed, and proposing slower rates of growth, Stalin was clearly offering a compromise, in an attempt to maintain support for his policies. In keeping with this conciliatory tone, Stalin made no explicit mention of the various oppositions that had sprung up since 1930. This omission stands out even more when one considers the fact that this joint plenum adopted a resolution which ousted N.B. Eismont and G.G. Tolmachev from the party, dropped A.P. Smirnov from the Central Committee, and admonished Tomsy, Rykov, and Shmidt. ²³ According to Roy Medvedev, Eismont, Tolmachev and Smirnov were found guilty of creating a factional group which sought to undermine the policy of industrialization and collectization; he also asserts that their main "crime" was discussing the possibility of removing Stalin from the position of General Secretary. ²⁴

In sum, then, the 1933 speech reflects Stalin's pragmatism. At a time when the party was fighting for its very survival in the "war against the countryside," and when voices of dissent were growing within the party, Stalin chose not to take the offensive, as one might have expected. Rather than call for a closing of the ranks and greater "vigilance"

within the party, Stalin offered an olive branch--compromise and conciliation on economic policy. While this represents a shrewd tactic, it may also reflect Stalin's view that this was his sole possibility. As it turned out, Stalin's move proved to be sound. Things did begin to turn around in the following twelve months. The summer harvest of 1933 was very successful and, perhaps more importantly from Stalin's vantage point, the voices of dissent and criticism within the party seemed to die down.

NOTES

1. For example, see Robert Conquest, The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror Famine. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986). A thorough discussion of the sources of the statistical evidence can be found in Dana Dalrymple, "The Famine of 1932-1934" in Soviet Studies, Vol. XV, No.3, (1964), pp. 250-284.
2. Ibid. See also Hough and Fainsod, How the Soviet Union Is Governed, pp. 176-178.
3. See R.W. Davies, "The Syrtsov-Lominadze Affair," in Soviet Studies, Vol. XXXIII, No. 1, January 1981, pp. 29-50 for a detailed study of this episode.
4. The Riutin platform is discussed in some detail in Nicolaevsky, Power and the Soviet Elite, pp. 10-11.
5. Ibid., pp.28-30.
6. Barmine, One Who Survived, p. 265.
7. Ibid., p. 264.
8. Vestnik Krest'ianskoi Rossii, December 15, 1932, p. 1.
9. From the First to the Second Five year Plan: A Symposium (Moscow: International Publishers, 1933), pp.3-4.
10. Ibid., p.13.
11. Ibid., p.16.
12. Ibid., pp.21-22.
13. Ibid., pp.24-25.
14. Ibid., pp.27-28. Italics added.
15. Ibid., pp.27-28. Italics added.
16. Ibid., p.32.
17. Ibid., pp.37-38. Italics Added.
18. Ibid., pp.54-55.

19. Ibid., p.55.
20. Ibid., p.56.
21. Ibid., p.58.
22. Nicolaevsky, Power and the Soviet Elite, p. 74. Nicolaevsky notes that this was one of the stormiest plenums up to that time, and that criticism of Stalin had grown and intensified.
23. From the First to the Second Five-Year Plan, pp.471-72.
24. Medvedev, Let History Judge, p. 155.

Chapter Three: Stalin Throws Down the Gauntlet

Vyacheslav M. Molotov convened the Seventeenth Party Congress on the evening of January 26, 1934, amidst a feeling of great relief and hope for the future. For the rank-and-file party members attending the congress, this was an occasion for celebration, for having survived the worst times and looking ahead to better times. A successful summer harvest in 1933 helped shape this more positive outlook. After all, Pravda was proclaiming this was "the congress of victors." The party had survived, its policies in place, and the foundations of the new Soviet society had been laid. Life would regain a sense of normalcy.

In contrast to this atmosphere of hope, high-level members of the Soviet Communist Party knew that the coming two weeks would be filled with much debate and backroom "politicking" which would probably shape their future careers. Indeed, as the congress began, the issue of growth rates and targets for the Second Five-Year Plan--the central issue in the major debates of the previous three years--was still unresolved. Although General Secretary Stalin had made major concessions on this issue at the January 1933 joint plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission, the fact that the figures for the next four years were still under debate suggested that the issue was far from

dead. Thus, some Congress participants entered the proceedings with some anxiety. They eagerly awaited the opening address by Stalin, for his enunciation of the central issues could reveal the extent to which these questions might actually surface in a policy debate during the various speaker presentations. (Inasmuch as this speech is central to this congress--and the statement against which the other speeches will be compared and evaluated, it is essential to analyze most of its content, despite its length and sometimes repetitious nature.)

Molotov's introductory remarks contained three references to Stalin, each of which was greeted by "stormy prolonged applause" that turned into standing ovations. This show of adulation was to be repeated many times in the two-week period of the congress.

As in previous congresses, the introductory speaker outlined the sequence of major presentations for the coming two weeks. These included:

(1) REPORTS:

Central Committee - Stalin
Central Auditing Commission - Vladimirsky
Central Control Commission-Workers'-
Peasants' Inspectorate - Rudzutak
Delegate of All-Union Communist Party in the
Communist International - Manuilsky

- (2) THE SECOND FIVE-YEAR PLAN - Molotov and Kuibyshev
- (3) ORGANIZATIONAL QUESTIONS (Party and Soviet Construction)
Kaganovich
- (4) ELECTIONS OF CENTRAL ORGANS OF THE PARTY

After each report, there would be responses to the report by key party officials from the various party organizations. Molotov then proceeded to the first item on the agenda, the report of the Central Committee. As Stalin was introduced the congress gave a tumultuous response. According to the stenographic record, "The entire hall stood. Stormy prolonged applause, becoming a prolonged ovation. Cries: Hurrah, Long Live Our Stalin." ¹ (NOTE: All subsequent citations will note, in parentheses, the corresponding page number from the stenographic record at the end of the quoted passage.)

Stalin's report was divided into three major sections:

- I - The Continuing Crisis of World Capitalism and
the Foreign Relations of the Soviet Union
- II - The Continued Progress of the National Economy
and the Internal Position of the USSR
- III - The Party

Stalin had employed this format since the Fourteenth Party

Congress (1925), when he first delivered the political report of the Central Committee.

The Continuing Crisis of World Capitalism and the Foreign Relations of the Soviet Union

With many nations still gripped by the Great Depression, it is not surprising that Stalin initiated his report with a contrast of the gloomy economic crisis in the capitalist states and the progress of socialist construction in the Soviet Union. The economic crisis of capitalism was ascribed to an industrial crisis that had become interwoven with an agricultural crisis, as well as monopolist cartels that maintained high prices. Stalin pursued this theme in his first subsection, "The Movement of the Economic Crisis in Capitalist Countries." Charts displaying the percentages of industrial output for the United States, England, Germany, and France, as compared to that of the Soviet Union, were cited in support of his analysis. Stalin concluded that a "special kind" of depression "which does not lead to a new boom and flourishing industry, but which, on the other hand, does not force it back to the lowest point of decline" had overtaken the capitalist countries. (p.10)

One of the most important parts of the address was the next subsection, "The Aggravation of Political Relations in the Capitalist Countries," which presented an analysis of the international situation. Stalin asserted the existence

of a link between the economic crisis and the increasingly aggressive behavior of some of the capitalist states in the arena of international affairs. The picture of the capitalist world he drew was one of imperialism, nationalism, and arms races. Clearly, this world was "moving toward a new war." (p.10) It was in the context of a decaying capitalist world that Stalin broached the subject of fascism:

...The number of unemployed...reached 3,000,000 in England, 5,000,000 in Germany, and 10,000,000 in the United States, not to speak of other countries in Europe. Add to this the number of workers employed part-time, which exceeds 10,000,000, add the millions of ruined peasants - and you will get an approximate picture of the poverty and despair of the toiling masses. The masses of the people have not yet reached the stage when they are ready to storm the citadel of capitalism, but the idea of storming it is maturing in the minds of the masses - there can hardly be any doubt about that. This is eloquently testified to by such facts as, say, the Spanish revolution which overthrew the fascist regime... This, as a matter of fact, explains the fact that the ruling classes in the capitalist countries are zealously destroying, or nullifying the last vestiges of parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy which might be used by the working class in its struggle against the oppressors...and resorting to open terrorist methods in order to maintain their dictatorship...

It is not surprising that fascism has now become the most fashionable commodity among bellicose bourgeois politicians. I mean not only fascism in general, I mean primarily, fascism of the German type, which is incorrectly called National-Socialism...

In this connection, the victory of fascism in Germany must be regarded not only as a symptom of the weakness of the working class, and as a betrayal of the working class by Social-Democracy which paves the way for fascism; it must also be regarded as a symptom of the weakness of the bourgeoisie, as a symptom of the methods of parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy, and as a consequence is compelled in its home policy to resort to terrorist methods of administration - it must be taken as a symptom of the fact that it is no longer able to find a way out of the present situation on the basis of a

peaceful foreign policy, as a consequence of which it is compelled to resort to a policy of war...

Of course, there are no grounds for assuming that war can provide a real way out. On the contrary, it must confuse the situation still more. More than that, it will certainly unleash revolution, and put in question the very existence of capitalism in a number of countries, as was the case in the course of the first imperialist war. (p.11;Italics added)

In Stalin's mind then, fascism was merely a phase within decaying capitalism that signaled the impending doom of the capitalist system. In this phase, the bourgeoisie sought to put off the inevitable by dropping the mask of parliamentarism and democracy and adopting terrorist, repressive methods of rule. This interpretation became the official party view, as reflected by its inclusion in the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), Short Course. ²

In keeping with his interpretation of fascism, Stalin later elaborated on Soviet relations with fascist states:

...Of course, we are far from being enthusiastic about the fascist regime in Germany. But fascism is not the issue here, if only for the reason that fascism, for example in Italy, did not prevent the U.S.S.R. establishing very good relations with that country...Our orientation in the past, and our orientation at the present time is toward the U.S.S.R. and toward the U.S.S.R. alone. And if the interests of the U.S.S.R. demand rapprochement with this or that country which is not interested in disturbing the peace, we shall take this step without hesitation.

No, that is not the point. The point is that the policy of Germany has changed...A fight between two political lines broke out in Germany, between the old policy which found expression in the well-known treaties between the U.S.S.R. and Germany and the "new" policy which in the main recalls the policy of the ex-Kaiser who at one time occupied the Ukraine, undertook a march against Leningrad, and transformed the Baltic countries into a place d'armes for this march; and this "new" policy is obviously gaining the upper hand over the old policy. The fact that the supporters of the "new" policy are gaining supremacy in all things...cannot be regarded as an accident. That is the point, comrades. (pp. 13-14; italics added.)

At first glance, this discussion might appear to be a rather harsh indictment of the new leaders in Germany. Several other factors, however, would cast doubt on this assessment. For one thing, consider the omissions from the speech.

Neither Hitler nor his virulent anti-Bolshevism is explicitly noted. The persecution of the German Communist Party (KPD) by the Nazis is also ignored. (The plight of the KPD was later discussed at the congress by a German Comintern leader, Fritz Heckert.) Most conspicuously absent was any mention of Georgi Dimitrov, the Bulgarian communist who had been acquitted in the recent "Reichstag Fire" trial, only to remain in a Nazi prison. This trial had been a major story in Pravda, and was in fact still a current topic at the time of the congress. ³ Another perspective on Stalin's discussion can be gained by contrasting the views of the Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Maxim Litvinov, on the

question of Nazi-Soviet relations. Only a month before the congress, Litvinov presented a survey of the international situation in an address to the Central Executive Committee. At that meeting, Litvinov presented a much gloomier account of Soviet-German relations. He described the "poisoning of our relations by the systematic persecution, by every kind of German official authority, of Soviet institutions and citizens," and proceeded to analyze the Nazi leader, Adolf Hitler:

...A new politician came into power...preaching rapprochement with the West with the object of making a combined attack on the Soviet Union. He founded a political club to carry on propaganda for this idea and he personally worked zealously for its realization...The founder of this party devoted a book to developing in detail his conception of German foreign policy. According to this, Germany was...by fire and sword to cut a road for expansion to the East, which was not to stop at the Soviet frontier, and to enslave the Soviet peoples...

I thought it necessary to speak frankly, because attempts are not infrequently made from the German side to attribute the origin of the change in relations to us, and to explain it by our displeasure with the present German regime, the persecution of communists, etc. ⁴

The tone of Litvinov's analysis was one of critical wariness, in which the Germans threatened "the gates of Moscow." It is interesting that Molotov also addressed the Central Executive Committee the day before Litvinov spoke and presented a much more conciliatory view of the German regime, merely commenting that "the policy of the ideologues of militant national socialism...was incompatible with the great future

before Germany." Molotov noted that the Soviet Union still adhered to the principles which had contributed to the "recently friendly relations between the USSR and Germany." 5

The importance of differences in tone and nuance must be stressed for the party eschewed any public debate of issues and policies. As Henry Roberts has aptly noted, "in a political system where all action and policy is dependent upon a party line enunciated by the supreme authority, emphasis and interpretation are all-important especially since the line is often not wholly unambiguous." 6

Seen in the context of contemporary events and statements, Stalin's comments on the new order in Germany appear relatively soft. He did, of course, make some allusion to the hostility of the "new policy" in Germany, but he also stated that good relations were not out of the question.

The subsection on the "Aggravation of Political Relations in the Capitalist Countries" also included a lengthy analysis of the "organization of war" being orchestrated by "bourgeois politicians" and the outcome of such a war (p.11). Stalin noted that attacks on weak nations often led to increased nationalism, as the nineteenth century experiences of Italy and Germany had shown. To those who envisaged a war between superior and inferior races, Stalin raised the example of the Romans who were overthrown by the barbarians. Finally, Stalin commented on a war directed at

the U.S.S.R. Citing the unsuccessful allied intervention in the Russian Civil War, he warned that "a second war against the U.S.S.R. will lead to the complete defeat of the aggressors, to revolution in a number of countries in Europe and in Asia, and to the overthrow of bourgeois-landlord governments in these countries" (p.16).

The long, rather cumbersome account of war scenarios had but one message: war would not solve any problems, but would rather bring ruin to those who initiate it. Stalin ended this section in a most curious fashion. To the capitalist countries, he reiterated his warning of impending revolution, and in the same breath, castigated "those comrades who think that as soon as a revolutionary crisis occurs...the victory of the revolution is assured, and that all they have to do is wait for the bourgeoisie to fall and to draw up victorious resolutions" (p.16).

A lengthy passage from Lenin was quoted to bolster this admonition. Since Lenin was quoted in the speech most sparingly this issue must have been of some significance. Though the "comrades" to whom Stalin directed his comments are not directly apparent, there had only been one recent "revolutionary situation" - in Germany. In the period 1928-1933, there had been a debate in international communist circles as to the best tactics to employ in crisis-ridden Germany. Specifically, the question revolved around communist relations with the strong German Social Democrats.



Rather than ally with the Social Democrats, the German communists followed the Comintern line of "the united front from below," which called for a struggle against the Social Democrats. As a result of this line, the working class movement in Germany was confused and divided.

While it is debatable whether Stalin's line in the Comintern actually contributed to Hitler's rise to power, it is clear that many communists thought that it did. ⁷

Moreover, Trotsky had accurately predicted the implications of Stalin's line as early as 1931, when he (Trotsky) was calling for "fighting unity" among the communists and Social Democrats. ⁸ Why Stalin continued this line in the face of obvious defeat is not entirely clear. Franz Borkenau has argued that Stalin could ill afford to change his line and thus tacitly admit error, when his own rule at home was "tottering" amidst the collectivization hardships, for it "might have contributed to his downfall." ⁹

Whatever his motive, Stalin's reference in his congress address, to the need for "a revolutionary party of the proletariat sufficiently strong and authoritative to lead the masses and take power" was a call for maintaining pure communist parties, free of "social-fascists", as the Social Democrats were labeled (p.12;italics added). Stalin's call was not unheeded; the KPD speaker at this congress, Fritz Heckert, backed Stalin up completely. After describing Stalin as the "greatest of living Marxists", Heckert

denounced the German Social Democrats as "the living raskolniki (schismatics) in the working class" and called Social Democracy a party "willing to conclude a peace with the fascists in order to obtain the opportunity to intensify its struggle against the communists" (pp.331-333).

His account of the capitalists' war machinations completed, Stalin went on to the next subsection, "The Relations Between the U.S.S.R. and the Capitalist States." This subsection summarized the basic lines of recent Soviet foreign policy: non-aggression pacts with neighboring countries, the amelioration of relations with France and Poland, and the questionable situation in Germany and Japan.

Alleged French hostility toward the Soviet Union had been a real Soviet concern in the early 1930's, so Stalin's emphasis on the "change for the better" in that quarter was understandable. Likewise, the positive turn in Soviet-Polish relations was stressed, since Poland had often been viewed as the "vanguard in the event of a military attack upon the U.S.S.R." (p.13). These and other Soviet successes were attributed to two causes: "the growth of the strength and the might of the U.S.S.R." and the restoration of normal relations with the United States. Since the United States had been regarded by many as the "bulwark for all sorts of anti-Soviet activities", Stalin called the establishment of ties an act with "very serious significance for the whole system of international relations." As for the

growth of Soviet "might," Stalin noted that "in our times, it is not the custom to give any consideration to the weak" (pp.13-14).

Of course, not everything was going well. Stalin pointed to strained relations with England, and more significantly, the "need for very considerable improvement" in relations with Japan. This need was reflected in Japan's refusal to sign a non-aggression pact, the stalemated negotiations for the sale of the Chinese Eastern Railway and the "outrageous acts" of Japanese agents. Stalin stated that the Soviet Union would continue to strive to improve relations, but at the same time, measures would be adopted "for the purpose of guarding our country against surprises and to be prepared to defend it in the event of attack (p.14). The gravity of the Japanese situation was also underscored at the congress by the Commissar of Defense, Voroshilov (in a speech appropriately titled "Ready for Defense") and the commander of the Far Eastern provinces, Bliukher, who gave specific data concerning the Japanese buildup in the East, as well as Soviet measures to rebuff any invasion attempt (see pages 224-235 and pages 629-631 respectively).

Stalin's concluding passage on the international situation reflected Soviet preparedness for any military conflagration:

We stand for peace and champion the cause of peace. But we are not afraid of threats and are prepared to answer blow for blow against the instigators of war...Those who try to attack our country will receive a stunning rebuff to teach them not to poke their pig's snout in our Soviet garden again (p.14).

There was one curious omission from Stalin's discussion of Soviet diplomacy: disarmament. This omission was all the more glaring considering the fact that Litvinov had been the principal architect and champion of international disarmament since the early 1920's. Perhaps disarmament was an issue for which Litvinov had little support; this would not be the only issue on which there would be disagreement. ¹⁰ Nonetheless, it seems unusual that a speech so replete with comments on Soviet efforts for peace would not highlight Moscow's longstanding and pioneering efforts for disarmament.

"The Continued Progress of the National Economy and the Internal Position of the U.S.S.R."

This section offered a statistical survey of all the major sectors of the Soviet economy at the end of the First Five Year Plan. Stalin introduced the survey with some

general observations on the radical transformation of the U.S.S.R. "from an agrarian country to an industrial country, from a land of small individual agriculture to a land of collective, large-scale mechanized agriculture," adding that this "ignorant, illiterate and uncultured country became, or rather, was becoming a literate and cultured country" (p.15).

The great Soviet transformation was, Stalin said, the result of "the successful building of socialism, the social labor of tens of millions of people, and the advantages which the socialist system of economy has over the capitalist and individual peasant systems"; Stalin added that "the colossal progress...of the U.S.S.R. ...signified...the liquidation of the capitalist elements, and the pushing of individual peasant economy into the background" (p.15). Indeed, Stalin's statistics bore this claim out: the socialist sector of industry was 99% and in the agricultural sector, 84.5% (p.15). From this broad overview, Stalin went on to describe in detail the gains in industry and agriculture.

The first subsection, "Progress in Industry" presented data to support the following conclusions:

- (1) The Soviet Union was finally an industrial country-the data showed that the gross output of industry represented 70.4% of the national economy.
- (2) The production of implements and means of production

occupied the predominant place in the total volume of industry.

(3) The engineering industry played "the leading role in the total volume of industry." As engineering was the "main lever for the reconstruction of the national economy" this was most important.

(4) The socialist system of economy was the sole and monopolist system in industry. (pp.16-17)

Of these successes, Stalin asserted the most important was the "training and molding of thousands of new people, new leaders of industry, a whole stratum of new engineers and technicians, hundreds of thousands of young skilled workers who have mastered the new technique, and who have advanced our socialist industry" (p.17).

Not one to be carried away with great successes, Stalin then delved into a ten-item list of "defects in industry." Among these were the "absence of concern" for production of consumer goods, an "intolerable attitude" toward the quality of production, a lag in the increase of labor productivity, the bad organization of labor and wages, depersonalization in work, and bureaucratic routine methods of leadership (p.18). These key phrases are important for they became ritual formulas for the discussion of problems by later speakers.

"Development in the sphere of agriculture proceeded

somewhat differently," noted Stalin. This classic understatement was continued, as Stalin conceded that the period under review had not seen "a rapid rise and powerful upswing." Nonetheless, he claimed the pre-requisites for such a rise had been created. Progress had been retarded by several factors such as the difficulty of uniting scattered farms, and the creation of big grain cattle farms in vacant lands (p.18).

The growth of the amount of land under cultivation, the number of machine-tractor stations (MTS), collective farms, and tractors was evidenced in a series of statistical charts presented by Stalin. One chart managed to reflect part of the realities of the collectivization drive - the chart of livestock:

LIVESTOCK IN THE U.S.S.R.

(in millions of head)

	<u>1916</u>	<u>1929</u>	<u>1930</u>	<u>1931</u>	<u>1932</u>	<u>1933</u>
s	35.1	34.0	30.2	26.2	19.6	16.6
horn	58.9	68.1	52.5	47.9	40.7	38.6
e						
and	115.2	147.2	108.8	77.7	52.1	50.6
	20.3	20.9	13.6	14.4	11.6	12.2

These statistics reflect nothing less than a major conflict and famine in the countryside (p.20). Stalin's explanation of these figures is again grossly understated:

Apparently, the fact that the stock-breeding branch of agriculture was more in the hands of the big kulak elements and also the intense kulak agitation for the slaughter of livestock which found favorable soil in the years of reorganization are reflected in this table (p.20).

Employing the various statistics cited by Stalin, one is made quickly aware of their implications. For example: Stalin said there were 204,000 tractors. He also said there were 224,000 collective farms. Thus, some 20,000 farms were without tractors. The striking decrease in the number of horses only adds to the magnitude of this problem of physical power. Coupling these statistics with Stalin's data on the increase of delivery of goods to the state, the reality of these years becomes all the more apparent.

It seems incredible that Stalin not only did not acknowledge the veritable revolution in the countryside, but implied that the peasantry had joined the working class and

was "sailing forward toward socialism" (p.21). On the basis of these facts, Stalin then concluded that the socialist foundation of Soviet society had been laid.

Stalin acknowledged the help and support of the Central Committee, political sections, agricultural experts, and farmers (supplied from the party apparatus) in the successes of agriculture. Anyone who had heard Stalin's prior data could understand the import of this acknowledgment. The tone then abruptly changed, however, as Stalin hurled serious criticisms at the Commissariat of Agriculture. Despite the aid and support afforded it, it had failed to "make use of these possibilities." Furthermore, this commissariat was more infected with bureaucratic routine than other commissariats (p.22).

In addition to bureaucratic-routine leadership, there was unsatisfactory maintenance and repair of machinery, poor farm methods, and a slow system of transport. Land departments were chastised for failing "to raise the alarm about the serious livestock problem," as well as glossing over and concealing the problem from public opinion (p.23).

The same problems had been identified at a 1933 joint plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission by Kaganovich and Yakovlev, People's Commissar for Agriculture. Yakovlev had mentioned the bad condition of the livestock industry, but added that a new base for restoration of livestock had been created. ¹¹ Later, in his address to

the congress, Yakovlev was to acknowledge the validity of Stalin's criticisms and stressed the need for well-trained, experienced cadres (pp. 153-155).

Stalin's discussion of the agricultural sector ended with a list of tasks for the immediate future: the need for "each geographic area to develop its own agricultural base, combatting drought in the trans-Volga region," and so on (pp. 23-24).

The next subsection, "Improvement of the Material Conditions and Culture of the Workers," highlighted the following achievements: the "end of exploitation of man by man", the end of unemployment, and the end of poverty in the rural districts (for those peasants who wanted to "work honestly and not be a loafer, a tramp, and a despoiler of collective farm property.") Data on the number of workers, the seven hour day, wage and insurance increases, state aid, and the number of schools were presented as evidence of these new successes. The growing role of women collective farmers in social organizing work was singled out by Stalin as an example of the "growth of culture in the countryside" (pp. 24-25). In something of an afterthought, Stalin ended the subsection with a comment on the neglected pedagogical and medical faculties, a defect that had to be corrected (p.26).

Questions of trade and transport dominated the final subsection on the national economy, "Improvement in Commodity Circulation and Transport." Despite the title, the

bulk of Stalin's comments consisted of sharp criticisms of the numerous shortcomings in these areas. He cited increases in the production of consumer goods, agricultural produce, and the demand for these goods. However, he added, "cases have occurred when we have had a fair quantity of goods and produce, but these did not reach the consumers" (p.26). This naturally led to decreased incentive to produce. Other obstacles also contributed to this situation: Communists with "supercilious, contemptuous attitudes toward trade in general, and Soviet trade in particular," "leftist chatter" about direct exchange of goods, and depersonalization (p.26.). In spite of such obstacles, Stalin continued, the state increased the number of stores, regional goods bases, Workers' Supply Departments, and public dining rooms.

Stalin then turned to the issue of transport, an essential factor in the circulation of commodities:

...transport is the weak spot which may cause a hitch, and perhaps is already causing a hitch, in the whole of our economy, primarily in the sphere of commodity circulation. (p. 27)

The railway and water transport systems were both characterized as producing "too little for our economy," and increases in the automobile industry were "so inadequate that one is ashamed to speak about it" (p.27). Bureaucratic

routine methods of leadership were common to all three branches, and Stalin called for their elimination. He stressed the fact that all achievements could be lost if hitches in commodity circulation and transport continued.

In reviewing Stalin's discussion of the economy, one word continually comes to mind: understatement. While Stalin presented endless statistics which demonstrated the successes of the period under review, one was hard pressed to find any direct references to the other realities of this period: peasant resistance, famine, and the continued growth of forced labor. When hints of these problems were dropped, they were so understated that they were meaningless. On the other hand, one must consider the audience. Surely, the party members at this congress knew of the outside realities.

The Party

Like the discussion of the international situation, the section devoted to the Party surveyed recent developments in the areas of ideology, organization, and leadership. The survey was prefaced by observations on the state of the party:

The present Congress is taking place under the flag of the complete victory of Leninism, under the flag of the liquidation of the remnants of anti-Leninist groups. The anti-Leninist Trotskyite group has been defeated and scattered. Its organizers are now hanging around the backyards of the bourgeois parties abroad. The anti-Leninist Right deviationist group has been defeated and

scattered. Its organizers long ago renounced their views and are now trying very hard to expiate the sins they committed against the Party.

The national deviationist groups have been defeated and scattered. Their organizers long ago became finally merged with the interventionist emigres, or else have recanted.

The majority of adherents of these anti-revolutionary groups have been compelled to admit that the line of the party was right and have capitulated before the Party.

At the Fifteenth Party Congress it was still necessary to prove that the Party line was right and to wage a struggle against certain anti-Leninist groups; and at the Sixteenth Party Congress, the last adherents of these groups had to be dispatched. At this Congress, however, there is nothing to prove and perhaps, no one to beat. Everyone now sees that the line of the Party has conquered. (pp. 27-28; italics added)

This account of the defeat of the various opposition groups seemed to point out the unity of the party in 1934. The use of the word "perhaps" (in emphasis above) was a revealing one, for it reflected Stalin's characteristic caution and suspicion. Despite his subsequent assertion that "the Party today is united as never before" an analysis of the two subsections on the Party suggests that Stalin did not really believe it.

In the first subsection, "Problems of Ideological-Political Leadership," Stalin employed his familiar style of rhetorical questioning to convey his contention that the party must not rest on its laurels (p.28) To support this view, he stated that the defeat of various party enemies did not signify the death of their ideas, adding that "remnants of their ideologies still live in the minds of individual

members of the Party, and not infrequently, they find expression."

Can one say that we have overcome all the survivals of capitalism in the economy? No, we cannot say that. Even less could one say that we have overcome the survival of capitalism in the minds of people. This cannot be said not only because the development of the mind of people lags behind their economic position, but also because the capitalist encirclement exists, which tries to revive and support the survivals of capitalism in the economy, and in the minds of the people of the U.S.S.R., and against which we Bolsheviks must always keep our powder dry.

It goes without saying that these survivals cannot but create a favorable soil for the revival of the ideology of the defeated anti-Leninist groups in the minds of individual members of our party. (p.28)

The battle-type mentality of this statement reflects a major theme of the section on the party, vigilance. The revival of the defeated ideologies was also abetted by the "not very high theoretical level of the majority of the members of the Party, the weak ideological work of the Party organs..." (p. 28). Stalin pursued this theme in a lengthy digression designed to prove that many people were confused in their understanding of Leninism. This was a serious problem, for "the confusion that exists...in the minds of individual members...not infrequently permeates our press...which helps to revive the survivals of the ideology of the defeated anti-Leninist groups" (p.28)

Stalin presented several concrete examples of these "problems of Leninism," the first of which centered on the question of building the classless society:



...It goes without saying that classless society cannot come by itself. It has to be won and built by the efforts of all the workers, by strengthening the organs of the dictatorship of the proletariat, by extending the class struggle, by abolishing classes, by liquidating the remnants of the capitalist classes in battles with the enemy, both internal and external.

The thing is clear, one would think.

And yet, who does not know that the promulgation of this clear and elementary thesis of Leninism has given rise to not a little confusion and unhealthy moods among a certain section of Party members. The thesis about our advancing toward classless society, put forward as a slogan, is interpreted by them as a spontaneous process. And they begin to reason in the following way: if it is a classless society, then we can relax the class struggle, we can relax the dictatorship of the proletariat and generally abolish the state, which in any case has to die soon. And they dropped into a state of foolish enthusiasm in the expectation that soon there will be no classes and thus no class struggle, no anxieties and worries, and therefore it is possible to lay down our arms and retire to sleep and wait for the expectation of classless society. (Laughter)

There can be no doubt that this confusion of mind and these moods are as like as two peas to the well-known views of the Right deviationists who believed that the old must automatically grow into the new and that one fine day we will wake up and find ourselves in socialist society. (pp.28-29; italics added)

As stated in this section, Stalin's views on the building of a classless society are merely a restatement of his famous dictum that the closer one gets to the classless society, the more intense becomes the class struggle. Hence, the references to "struggles," "battles," and "liquidations." The "certain section of Party members" who viewed this development in less violent terms were likened to the Right deviationists. In singling out only the Right opposition, Stalin was in effect acknowledging this was the one which still posed a problem within the Party.

Other examples were provided to expose the survival the ideas of the defeated anti-party groups. Among these "problems of Leninism" were the issues of the artels, Marxian equality, and nationality (pp.29-31). The Skrypnik affair, in which the Ukrainian Peoples' Commissar of Education, Skrypnik, committed suicide, was depicted as a case study in nationalist deviation. Stalin indicated that this deviation had not represented a real danger until people ceased to fight it (pp.31-32). This conclusion represented an implicit call for vigilance. Employing a similar theme, i.e., the failure to keep fighting dangers, Stalin looked at the present concern in the party with the Right deviation:

Here too, as in other spheres, there is no little confusion in the minds of certain members of the Party. Sometimes while fighting against the Right deviation, they take their hands away from the "Left" deviation and relax the fight against it, on the assumption that it is not dangerous or only slightly dangerous. This is a very serious and dangerous mistake...It is all the more impermissible for the reason that recently the "Lefts" have completely slipped to the position of the Rights, so there is no longer any essential difference between them... It follows then that the "Lefts" have openly associated themselves with the counter-revolutionary program of the Rights in order to enter a bloc with them and to wage a joint struggle against the Party. (p.32)

web of conspiracy implicit in this statement was ominous; theme was to appear again, in the Great Purge trials of 1938. As though these examples were not adequate in selves, Stalin added a closing comment, saying that are not the only questions which could serve to

demonstrate the confusion of mind among certain members of the party." Then, the predictable rhetorical ploy: "After this, can it be said that all is well in the Party? Clearly, it cannot." Stalin then listed six tasks in the sphere of ideological and political work: the heightening of the theoretical level of the Party, intensification of ideological work, criticism of deviations of certain comrades, and the exposing of remnants of ideology hostile to Leninism (p.32).

From the bright opening which reflected the theme "Congress of Victors," Stalin's address had been transformed into a very serious, businesslike account of the party and its problems. At best, Stalin might have been considered "an uneasy victor." Contrary to his opening claims of unity, his description of the party made it appear to be an organization infested with deviators and weak-minded idiots. The diagnosis of this situation called for increased vigilance on all fronts. Stalin's prescription could hardly give encouragement to the moderate elements within the Party.

The importance of organization was stressed in the second subsection, "Problems of Organizational Leadership." Since party and Soviet organizations had grown so large and were responsible for implementing most of the party's directives, Stalin was serious when he said their work was everything. Thus it was easy to share his concern when he noted the existence of difficulties in organizational work

and leadership, problems which were "concealed within ourselves, in our leading workers...in the apparatus of our Party, of our Soviets, our economic trade union, Komsomol, and in all other organizations" (p.31). These organizations were, in Stalin's mind, responsible for "nine-tenths" of the failures from this point on, since the role of "objective conditions" had been reduced to a minimum (pp.32-33). The specific problems of organizational work were identified as "bureaucracy in administrative departments," idle chatter about leadership in general, fear of self-criticism, and absence of personal responsibility. To overcome these problems, the party had accomplished fourteen tasks, which included such things as "extensive self-criticism, increased supervision of fulfillment of decisions, and purging of unreliable and demoralized elements" (pp. 33-34).

After a reference to Lenin's observation that the main thing in organizational work was the selection of people and supervision of fulfillment of decisions, Stalin described four types of workers who hindered progress. Two of these were "incorrigible bureaucrats and office rats kantseliaristov about whose removal there were "no differences of opinion among us" (p.34). By inference, there was a difference of opinion on dealing with the other two types, whom Stalin described at great length.

First came the "aristocrats", or people who, having rendered services in the past, believed they could ignore

party and Soviet law. Stalin demanded that these aristocrats be removed from leading posts and degraded to lower positions, irrespective of their past services (p.34). By defining these "aristocrats" as individuals who had rendered services in the past, there could be little doubt that Stalin was alluding to former oppositionists and critics who still maintained party membership, if not positions of some responsibility. The other problem person was the "chatterbox, the honest, loyal person who discusses, votes, sends greetings, etc., but never does any real work." The solution to this problem was simple: remove such people from "operative work" posts (p. 34).

Stalin completed this subsection with two proposals designed to tighten up supervision of fulfillment of decisions. His first proposal called for replacement of the the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate (Rabkrin) by a Soviet Control Commission. It was argued that the Inspectorate was no longer necessary, since economic work had grown to such an extent that it was impossible to inspect everything from one center. What was needed in the current situation, Stalin argued, was a body to supervise the fulfillment of decisions of the center, or in other words, control (p.34). The Soviet Control Commission, as this new body would be called, would have representatives in local districts who would be independent of local authorities. These representatives would be nominated by the Party congress, and subject to

approval by the Council of People's Commissars and the Central Executive Committee (p.35).

A similar reorganization was proposed for the Central Control Commission, which was to be called the Party Control Commission. Stalin justified this idea on the grounds that the Central Control Commission had been originally created to avert a split in the party. Since this was no longer a problem, and there was a need for "supervision of fulfillment of decisions," a new organization was needed. Its representatives would be independent of local authorities.

The functions of the Party Control Commission varied little from those of the Central Control Commission. Taken as a whole, the proposal on the Commission of Party Control represented a measure of extreme centralization, which deprived local commissions of their semi-autonomous status. Apparently, this concentration of various functions at the center was Stalin's solution to the problem of supervision of fulfillment of decisions.

In his final comments, Stalin presented "conclusions to be drawn" from his discourse. The first of these was "not to allow ourselves to be carried away by the successes achieved, and not to get swelled-headed." ¹² Such attitudes were dangerous for they disarmed and demobilized the party. There had been cases of such attitudes, he said, and he again stressed the need for constant preparation:

...we must not lull the Party, but rouse its vigilance,
we must not lull it to sleep, but keep it in a state of
fighting preparedness, not disarm but arm it, not
demobilize it but keep it in a state of mobilization for
the purpose of fulfilling the Second Five-Year Plan.
(p. 36)

This was Stalin's most explicit, pointed call for vigilance; that it was one of his major conclusions was a matter of no small import. The second conclusion was "to remain loyal to the end to the great banner of Marx, Engels, and Lenin"

(p.36) Here, Stalin reiterated his earlier theme on the socialist advances of the U.S.S.R. that had occurred while the capitalist world was in a great crisis. This in turn led to the third major conclusion, "to remain loyal to the end to the cause of proletarian internationalism, to the cause of the fraternal alliance of the proletarians of all countries"

(p.36). This was a reminder that the party had an obligation, "as the shock brigade of the proletarians of all countries" to work and fight for the final victory of socialism.

At the conclusion of Stalin's address, there was a rousing response:

Stormy, prolonged applause in the entire hall. The Congress rises in ovation for comrade Stalin. Singing of the "International." With the playing of the "International," the ovation recommenced with new strength. Shouts; "Hurrah Stalin," "Long Live Stalin," "Long Live the Central Committee of the party." (p.36)

According to the stenographic record, this was the most profuse response accorded any speaker at the congress. (See Table two in Appendix section for comparative listing of greetings accorded each of the key speeches).

Overall, Stalin's opening address did set a tone--but hardly one in keeping with the spirit of victory and celebration so evident in the media. If there were delegates present who presumed they would hear a speech consistent with the conciliatory tone and concessions that characterized Stalin's 1933 joint plenum speech, they must have been rudely awakened. Stalin clearly was not partaking in the veritable celebration of victory that seemed to be in the air. Indeed, his speech stands out in marked contrast to others presented at this congress.

Stalin's tone was one of guarded reserve. The only section in which he expressed any real satisfaction was the report on the international situation. A certain amount of pride was evident in the discussion of the economy, but it

was tempered by lists of flaws, defects, and criticisms. The final section on the party is so replete with suspicions, warnings, and calls for vigilance that one might have thought the party was on the verge of beginning the First Five-Year Plan, not ending it. In light of the hardships endured by the party, as well as the general support given to Stalin in the turbulent period of 1930-1934, loyal party supporters in the audience might have expected some display of thanks or gratitude in this address. In fact, there were few, if any, comments on the "good work" of the party.

Politically astute party members may have been more disturbed by Stalin's vague allusion to "this" or "that" sector of the party that had strayed from the line. The anonymity of such accusations could produce anxiety in anyone, as the charges were so open-ended. Such anonymity was not evident in Stalin's comments to the Sixteenth Party Congress in 1930. Rykov, Tomsky, Bukharin, and Uglanov are clearly identified as the objects of Stalin's diatribes. ¹³

Similarly, a perceptive congress delegate who had attended the 1933 joint plenum probably would have noted that Lenin's name and his statements were seldom mentioned in Stalin's congress speech. Stalin invoked the ghost of Lenin frequently at the 1933 joint plenum, when he was clearly on the defensive; his failure to do so a year later could be interpreted as a sign of his increased confidence.

Beyond these "psychological atmospherics," Stalin's

speech offered unambiguous language on several major issues which could leave no one in doubt as to the General Secretary's position. In foreign policy, Stalin stated he was prepared for a pragmatic engagement with Hitler's Germany, if it so chose; the corollary to this position for communist parties in the Comintern was clear--the emergence of a hostile fascism did not necessitate tactical alliances with "opportunists", i.e., social-democrats on the left, or middle class liberals.

On the domestic front, meanwhile, Stalin made clear his intention to shake the party up, thus avoiding any sense of complacency that might set in as a result of "surviving" the trauma of the previous five years, or a good summer harvest. Stalin's comments on the increased need for vigilance within the party, the existence of "opportunists" and "party aristocrats"--when coupled with his reorganization of the Central Control Commission--could hardly be reassuring to anyone but the most devoted and servile apparatchik. Indeed, anyone privy to the heated debate over the Riutin death penalty controversy needed no further hints as to the meaning of Stalin's not-so-subtle attack on various "problem" groups still in the party ranks.

And on the big economic question--the growth rates and production targets for the remainder of the Second Five-Year Plan--Stalin offered a studied ambiguity. While highly critical of agriculture, and replete with complaints about

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industrial problems, his speech lacked specificity on the issue of the Second Five-Year Plan--suggesting that this question was still contentious and unresolved.

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1. XVII s'ezd vsesoiuznoi kommunisticheskoi partii (b), 26 ianvaria-10 fevralia 1934 g. Stenograficheskii otchet (Moscow: Partizdat, 1934) p. 7. (All subsequent citations to the stenographic record will be noted in the text directly, with page numbers in parentheses).
2. Short Course, pp.301-2.
3. See, for example, Izvestiia, February 3, 1934. p.5.
4. Jane Degras, ed. Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy Vol.III, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), pp.55-56.
5. Ibid., p.47.
6. Henry Roberts, "Maxim Litvinov" in G. Craig and F. Gilbert, eds., The Diplomats, 2 vols., (New York: Atheneum, 1971), Vol. 2, p. 367.
7. Heinz Brandt. The Search for a Third Way (New York, 1970), pp.70,78-80 For more details on the German question, see Julius Braunthal, History of the International. Vol.III. (New York, Praeger, 1967), pp.364-90. Kermit MacKenzie, The Comintern and World Revolution (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), PP.113-139, and Xenia J. Eudin and Robert M. Slusser, Soviet Foreign Policy, 1928-1934-Documents and Materials, Vol.II (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1967), pp.386-92. For a provocative reconsideration of the origins of the "united front from below" policy, see Theodore Draper, "The Strange Case of the Comintern, in Survey, Vol.18, No.3 (Summer, 1972), pp.91-137, especially pp. 131-37.
8. Leon Trotsky. "Germany, The Key to the International Situation," in Leon Trotsky: The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany, edited by George Breitman and Merry Maisel, (New York: Pathfinder Press,1971), pp.126-27.
9. Franz Borkenau. European Communism. (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1953), pp.73-74.
10. Roberts, "Maxim Litvinov," pp.367-69.

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11. From the First to the Second Five-Year Plan, pp.287-288. For speech by Kaganovich, see pp.211-275, especially pp.254-259. For Yakovlev, see pp.279-345, especially pp.327-345.

12. Sten.ot.,1934., p.35.

13. XVI S'ezd vsesouiznoi kommunisticheskoi partii (b).
Stenograficheskii otchet. 2 vols. (Moscow,1931), pp.289-293.

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Chapter Four: The Gauntlet Seized: The Rebuttal to Stalin

As prescribed in the congress agenda, a host of speakers went to the rostrum to respond to Stalin's opening report of the Central Committee, a process encompassing 10 sessions over a period of five days. The speakers included a wide range of individuals, such as close Stalin proteges, Lenin's widow, Krupskaya, and even some former oppositionists. Many of these speakers were predictably sycophantic.

However, Bukharin (January 28), Ordzhonikidze (January 29), Kirov (January 31) and Rudzutak (February 1) offered carefully crafted commentary which clearly contradicted or challenged Stalin's views on key domestic and foreign policy issues. Their presentations represented a clear rebuttal to Stalin's opening address, and paved the way for subsequent debate of some of these issues--particularly the Second Five-Year Plan growth rates.

Bukharin and the Foreign Policy Question

It was somewhat ironic that the first implicit challenge to Stalin at this "congress of victors" came from a former oppositionist, Nikolai Bukharin. Indeed, Bukharin's presence as a congress speaker was noteworthy in and of itself. He had not attended the previous Congress in 1930, and had last addressed a congress in 1927, well before his political demise as a leader of the Right Opposition. Comments in

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Kirov's speech three days later suggested that the participation of such former oppositionists was still a contentious issue, which had yet to be resolved.

Bukharin's speech included a review of the domestic and international situations respectively. This was somewhat unusual in that Stalin--and D.Z. Manuilsky, head of the Comintern--were the only other speakers to specifically address issues related to Soviet foreign policy. Bukharin, a former Comintern chief himself, clearly demonstrated that he had not lost interest in the problems and tactics of the international communist movement.

On the domestic situation, Bukharin opened with a candid acknowledgement of the correctness of Stalin's line, the errors inherent in his (Bukharin's) former views and the serious consequences that would have grown out of those views had they been adopted as policy:

I feel obliged to say...that in the first place, the prerequisite of the victory of our Party was the working out by the Central Committee and Comrade Stalin of the remarkably correct general line; secondly, the operative and manly [muzhestvennoyi] application of that line, and thirdly, the ruthless crushing of all oppositions, including the Right Opposition, the main danger, the opposition to which I formerly belonged.

Despite the fact that for some years now I have been actively following the general Party line...I feel that I must focus attention to certain relevant conclusions. It is clear that the rightists to which I once belonged...pursued a different political line...This line envisaged different rates of development, that in effect opposed the forced development of industrialization...It opposed the policy of transforming the small-scale peasant economy...It opposed every new stage of the broad

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socialist offensive, failing to understand its historical inevitability and drawing conclusions which could only be seen as anti-Leninist...

It is clear that this group inevitably became the center of attraction for all those forces who fought against the socialist offensive, namely the kulak strata...and their theoretical supporters among the intelligentsia...it is equally clear that the victory of this deviationist grouping would have necessarily unleashed a third force and extremely weakened the working class...leading to premature outside intervention, which was already creeping up on ...the weaker, less healthy sections...and would have exacerbated the situation at home and abroad by significantly undermining the strength of the proletariat and unleashing the forces of antiproletarian counterrevolution. (pp.124-125)

Bukharin then noted that Stalin "was entirely right, brilliantly using Marxist-Leninist dialectics to destroy the theoretical principles of right-wing deviationism, formulated first and foremost by myself" (p.125). Of greater importance, perhaps, was Bukharin's subsequent admission that even after the Rightists were defeated, some underground groups, including some of his students, continued to operate, and became more counterrevolutionary. It was exactly this form of "contagion" by association that was to be used against Bukharin, Zinoviev, and Kamenev at the purge trials of the mid-to-late 1930s.

Bukharin went on to describe specific achievements in the realm of agriculture and industry, focusing special attention on the role of universities and technical training. He cited the technical, scientific, and cultural goals of socialism, suggesting such considerations should play a role in the planning process of the country's economic programs

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(p.125). In the realm of international affairs, Bukharin applauded the party's dual track approach in the struggle against war; he acknowledged the "diplomatic line of this brilliant foreign policy" as well as the huge efforts being made in the realm of military defense, whose basis was heavy industry (p.127). "Fascist Germany" and "Imperialist Japan" were then identified as the two "springboards" of the "counterrevolutionary assault" being directed at the Soviet state.

Bukharin quoted extensively from Hitler's writings, as well as those of other German ideologists and propagandists, to emphasize German intentions, and the ruthlessness of the adversary that was rising in the West. From Hitler's Mein Kampf, he cited several passages about Hitler's declared aims in Russia:

We are coming to the end of the policy of colonial trade and moving to a policy of fighting for new lands. And when we speak of new land in Europe, we can only be thinking of Russia and her dominions...Our future foreign policy must have as its aim not only a Western or Eastern orientation; it must be an Eastern policy in the sense of appropriating the territory which is so essential to the German people. (pp.127-128)

In a sarcastic and ironic passage, Bukharin summed up the implications of German and Japanese ambitions:

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Hitler is forming his brazen, criminal policy so as to push us out into Siberia. The Japanese militarists are forming theirs so as to push us out of Siberia. So, it seems that we will have to find place in one of the blast furnaces in Magnitka to house all of the 160 million population of our Union (p.128).

The bulk of Bukharin's comments concentrated on the threat posed by Hitler's Germany, presumably to underscore the seriousness of that threat. Quoting Nazi writers, Bukharin noted that "barbarism" was being extolled as a virtue by a people who called for leaders to let flow "blood, blood, and more blood, people who cut and stab" (p.129).

This, Bukharin argued, was the "bestial face of the class enemy." "This is who stands before us, and who, comrades, we shall have to face in all these colossal historical battles which history has placed upon our shoulders" (p.129). In concluding, Bukharin offered up one more accolade to Stalin, describing him as the "glorious field marshal of the proletarian forces, the best of the best" (p.129).

Bukharin's speech offered almost fawning praise of Stalin while disagreeing with Stalin on a specific policy question. His discussion of the threat emanating from fascist Germany did not offer a specific policy prescription, but it left little doubt as to what tactics and policies--both in Soviet and Comintern policies--Bukharin believed were imperative. Bukharin's alarm over the German threat became

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more explicit after the congress, as he employed his post-Congress appointment as editor of Izvestiia to propagate his views. 1

Ordzhonikidze and the Second Five-Year Plan

The speech of Sergo Ordzhonikidze, Commissar for Heavy Industry, offered the promise of some clues as to the status of the debate on the growth rates and targets for the Second Five-Year Plan. In particular, those who were present at the January 1933 joint plenum knew how to gauge Ordzhonikidze's remarks, to see if they were in keeping with Stalin's concessions at that meeting. Indeed, Ordzhonikidze's discussion of the performance and future tasks of heavy industry did foreshadow the acrimonious debate which was to develop in the major reports on the Second Five-Year Plan by Vyacheslav Molotov and Valerian Kuibyshev. Another interesting aspect of this address is its relatively limited degree of praise of Stalin--a contrast to most other Congress speakers. Indeed, the introductory and concluding references to Lenin seemed to counter the typical accolades concerning Stalin's originality and genius.

Ordzhonikidze's address was comprised of eight sections: "Stalin was the Soul of Our Whole Policy," "Twenty-one and a Half Billion has been Invested in Heavy Industry," "Machine-Building is the Key to Reconstruction," "Precise Organization of Production and Flexible Leadership Is the Principal Task,"

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"Electrification, Coal, Oil," "Eliminating the Lagging of Ferrous Metallurgy," "New Centers of Industry Have been Created," and "We Must Inculcate Respect for Our Labor and Our Products."

The title of the opening section seemed to be curious misnomer, for while Ordzhonikidze commended Stalin's report and leadership, he focused primarily on Lenin and his guiding impetus to the policies adopted in the First Five-Year Plan. Stalin was portrayed as an executor of Lenin's blueprint for economic development:

May I be allowed to say that Comrade Stalin has raised all questions to the height to which they used to be raised by the teacher and organizer of our Party, the organizer of the victories of October, the greatest revolutionary of all ages, the great disciple of the great Marx and the perpetuator of his teaching--Lenin. Lenin left us ten years ago, but Leninism, his banner, has remained our guiding star. Lenin outlined the program of our actions. For all our victories, we are obligated entirely to Lenin and Leninism (p.167).

On the question of agriculture, Ordzhonikidze paraphrased Lenin's 1920 comments on the dangers of a "petty peasant economy," and noted that Stalin's offensive against the kulaks had succeeded: "From the point of view of the correlation of forces within the country, the danger of a restoration of capitalism has been wiped out for all time. " He then defended the "forced tempo" of the First Five-Year Plan, noting that to give in to the difficulties that developed would have brought about the destruction of the Soviet government. During that period, the "struggle for

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tempo" was the whole issue, he continued (p.169). His use of the past tense implicitly suggested that a similar "forced tempo" was not to be continued during the Second Five-Year Plan--a theme he employed throughout the speech.

At many points throughout the speech, Ordzhonikidze made clear references to the hardships and difficulties endured during the buildup of heavy industry. "During these years, we carried out enormous capital construction...it was not an easy task...it required the straining of every fibre of the country" (p.169). Citing the figures for capital investment, he again noted "the strain [naprazheniye] which the national economy had to undergo in order to build up its industry" (p.170). However, he added that this effort had already paid off, asserting optimistically that "I can boldly state from this tribune that we already have our reward...we can say without boasting that we have factories which have no counterpart in Europe. How we work in these factories is another matter--I shall speak on this later" (p.170). This comment set the stage for the dominant theme of the speech--the need for mastery of technique, technically skilled cadres, and organizational improvements to boost output.

For example, in his discussion of the machine-building industry--characterized as the "key" to reconstruction of the entire national economy--he argued that "We do not use this key rationally yet" (p.170). He amplified on this point in his comments on organization and leadership:

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It is not a question of our workers not wanting to work...nothing of the kind...The enormous cadres which we have trained are burning with desire to work, but we do not know to organize them...The degree of organization in our country is still very low...Very often a worker loses time running all over the plant when he has to fetch tools, material, blueprints etc. (p.172).

Thus, Ordzhonikidze contended that in most plants "correct placement of labor, correct organization of the place of work, give us enormous opportunities for increasing our output further" (p.172). In a similar vein, he went on to cite specific industries, such as the ball-bearing, coal, mining and non-ferrous metallurgy industries, in which the use and mastery of equipment had yet to be achieved because of the "barbarous [varvarski] misuse of equipment" (pp.173-174).

One solution to such problems, he argued, was flexible leadership [gibkoye rukovodstvo]. In a lengthy passage on the Stalino metalworks, Ordzhonikidze praised the work of its director, a certain Makarov. While Makarov was "late" with his daily reports and his smelting figures were "sometimes erratic," Ordzhonikidze said this was not a problem because he knew Makarov "will manage to get it even" and then urged other plant directors to emulate Makarov's example (p.175). In a related point about bureaucrats and paperpushers, Ordzhonikidze also warned young specialists to take from the old engineers their valuable knowledge, but not their "habits

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of routine and inertness" (p. 176).

In his concluding section, Ordzhonikidze made an implicit argument for a more measured tempo in the ongoing Five-Year Plan. He opened by praising the results of the First Five-Year Plan, which, he noted, were not matched by the capitalist states, even over longer periods of time. He then jumped into the issue of quality, citing three specific examples of plants which produced a given item, but then let the item fall into disrepair:

We must devote the most serious attention to the quality of our output, in order to prevent such cases as we still have now, when people only care about getting their output off their hands without giving a damn [chort s nim] what the output is like. (p.178; italics added)

This passage seemed to argue against the high goals and tempos that fostered such a target mentality on the grounds that the resulting figures would not accurately reflect the state of the industry and would be counterproductive. This was reaffirmed in his final comments comparing the tasks of the First and Second Five-Year Plans:

When we entered upon the first five-year plan period, Lenin's question of "who will beat whom," the question of the creation of a heavy industry, the question of the collectivization of agriculture, faced us and awaited solution. Now, when we have entered the second five-year plan period, these problems have already been solved. We have created a heavy industry, we have collectivized agriculture, our cadres have grown during these years, and we have more experience and knowledge than we had then. What can stop us then, what can prevent the fulfillment of the second five-year plan ? Nothing. Our Party, the Party of Lenin has fulfilled the greatest task

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under the most difficult conditions, and now, when it is armed with its own powerful technique and its own cadres, the Party will fulfill, and honorably fulfill, the second five-year plan (p.179;italics added).

In reviewing the main thrust of Ordzhonikidze's presentation, it seems clear that he was advancing all the key arguments for the somewhat reduced rate of increase in industrial output that he was to formally introduce later in the congress, one which was slightly lower--one and a half per cent--than that offered by Molotov. This argument was couched in the calls for "mastery of technique", better utilization of mechanisms already in place, and improved organizational and management planning. His failure to mention, even in passing, various dangers such as the "survivals of capitalism in people's minds" etc., so prominently noted in the Stalin and Molotov speeches, suggests that part of the argument for a lower growth rate was defensive--i.e., there are no serious threats or challenges which would require the same high rates employed during the difficult years of the First Five-Year Plan. This would explain his strong assertion that the danger of a "restoration of capitalism" was "wiped out for all time."

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Kirov and the Question of the Former Oppositionists

The appearance of Sergey Kirov at the rostrum was greeted by "stormy prolonged applause, with all standing, an ovation throughout the hall" (p. 251). The popular Kirov, first secretary of the powerful Leningrad Party Organization, was viewed by some as a likely successor to Stalin. As a full member of the Politburo, his comments warranted close scrutiny, as they would likely represent authoritative views on important issues.

Kirov's address was the final response to Stalin's report of the Central Committee. The one-and-a-half-hour address was punctuated by applause some twenty times, as Kirov scanned a variety of topics, under four main themes: "A Most Outstanding Document of the Epoch," "About Those Who Remained in the Rear," "The City of Lenin Passed the Test," and "On Party Education and Self-Criticism."

The opening section, "A Most Outstanding Document of the Epoch," focused on the party's victory, and Stalin's earlier comments on that victory. Kirov began by acknowledging the "exceptional role played by the party... in the realization of the Leninist plan for the construction of socialism in one country" (p.251; italics added). He added that the problem had now been solved in practice, while it had been much earlier in theory. Kirov then noted that the

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problem was solved "not only by industrial conquests in the realization of Lenin's slogan of industrialization," but also by the "decisive directing of millions of peasant households into new socialist channels" (p. 252; italics added).

These opening paragraphs offer an interesting contrast to other speeches presented at the congress. Whereas most of the other speakers stressed Stalin's leadership in the struggle to build socialism, as well as his theoretical genius, Kirov neglected to pay homage on either count. He did shower effusive praise on Stalin in other parts of his speech, but these introductory comments are conspicuous nonetheless for the absence of Stalin's name.

Recognizing the international implications of the successful building of socialism, Kirov expressed the view that this victory was "the best agitator and most forceful argument in favor of socialism beyond the borders of our country, among the international proletariat, among all the oppressed of the East and West" (p. 252). The introductory section ended with lavish praise for Stalin's report, which was characterized as "the most vivid and complete document we have ever known until this day, the document of our great socialist construction" (p. 252). In the midst of this praise, Kirov made an unprecedented proposal:

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It seems to me that after such a detailed discussion of the report of the Central Committee of our party...it would be useless to bother ourselves with the question of what decision, what resolutions we should adopt on Comrade Stalin's report. In my opinion, it would be correct and, in any case, more expedient than any other decision, to adopt for fulfillment as party law, all points raised, and conclusions drawn, in Comrade Stalin's report. (Stormy, prolonged applause. All rise, applauding) (p. 253; italics added).

Such a proposal had never been made in Lenin's time; clearly, Kirov's motion reflected the cult of personality that had fully blossomed in the thirties.

In a new section entitled "About Those Who Remained at the Rear," Kirov discussed the question of former oppositionists. While many congress speakers made passing slurs or comments about these people, Kirov and Stalin were the only two speakers to give this subject extensive treatment. Kirov's comments offered a new perspective from which to view the former oppositionists:

...We have discussed these matters some years ago, but it is necessary somewhat more practically, so to speak, humanely to glance at what has happened to the leaders of the former opposition groups...without going into a theoretical analysis of the viewpoints held by the various types of opposition, views that they themselves no longer defend...

But you know, comrades, that in the war...that is being waged for the building of socialism, it has happened that individual comrades, for various reasons have begun to doubt the expediency and the success of the great advance which we have made, and instead of fighting in the ranks of the principal fighters, have, either individually or in groups, even from the leading ranks, diverged to the sides, or lagged behind, or concealed themselves in the

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rear. But the army goes forward, gaining victory after victory. And in the rear, those wavering groups, links, and circles still conducted their work. On receiving orders from the higher command, these people, far from trying to fulfill these commands, tried in every way to discredit these commands. They tried in every way to demoralize the ranks within their reach....

And the struggle goes on, the army wins victory after victory. And here, picture to yourselves, after the army has gained a decisive victory...the war not yet over...but something like a breathing spell arrives, and the entire great, victorious army is singing a song of victory, at such a time, what remains to be done for those who stayed in the rear? (applause, laughter).

They, comrades, also attempt to take part in the general victory, to fall into step to the same music, to keep up with our progress. But however hard they try, nothing comes of their attempts. (laughter, applause)
Let us take Bukharin, for example. In my opinion, he sang in tune, but not with the same voice. (laughter, applause) And I haven't spoken about comrades Rykov and Tomsky. Here, even the melody is different. They can neither sing in tune, nor fall into step.
 And I must say, humanely, comrades, that this is not so simple, for one must put one's self in the place of people who spent whole years, the decisive years of the party's intense struggle and that of the working class, following behind...

It is very difficult for them to take up the party position. And I think, although I do not want to be a prophet, that still some little time must pass before the whole of this baggage train will catch up with our victorious communist army.

...The fact that we have won, the fact that these routed oppositionists are attempting by all and every means to adapt themselves to our victories, does not in any way remove from our agenda the item that we have to guard in the future, the purity and inviolability of the general-line of our party (p. 253; italics added).

While Kirov acknowledged that the former oppositionists had "lagged behind" and tried to demoralize the ranks, he also implied that their efforts had little effect on the general

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outcome of the "war." It is most interesting that Kirov's comments reflect some degree of understanding and sympathy. Furthermore, he explicitly stated that these people will rejoin the ranks, as "they are attempting by any and all means to adapt themselves" (p. 253). The subsequent call for party discipline to guard the party line was not explicitly directed at the former oppositionists or any other group; it was merely a caution for the future.

In both tone and substance, Kirov's remarks on the former opposition offer a sharp contrast to Stalin's discussion of the same topic. Stalin described the former oppositionists as "deviationists," "contemptible cowards," "capitulators," "counter-revolutionaries," and "dangerous." In addition, he contended that these elements still represented a threat, and that "all was not well with the party." He then called for continuing efforts to criticize, expose, and root out the "ideology and remnants of trends that are hostile to the party." Thus, Stalin sought to root out those elements, for fear that they were still influencing "people's minds", whereas Kirov pictured these former oppositionists as people who were working hard to re-enter the mainstream of the party. Kirov, moreover, made no suggestion that these people be publicly harassed or demoted, as Stalin had done.

These differences in tone and general outlook between Stalin and Kirov were already apparent before the congress,

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at the various preparatory conferences of the local party organizations. The statements issued by the Leningrad and Moscow Party Organizations offer a striking contrast which corresponds to the different outlooks offered by Kirov and Stalin:

Leningrad

The Bolshevik Party was never so united, never less liable to vacillations, never more confident in the correctness of the Leninist policy than it is today. The masses of the workers never rallied to its banner more enthusiastically and with greater devotion than they are today under the Leninist leadership with Stalin at the head. The working peasantry never had more confidence in the Soviet power and in its leader Stalin than it has today. The proletarian dictatorship was never more solid, never more powerful, never so feared by its enemies all over the world and never so loved by its friends than it is today. ²

This statement reflected the positive outlook of the Leningrad Party Organization--one which was further enunciated by Kirov at the congress. The statement is noteworthy in that it makes no allusions to "shortcomings" or problems and because it notes that Stalin heads a "Leninist

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leadership." In contrast, a statement of the Moscow Party Organization on the eve of the congress affords an entirely different and ominous perspective:

Moscow

We are going forward to our Seventeenth Party Congress, the great Party Congress of a great Party, proud of our victories, and fully realizing what great tasks are before us. We have the firm wish that at this Party Congress our shortcomings may be exposed, as taught by the Central Committee and Comrade Stalin, the determined wish that self-criticism may be more efficiently developed, that we may march forward firmly and certainly to new victories. ³

The references to "exposing shortcomings" and more efficiently developing "self-criticism" portended the vigilance theme upon which Stalin elaborated during his opening address to the congress.

A saying of the Leningrad workers introduced the second section of Kirov's address, entitled "The City of Lenin Has Passed the Test": "The only thing left of the old in Leningrad are the revolutionary traditions of the Petersburg workers - everything else has become new" (p. 254). Indeed,

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Kirov proudly noted that Leningrad's industry accounted for 14-15% of the gross industrial output in the U.S.S.R. during the 1930-1934 period. Aside from being "a powerful forge-shop where cadres are hammered out for new socialist constructions and scientific research institutions," Leningrad was also praised for contributing 7500 qualified workers in areas outside of the Leningrad province (p. 256).

At one point in his discussion, Kirov appeared to be offering a defense of the Leningrad workers:

...I must take this opportunity to testify on behalf of the Leningrad workers, who were not in the last ranks of the struggle...but were one of the most powerful, advanced detachments of the Bolshevik Party and its Central Committee.

...These workers, by their selfless struggle for the general line of the party, have shown themselves worthy of the name of the city of Lenin, in which they live and work (p.256).

Kirov was reputedly a staunch supporter of the workers in his jurisdiction, even when such support caused consternation among his Politburo colleagues. ⁴ Apparently, he felt no compunction about reaffirming his support before the congress.

Kirov elaborated at length on the tasks and problems confronting the national economy in the forthcoming Second Five-Year Plan. After calling on Leningrad Oblast to develop a firm fuel base and an agricultural base, Kirov cited problems which were common to most of the congress

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speeches: the quality of work, new methods for organization of work, commodity circulation, livestock-breeding, and transportation. In the area of water transportation, he noted the various shortcomings that existed, but stressed the great potential offered by the canal system which had yet to be developed. The People's Commissariat of Agriculture was also singled out as an agency which had to "radically improve their work and leadership from top to bottom" (p.257).

In his closing section, "On Party Education and Self-Criticism," Kirov paid tribute to those involved with education and propaganda, calling them "one of the most responsible sectors of the whole of our party" (p. 258) With youthful optimism, Kirov expressed his happiness over the positive changes in Russia: "Our successes are truly magnificent. By heavens, how one wants to go on living and living (laughter), to really see what is going on. It is really true!" This burst of enthusiasm was greeted by "tumultuous applause" (p. 258) Noting that success could lead to "dizziness," Kirov called on the party "to realize with care and affection, one of the greatest slogans of our party, self-criticism" (p.258). He concluded his address with spirited praise for Soviet workers, the party, Lenin, and Stalin:

...When we have such a heroic working class...when we have such a party as the one nurtured by the greatest of men, Vladimir Il'ich Lenin...the tasks before us are not only capable of solution, but of brilliant and victorious

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solution, the more so since the main difficulties are already behind us.

Comrades, ten years ago we buried him who created our proletarian state. But ten years ago we took a sacred vow to fulfill the great bequests of Lenin, a vow through the lips of the best perpetuator of the cause of Lenin, the best helmsman of our great socialist construction, our party of millions, our working class of millions. Comrades, we may declare with pride before the memory of Lenin: We are fulfilling this vow, and will fulfill it in the future, because this vow has been uttered by the great strategist of the emancipation of the toilers of our country and the whole world, Comrade Stalin (p.259).

A great response was accorded Kirov at the conclusion of his speech. According to the stenographic record, the congress responded with "stormy, unending applause and a warm ovation, with all standing throughout the hall" (p.259). Izvestiia reported the ovation more fully: "The congress gave Kirov a new ovation. Applause, Cries of Hurrah, Long live the Leningrad proletariat, long live the leader of the Leningrad Bolsheviks, comrade Kirov, endlessly for several minutes." ⁵ This disparity is noteworthy, for recent histories and accounts stress the enthusiastic support of Kirov manifested at this congress. ⁶

Kirov's speech presents an intriguing dichotomy, for it contains fulsome adulation of the leader while at times disagreeing with him. As noted earlier, Kirov's proposal to adopt Stalin's report with no further revision or discussion was unprecedented, and seemingly signified the strength of Stalin's position. Yet Kirov's fulsome tributes to Stalin's wisdom and leadership did not obscure the

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existence of a differences on certain issues. With a crafty sense of balance, Kirov voiced support of the Stalinist program of further expansion of heavy industry while concurrently advocating a spirit of moderation and humanity. His comments on the former oppositionists and his exuberant vision of the future clearly revealed his belief that the worst was over, that the future held great promise. Kirov himself seemed to personify that very picture; young, boyishly enthusiastic, and popular, his future seemed to have no bounds. The optimistic spirit that permeated Kirov's address struck a responsive chord among the congress delegates, who responded with warm enthusiasm

At the conclusion of Kirov's speech, Pavel P.

Postyshev asked if there were any amendments to the Report of the Central Committee, to which the delegates replied no.

Postyshev then introduced Stalin, who offered some closing comments:

Comrades, the debate at this congress has displayed complete unity of opinion among our party leaders, and one can say, on all questions of party policy. As you know, there were no objections whatsoever to the report. Thus, an extraordinary ideological-political, and organizational unity in the ranks of our party has been displayed. The question arises, is there need for a speech in reply to the debate? I think that there is no need for it. Permit me then to refrain from making a speech in reply. (Stormy ovation, the whole congress standing, loud hurrahs, groups of voices: "Long Live Stalin", The congress standing, sings the "International". After completing the "International", the ovation resumed. Cries "Hurrah", "Long live Stalin", "Long live the Central Committee.") (p.259)

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Nikita S. Khrushchev then presented the final resolution which accepted and adopted Stalin's report of the Central Committee in its entirety. This motion was also interrupted by stormy applause, and cries of "long live the great Stalin" (p.260).

Rudzutak and Party Cadre Policy

Kirov's speech begged the question of party cadre policy. More specifically, it seemed to ask, "What role, if any, could former oppositionists play in the party?" Stalin's answer seemed clear--root them out of the party, while Kirov argued for a more humane, "second chance" approach. The views of Yan Rudzutak, as head of the Central Control Commission--the organ responsible for implementing party cadre policy--presumably would afford an important perspective on this question.

Rudzutak's report on the work of the Central Control Commission-Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate (Rabkrin) began a new segment of the congress. Inasmuch as Stalin had already revealed he proposal to dissolve the Central Control Commission-Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate in favor of a new Party Control Commission and Soviet Control Commission, Rudzutak's comments were of more than passing interest.

Rudzutak tackled the question of party governance head-on and presented a strong defense of his tenure as head of

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the now defunct Central Control Commission.

Rudzutak's speech suggests that while he did not necessarily share Kirov's enthusiasm for embracing former oppositionists, he was greatly concerned that whatever policy was adopted be legally sound and not susceptible to the political machinations of one group or another.

Rudzutak opened with a strong attack on "would-be-Leninists" and "inner-party oppositionists" who had opposed industrialization and collectivization, in a section entitled "Whoever Is Not for Us Is Against Us":

At the time when the Party, rolling up its sleeves, began to fulfill the plan of industrialization...the Right opportunists began to preach the theory that "the class struggle is abating." Bukharin developed the theory that the kulak...will peacefully change over to socialism. ...Various groupings attempted to shatter the unity of the Leninist party: that of Trotsky, the most bitter enemy of Leninism; that of Zinoviev and Kamenev who did not understand Lenin and were frightened by the huge plan of reconstruction of the national economy; that of Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky, who left the field of battle and turned their petty bourgeois philistine weapons against the party, being frightened of a decisive attack against the class enemy.

From step to step, "inner party" opposition slid down through the groups of Smirnov-Eismont, Riutin-Ginsburg, and finally found itself in the camp of rampant counter-revolutionaries and wreckers in the pay of foreign capital.

The history of the struggle of our party against the petty bourgeois fragments and remnants which have remained inside our party...fully justifies the formula "Those who are not with us are against us." Finally, all these various oppositions and groupings combined with one another and created a united front against the general line of our party (p.262).

This sharp attack offered a striking contrast to Kirov's almost benign comments of the previous evening. The bulk of Rudzutak's report centered on the inadequacies, failures, and mismanagement that existed in various sectors of the national economy. The section titles reflect this critical tone: "The Work of the Ferrous Metal Industry Must be Greatly Improved," "Improvement of Quality of Products-The Most Important Task," "Consumers To Be Treated with Care and Attention," "Workers' Supply Must be Organized in a Bolshevik Manner," "The All-Union People's Commissariat of Agriculture Has Failed to Cope with its Tasks," "Why Rail Transport Works Badly." The discussion, lengthy and highly repetitive, employed Stalin's earlier comments as a blueprint for commentary. Following Rudzutak's comments on rail transport, the morning session ended.

The remainder of Rudzutak's report was presented at the evening session of February 1. Reporting on the results of the party purge initiated in 1933, he cited key statistics which demonstrated the scope of the purge. In the ten provinces in which the purge was completed, 17% of the party's members had been expelled, and 6.3% had been reduced to the status of "sympathizer" (p. 287). Leningrad and Moscow were acknowledged as having the "strongest and soundest" party organizations, with expulsion rates of 12.7% and 13.6% respectively. On the other hand, the East Siberian Party Organization suffered a reprimand, as their figures topped

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the list of expulsions with 25.2%. Expulsion rates in the other areas were: Urals- 23.1%, Odessa- 21.9%, Far East- 21.9% and Karelia- 20.3% (p. 287). ⁷ Rudzutak also noted that the purge primarily affected young party members, especially those who had entered the party in the previous 3-4 years. Another noteworthy trend was the low expulsion rate in the secret police and military sectors: 6.7% in the Red Army, and 8.2% in the OGPU (p.287-289).

The purge had exposed some serious problems, according to Rudzutak. Among these were the insufficient and poor system of party education and inadequate attention to the task of party selection. And despite Rudzutak's assertion that the purge had "strengthened the party, which has now become stronger and firmer than ever before", he cited numerous examples in which party organizations had failed to carry out the "essence" of the purge directive:

The purge revealed several instances of entire district organizations, and even organizations of whole provinces, dealing with decisions of the party and its Central Committee in a formal way, and not with its essence. A formal attitude in applying these decisions of the party and the Central Committee is the greatest evil one can now imagine in our party. Decisions of the Central Committee of our party are military commands of the communist army, and carrying out these military commands in form and not in essence means to retard our advance, to delay our victory (p.289; italics added).

Rudzutak's call for carrying out the "essence" of the party decision raises an important question: What was that

essence? More specifically, what was the intent of the decision to purge the party in 1933? The party decree "On the Party Purge", issued on April 28, 1933 offers some interesting answers to these questions.

Written in connection with a general resolution calling for a purge in January 1933, the document "On the Party Purge" presents a thorough account of the intent, functioning, and direction of the party purge. Citing the rapid, and at times indiscriminate, influx of new people into party ranks between 1930-1932, the resolution called for the expulsion of the following categories of people:

- 1 class-alien and hostile elements who made their way into the party by deceit and remain there to demoralize the party ranks;
- 2 double-dealers who live by deceiving the party, who conceal from it their true aspirations, and, covered by a false oath of "fidelity" to the party, in fact strive to undermine the party's policy;
- 3 open and hidden violators of the iron discipline of the party and state who fail to carry out the decisions of the party and the state, who cast doubt on and discredit the party's decisions and plans by their chatter about the "lack of realism and practicality";
- 4 degenerates who have merged with the bourgeois elements, who do not want to really fight against class enemies, who are not really struggling against kulak elements, grabbers, loafers, thieves, spoilers of public property;
- 5 careerists, self-seekers, and bureaucratized elements who exploit their stay in the party and their service with the Soviet state for their own personal, self-seeking aims, who are isolated from the masses and disregard the needs and demands of the workers and peasants;
- 6 moral degenerates whose unseemly behavior injures the dignity of the party, and who dirty the party banner. ⁸

Although the above categories seem open-ended and subject to broad interpretation, the rest of the resolution reflects a determination to prevent any abuses and to protect individual party members from such abuses. For example, provision was made for those party members who were "devoted to the cause" but who lacked the elementary political knowledge by calling for the provisional transfer of such people to candidate status. And even beyond this, the category of sympathizer was open to party candidates who lacked the "self-command" required by party discipline. Thus, it would seem that the purge was not meant to be a purely punitive action aimed at mass expulsion of party members. As if to underscore this fact, the resolution outlined, in great detail, the acceptable and unacceptable methods of conducting the purge:

...However, when checking individually on the member's knowledge of political fundamentals, purge commissions should not ask involved, "captious," "tricky," questions. They should take into account the overall level of development of the person undergoing examination so as not to exclude from the party comrades, especially workers and kolkhoz members, who have given absolute proof of their devotion to the cause of the party and the building of socialism but have not had sufficient opportunity to improve the level of their political knowledge.

The purge should in no way be seen, by those conducting it or those undergoing it, as a sign of the party's lack of confidence in all communists of the given cell indiscriminately. The purge commission must make every effort to create a comradely atmosphere for the purge, one in which each party member can feel that it is not a question of reprisals but of helping the party disclose

and root out all defects in party organization.

The purge commissions and all party members must resolutely rebuff anyone who attempts to exploit the purge to settle personal accounts for purposes of factional struggle...

While struggling against degenerate and unseemly behavior of party members in their everyday life (drunkenness, corruption, and intimacy with alien elements, anti-semitism, and similar phenomena incompatible with the name of communist), the purge commissions should in no case tolerate petty and captious digging into people's personal lives. Purge commissions should devote primary attention to how the party member carries out the job assigned to him by the party, how he struggles for the implementation and fulfillment of party decisions.

.... The purge extends to all party members and candidates except members and candidates of the VKP(b) Central Committee and Central Control Commission and members of the Revision Committee.... However, if a statement with supporting materials has been submitted by some party meeting or some group of party members demanding the purge of a given member of the Central Committee, the Central Control Commission...the person must undergo the purge. ⁹

Thus, it would appear that the Central Committee resolution which instituted the purge was characterized by a good deal of caution and restraint. Perhaps this was the "essence" to which Rudzutak referred. He did offer several examples of inappropriate behavior and bad situations which had plagued the purge process. A certain Comrade Bergavinov, for example, a krai committee secretary, had justified his use of statistic juggling and incorrect statistics by citing Lenin's dictum that "There are many ways to support and strengthen your position when it is necessary to do so" (p.289). Clearly, Rudzutak countered, this was not the intent of Lenin's original statement. On one level, this

tale is simple - it describes a common practice of party members who know they must meet the demands and quotas of the Five Year Plan. However, it may also be taken as an admonition to those who use Lenin's words out of context to justify unacceptable practices. Naturally, Rudzutak raised the obvious query: how could such people in leadership positions select cadres for their cells? (p.289).

Rudzutak's concluding section focused on the party's achievements, as well as the tasks it still faced. Toward the end of his speech, Rudzutak finally acknowledged the impending reorganization of the Central Control Commission:

The organizational forms and methods of work used by our control organizations hitherto are inadequate and imperfect in the present stage of socialist construction. Comrade Stalin has given a splendid outline in his report, with its characteristic accuracy and clarity, of the demands which the new situation brings forward in the organization of control (p.290).

Although Rudzutak seemed to recognize the need for the organizational change that Stalin recommended, he hastened to add that the Central Control Commission had performed in excellent fashion:

Comrades, the Central Control Commission, in all stages of our party organization and our party struggle, has been in the first rank of fighters, it was a true help of the Central Committee of our party against class enemies, and I think that it has fulfilled its principal task with honor (p.291).

Rudzutak touched on one more controversial issue before closing--fascism. In a fleeting yet forceful commentary, he castigated the fascists as those "who cry for the destruction of Marxism." Against those "tortuous masters," Rudzutak voiced support for the party, and noted that it would grow "even stronger in its conduct of the class struggle" under Comrade Stalin (p.291). In conclusion, Rudzutak noted, in a rather perfunctory fashion, Stalin's role as the "most tried leader of the proletarian legions" in the march for the future victory of the banner of Marx-Lenin-Stalin among the world proletariat. (p.291)

Overall, Rudzutak's speech sounded defensive, as though Rudzutak was questioning the need for Stalin's proposed abolition of the Central Control Commission. Indeed, the 1963 official biography of Rudzutak suggests that he did not support the reorganization, noting that he was not present at the Politburo session where Stalin first proposed the reorganization, despite the fact that Rudzutak always participated in the work of the Politburo. ¹⁰ He probably suspected, correctly, that Stalin would use reorganization to tighten his control of the purge process.

Rudzutak's fortunes may have been falling even before the reorganization announced at the XVII Congress. There are some indications that his failure to comply with Stalin's wishes in regard to the Riutin controversy of 1932-33 may

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have incurred the Soviet leader's wrath. ¹¹ The Central Control Commission, headed by Rudzutak, reportedly had rejected Stalin's demand for the death penalty, and passed the question along to the Politburo, where it was discussed and rejected by a majority. ¹² Stalin's reorganization may well have been a response to this earlier defeat.

Events at the XVII Congress seemed to confirm that Rudzutak's future was the subject of debate. Stalin successfully abolished the Central Control Commission and strongly criticized the work of the commission; moreover, Rudzutak was not named to the successor organizations of the CCC, the Party Control Commission or the Soviet Control Commission. Yet at the same time, Rudzutak was re-elevated to the Politburo, as a candidate member. According to official Soviet accounts from the Khrushchev and Brezhnev eras, Rudzutak was a full Politburo member from 1926-1932, and then a candidate member in 1934. ¹³ If this is true, it suggests that despite his being dropped from the Politburo--possibly over the Riutin affair--Rudzutak had strong support elsewhere in the leadership.

Irrespective of Rudzutak's personal fortunes, the significance of the reorganization of the Central Control Commission becomes apparent when one considers who was named Rudzutak's heirs in the all-important Party Control Commission at the conclusion of the congress: Lazar M. Kaganovich, who assumed duties as the chairman, with Nikolai

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. Yezhov as his deputy. Kaganovich had been one of Stalin's staunchest supporters throughout various party debates, including the Riutin controversy. For Yezhov, the deputy chairmanship served as a stepping stone to the chairmanship, which he acquired in May, 1935, and subsequently as chief of the NKVD--the secret police--in 1936. ¹⁴

Ironically, Rudzutak fell victim to the purge during Yezhov's tenure as People' Commissar for Internal Affairs. ¹⁵ Rudzutak was accused of conspiring in a "reserve Rightist centre." The probable "evidence" for such a charge, according to Robert Conquest, was Rudzutak's plea for moderation in the Bukharin controversy that dominated the "long plenum" of February-March 1937. ¹⁶ Another contributing factor was Rudzutak's performance as chairman of the Central Control Commission. ¹⁷

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2. L.F.
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3. Ibid

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1. See Slusser, "Role of the Foreign Ministry," pp. 218-225, and Stephen F. Cohen, Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution: A Political Biography 1888-1938, New York, 1973, pp. 360-68. Both authors note that Bukharin's commentaries on fascism probably were veiled criticism of Stalin's policies toward Nazi Germany.
2. L.F. Boross, "The XVII Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union" in International Press Correspondence, Vol. 14, No. 4 (Jan. 26, 1934), p.79 (Italics added).
3. Ibid., p.92. Italics added.
4. For reports that Kirov fended off criticism of the Leningrad workers, see Orlov, The Secret History of Stalin's Crimes, p. 11; see also Antonov-Ovseyenko, Time of Stalin, pp. 84-6.
5. Izvestiia, February 1, 1934. p.2.
6. See, for example, Medvedev, Let History Judge, pp.155-6, and 165-6.
7. See also T.H. Rigby, Communist Party Membership in the USSR 1917-1967, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), pp. 203-205 for discussion of othe trends associated with this purge; and Brzezinski, Permanent Purge, pp. 49-64.
8. Kommunisticheskaia Partiaa Sovetskogo Souiza v rezoliutsiiaakh i resheniiaakh s"ezdov, konferentsii i plenumov TsK. Vol. V. (1931-1941), (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1971), p. 180.
9. Ibid., pp.101-02; Italics added.
10. G.A Trukan, Yan Rudzutak (Moscow: Gospolizdat, 1963), p. 92.
11. For a more detailed discussion of the Riutin case, see Nicolaevsky, Power and the Soviet Elite, pp.28-30.
12. Conquest, The Great Terror, p.28.
13. See, for example, the Malaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia, Vol. 8, Moscow, 1960, pp. 12-13, and the Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia, third edition, Vol. 22, 1975, pp. 348-349. _

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14. Robert M. Slusser, "Chekist Leaders From Dzerzhinsky to Yezhov," paper presented to the Eighty-Eighth meeting of the American Historical Association, San Francisco, December 1973, pp. 14-15. Slusser notes that Yezhov did not rise from obscurity in the 1930s, as party congress protocols show Yezhov was a congress delegate as early as 1924, and that he was listed as a deputy chief of an unspecified department in the protocols of the XV Party Congress in 1927.
15. For details on Rudzutak's fall from power and his execution, see Medvedev, Let History Judge, pp.308,302,357; Robert Conquest, "The Historiography of the Purges" in Survey, Winter, 1976, Vol.22, No. 1 (98), p.159-160 and Nikita S. Khrushchev, "The Crimes of the Stalin Era," New York, 1962, pp.S29-30.
16. The major source of details concerning the dramatic "long plenum of February-March 1937 is Hrihory Kostiuik, Stalinist Rule in the Ukraine, Munich, 1960.
17. Conquest, "Historiography of the Purges," p.160, and The Great Terror, p.261.

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Chapter Five: Molotov, Kuibyshev And Ordzhonidize Debate the Second Five-Year Plan

The very real debate on questions of party cadre policy and foreign policy was subtle when viewed against the heated debate that erupted over the Second Five-Year Plan. Guidelines and targets for the plan had been drawn up at the Seventeenth Party Conference in 1932 and were subsequently revised in 1933, the first year of the Second Five-Year Plan. The downward revisions, presented by Stalin at the 1933 joint plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission, were again being revised. As the XVII Congress convened, there still was no agreement on the basic issues: the average annual growth rate for industrial production as well as individual production targets in specific sectors.

The Gosplan draft submitted to the congress called for an 18.9 average annual increase in industrial output. Molotov felt this figure was too low; Ordzhonikidze argued that it was too high. Moreover, as Commissar for Heavy Industry, Ordzhonikidze also maintained that some targets in some of the heavy industry sector were high. This debate was the only one acknowledged as such during the entire congress.

The specifics and the tone of the debate are evident in the congress speeches of Molotov, Kuibyshev and, as already noted, Ordzhonikidze.

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Molotov Presents the Maximalist Position

At the morning session of February 3, Vyacheslav M. Molotov opened the formal discussion of the Second Five-Year Plan with a report entitled "The Tasks of the Second Five Year Plan." One of Stalin's oldest and most reliable lieutenants, Molotov was accorded one of the most effusive greetings of the congress, reflecting his high rank in the party: "stormy, prolonged applause throughout the hall. All stand, starting an ardent ovation for comrade Molotov. Tumultuous, welcoming voices, cries: Hurrah, long live comrade Molotov" (p.351).

It quickly became apparent that Molotov was taking up the cudgels for the maximalist position on the growth rates and targets; in addition, he frequently offered his support of Stalin on other issues.

One of the longest and most important reports, Molotov's speech comprised five main sections under the general title, "Tasks of the Second Five Year Plan." The short introduction was followed by four major sections entitled "Completion of the Technical Reconstruction and the Advance of the National Economy," "Construction Program and the New Distribution of Productive Forces," "Higher Standard of Living and Culture for the Workers," and "Fight for the

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Five-Year Plan and the Party Leadership."

The general introductory section identified three fundamental tasks of the Second Five Year Plan:

The first, and at the same time the basic political task of the Second Five Year Plan period is "the final liquidation of the capitalist elements and of classes in general; fully to destroy the causes which give rise to class distinctions and exploitation; to overcome the survivals of capitalism in the economy and in the consciousness of people; to transform the whole working population of the country into conscious, active builders of a classless, socialist society."

The second task is to further improve the well-being of the masses of workers and collective farmers and to increase the level of consumption of the toilers by two and a half or three times.

The third task is to complete the technical reconstruction of the whole national economy - industry, transport, agriculture...

The fulfillment of these tasks must be based on a vast expansion of the national economy and its technical reconstruction. Hence, the completion of the technical reconstruction of the national economy is put forward as the fundamental economic task of socialist construction (p.351; italics added).

These opening paragraphs clearly indicated that Molotov not only wanted to push ahead on the plan, but that he shared Stalin's concern over the "survivals of capitalism." They also revealed the major theme that was to dominate Molotov's report: the necessity of vast expansion for the successful completion of all tasks of the Second Five-Year Plan. Before elaborating on this theme, Molotov reviewed the achievements of the First Five-Year Plan. In particular, the victory of socialist forms over capitalist elements was stressed as

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Molotov defined the goal of achieving a single social-economic system in the period of the Second Five-Year Plan (p.352). Toward this end, the "abolition of causes which engender class distinctions and exploitation of man by man" was enumerated as another task of the plan (p. 352).

In his discussion of the class struggle, Molotov reiterated Stalin's point on the "survivals of capitalism in the consciousness of people." To Molotov, this problem was "still considerable and extremely tenacious" and constituted a "source of anti-Leninist ideology for a long time to come" (pp.352-353). Having buttressed Stalin's view on the seriousness of the problem, Molotov went on to prescribe a solution: "The fight to overcome these survivals is a fight for a socialist attitude toward labor, for conscious and iron labor discipline, for the development of competition and shock brigade work, and against all disorganizers of our work" (p.353). In short, Molotov argued for a continuation of the pace and momentum of the First Five-Year Plan, with no letdown. As he later stated, "We are justified in stating that the tasks of the Second Five-Year Plan advanced here follow entirely from the achievements and successes of the preceding period" (p.353).

The concluding paragraphs of the introductory section provided some subtle, yet concrete signs of prior debate or discord over the directives for industrialization during the Second Five-Year Plan:

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Before proceeding to a concrete elaboration of the tasks of the Second Five-Year Plan period, I shall dwell on the directives given by the XVII Party Conference. As compared with these directives, the theses of the XVII Party Congress contain a number of modifications in regard to various branches of industry. This applies primarily to industrial production. I shall not dwell on details, but shall only say that these changes in no way alter the fundamental line of the XVII Party Conference. The basic tasks of the Second Five-Year Plan period as laid down in the theses of the Congress are formulated in complete accord with the decisions of the XVII Party Conference.

It is for the Congress to consider the changes indicated and to utter its final word regarding all the decisive tasks of the Second Five-Year Plan. (p.353;italics added)

Although Molotov admitted that there were "modifications" in the directives for the Second Five-Year Plan, he implied that the final decision on the issues was still subject to revision, since it was ultimately "for the Congress to consider." The fact that the industrialization issue was unresolved at this late date, coupled with Molotov's tacit admission of this fact, was a remarkable development for a supposedly monolithic group. The ongoing debate over the industrialization question became more apparent in the second section of Molotov's report.

The lengthiest section in Molotov's report, "The Completion of the Technical Reconstruction and the Advance of the National Economy," touched on all aspects of the economy in four sub-sections: industry, agriculture, transport, and reconstruction. Molotov emphasized the continued dominant

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role to be played by industry, which by 1937 would account for 70% of the total output of the national economy (p.354).

More specifically, he called for a 19% average annual increase in the rate of industrial output. This figure was based on the projected production figures for Group A and Group B industries, with Group A representing instruments and means of production and Group B representing articles of consumption. According to Molotov, Group A would show a 20% rate of annual growth, while Group B would increase by 22% annually (p.355). The full import of Molotov's call for a 19% average annual growth rate in industry is best understood when compared to the figures adopted for 1933, the first year of the Second Five-Year Plan. That figure was 16.5%.¹ In short, Molotov supported a speeding up of industrial growth at rates just below those of the First Five-Year Plan, which averaged 21-22%. It should be noted that a one per-cent increase in the period of the Second Five-Year Plan represented a much greater absolute amount than a one per-cent increase in the First Five-Year Plan. Molotov himself stated that the difference, in rubles, represented a huge amount: 386 billion rubles in the First Five-Year Plan, as opposed to 720 billion rubles in the Second Five-Year Plan (p.354). Molotov's 19% figure represented a repudiation of the growth rates adopted at the joint plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission in January, 1933.

As noted above, this body had called for a 16.5% annual

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growth rate for the year 1933; however, the overall annual growth rate for the Second Five-Year Plan period, as stated at that time by Molotov himself, was to be 13-14%.² The glaring differences between the figures adopted in 1933, and those proposed by Molotov at the congress reflected the changing economic and political situation.

In 1933, Molotov appeared to be on the defensive, as was Stalin. His report at the joint plenum manifested a certain desperation in his efforts to fend off ever-growing criticism:

And further, the resolution states that in connection with the great difficulties involved in mastering the new enterprises and new technology, a somewhat slower tempo of growth of industrial production is inevitable, at any rate for the first two or three years of the Second Five-Year Plan. On these grounds, it is proposed that the plenum approve the proposal to fix the annual increase of industrial production in the Second Five-Year Plan at 13-14 per cent as against the 21-22 per cent of the First Five-Year Plan...

While the pace at which the industrial output is going to increase annually is set at 13-14% for the Second Five-Year Plan as a whole, we propose a 16.5% increase in industrial production for the present year, the first year of the Second Five-Year Plan.³

This statement appeared to represent a compromise, with Molotov promising a much slower rate of annual growth in exchange for an above average rate for the year 1933. Molotov expressed his displeasure with this arrangement in not too subtle terms:

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Such a scale of work for industry cannot be described as otherwise than gigantic, as a new serious advance of socialist industry. However, other voices are to be heard from the ranks of the petty-bourgeois elements.

G. Zinoviev's declaration to the Central Control Commission in regard to the Riutin-Slepko anti-Soviet group is characteristic in this connection. He said:

"On the whole, my impression is as follows: As far as I can judge quite a considerable number of party members have lately been in the grip of a dangerous and vague idea of retreat, it is necessary to retreat somewhere...

Zinoviev, as is known, is very fond of putting his ear "to the ground." He is distinguished by a peculiar "sensitivity" to the moods of the petty-bourgeois elements.

But the reference to the existence of such moods among the petty-bourgeois elements is deserving of attention. Such typically right opportunist moods certainly do exist, and in certain Party circles too.

It is characteristic that one of the people to express these moods has been the emigrant Trotsky.

Not long ago, L. Trotsky butted in with his estimation of our economic results and the tasks of the present year... His chief slogan is that the Bolshevik policy of the offensive has gone too far, and that therefore, it is necessary...to retreat...He upholds the slogan of retreat and proposes to put off for one year the launching of the Second Five-Year Plan....This year, you see, should be "a year of capital repairs." Now the only thing left on his mind is retreat, retreat, and retreat. It is from such sources that Zinoviev drew his food...The Trotskyites, the Slepko's, the Riutins and their like now sing to the same tune...⁴

In this fashion, Molotov enunciated his views on

"retreating." By linking the idea of retreat with such outcasts as Trotsky and Riutin, Molotov was implicitly stating the political liabilities of holding too moderate a position on the issue of industrial growth rates.

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In light of this background, Molotov's proposed rate of 19% average annual growth in industry acquires real significance in the debate that developed at the XVII Party Congress. Without question, Molotov's position symbolized a return to the breakneck pace of the First Five-Year Plan. It also reflected a new confidence and strength based on the key successes of the economy in 1933, particularly in agriculture. These key successes enhanced Stalin's position, and, as stated earlier, he apparently felt strong enough to revive his call for vigilance and for seeking out the "enemies" in the party. Following Stalin's lead, Molotov too pushed to revive his views that had been compromised during the tough years, 1932-33.

Having laid out the basic guidelines for the Second Five-Year Plan, Molotov proceeded to describe specific tasks and goals for all of the important sectors in the national economy. With a detailed accounting of production figures for group A industries, Molotov demonstrated the need for a faster than average development of the machine-building sectors (pp.356-357). One of the key themes put forth throughout the report was the significant role to be played by Soviet-made machines, which was to characterize the Second Five-Year Plan. This radical difference between the Five-Year Plans pointed up the need to develop new machines, new industries, and new types of production (p.357). Naturally, this buttressed Molotov's earlier call for "vast new

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Turning to agriculture, Molotov immediately acknowledged that expansion in agriculture had not kept up with the industrial sector. However, there were great achievements, namely, the "revolution" in technical re-equipment and in the social organization of agriculture (p. 359). The increases in agricultural output and sown lands were supported by statistical data, as was the sharp decline in livestock (pp. 359-360). As for the Second Five-Year Plan, Molotov emphasized the central role of technical re-equipment of the farms in the creation of mechanized agriculture which would thereby create the conditions for "industrial labor" (as opposed to agricultural) in the countryside (p. 361).

On the subject of labor, Molotov began with a review of the railways. Repeating Stalin's admonition that bureaucratic methods must be fought, Molotov added that the technical reconstruction of transport, primarily of the railways "must form one of our main economic tasks" (p. 362). Toward this end, Molotov listed several projects which would remedy the situation, such as the construction of new engines, tracks, and railroad cars. In addition, advances in water transport and automotive transport would increase their role in the nationwide transport system (pp. 363-364).

The next section of Molotov's report, "The Completion of the Technical Reconstruction and the Problem of

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Mastery," revealed his economic priorities in the Second Five-Year Plan. Based on Stalin's dictum that "During the period of reconstruction, technology decides everything," Molotov stated the necessity of supplementing the slogan of new construction with the slogan of "mastering new technique and new industry" (p.364). The degree of success in "mastering the new technology and improving the organization of production" would be measured by "practical results...reflected primarily in a considerable increase in the productivity of labor, and in a considerable reduction in the cost of the productivity of labor, and in a considerable reduction in the cost of production" (p.365; italics in the original). In rhetorical fashion, Molotov queried, "On what do we base the increase in productivity of labor in industry and other branches of the national economy?", and replied:

The increase in the productivity of labor is based, in the first place, on the vast increase of new and perfected machinery and equipment in every branch of the national economy.

...[It] is based, in the second place, on the existence of vast reserves of unused labor time in our industries. ... It is high time to learn how to make genuine and proper use of the seven-hour working day...

...[It] is based, in the third place, on an increase in the activity of the working class masses throughout the whole of our socialist construction. Such activity is excellently expressed in socialist competition and shock work.

...[It] is based, finally, on the fact that our cadres of directors, engineers, technicians, and skilled workers have already accumulated considerable production experience, and are continuing to grow rapidly in the Second Five-Year Plan (p.364; italics added).

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This ordering of priorities clearly favored new construction on a vast scale. Despite the fact that Molotov lamented the poor quality of work, and the widespread practice of "bureaucratic methods," etc., he failed to offer any solutions to these problems. What is even more remarkable is his concern for getting more labor time out of the working class which had endured the First Five-Year Plan. The allusions to "genuine" seven-hour days and "shock work" indicate that a continued rapid pace would be pursued in the Second Five-Year Plan as well. Although Molotov had acknowledged the need to supplement the slogan of "new construction" with the slogan, "mastery of technique", it is difficult to find "mastery" in his list of priorities. If anything, his contention that the cadres of engineers, technicians, etc. had already accumulated considerable experience in production explicitly challenges the notion of a need for "mastery."

These subtle indicators of Molotov's position, i.e., the need to continue a rapid pace of industrial growth, appear throughout his report, and support his initial expectation of a 19% average annual growth rate in industrial output. For example, in the next section of the report, "Construction Program and the New Distribution of Productive Forces," Molotov began by saying that "the completion of the technical reconstruction...cannot be

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accomplished without vastly developing new construction work. New construction work...will be rapidly developed in every branch of the national economy" (p.366;italics added). In cost figures, capital construction in the Second Five-Year Plan was projected to be 133.4 billion rubles, as compared with 50.5 billion in the First Five-Year Plan (p.366). Molotov's high hopes went so far as to include the maintenance of "considerable reserves of productive capacity in the iron and steel industries, coal mining, electrical power production...for a still further vigorous development of the national economy of the country in the Third Five-Year Plan program" (p.367).

In a brief section on "A Higher Standard of Living and Culture for the Workers," workers' gains and benefits were discussed. Among these were the certainty of employment, improved conditions of poor and middle peasants, the seven-hour work day, projected wage increases, and cultural gains, such as the imminent end of illiteracy. Furthermore, more articles of general consumption could be expected in the Second Five-Year Plan.

Molotov's concluding section,"The Struggle for the Five-year Plan and the Leadership of the Party" resembled many parts of Stalin's report for the Central Committee. The General Secretary's diatribes against the Trotskyists, Left Opposition, Right Opposition and the "blocs" of these groups were repeated, as were the calls for vigilance:

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But such is the strength of the past, the strength of habit, the strength of the survivals of capitalism in the consciousness of people...and even among certain sections of the party, that our fighting slogan of the complete abolition of capitalist elements...is frequently understood to mean cessation of the class war... It cannot be denied that there are many who prefer to float with the tide, to allow things to take their course, and to allow themselves to submerge in the petty-bourgeois swamp of conventionality. That is why the party, and particularly comrade Stalin, takes every opportunity to destroy the "popularity" of this mentality and the "glory" of these heroes of laissez-faire...That is why one of the most urgent tasks of the party is to increase the revolutionary vigilance of the working class, to mobilize the masses more thoroughly in order to cope with the difficulties of the construction of socialism and...to strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat against the enemies and remnants of enemy classes. That is why we need "a strong and powerful dictatorship of the proletariat" (Stalin) (p.367; italics added).

This defense of a strong and powerful dictatorship of the proletariat led correspondingly to a defense of the leadership role of the party, and here again, like Stalin before him, Molotov stressed the need for self-criticism:

...After the successes of the first five-year plan, the party, far from putting a stop to proletarian self-criticism, will make use of the weapon of self-criticism in order to continue the fight for socialism. The Seventeenth Congress has shown that the party is holding high the banner of self-criticism...When we hear the speeches of those who yesterday were deviationists, we must say: what is needed now is not self-flagellation, and not speeches regarding past errors, but a desire to join the struggle to find one's self in the ranks of the

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heroic builders of socialism (p.379; italics added).

Thus, Molotov supported Stalin's call for increased vigilance, and exhibited his disdain for the apologies of the former oppositionists. The thinly-veiled threats against those enemies "even in the ranks of the party" gave evidence of Molotov's view of a less-than-monolithic party, despite all the hurrahs and cheers.

Overall, Molotov's report closely followed the line established by Stalin at the first session. This is most apparent in the emphasis on Bolshevik tempo, and the call for party vigilance and self-criticism. The strong arguments for continued rapid industrial growth reflected the new confidence of those who supported such rapid growth. Molotov's tone and position at this congress were a far cry indeed from the more conciliatory and compromising attitude he had displayed at the 1933 joint plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission, a time when the party was under great stress due to the 1932-33 famine and its corresponding social unrest. Now, in 1934, it appeared that the worst was over--yet Molotov did not in any way imply that this was now a more relaxed period, or a time to take a breathing spell, as did some speakers at this congress, notably Kirov. Rather, Molotov urged everyone to push on, to continue the pace that had been established. As the official protocols to the Seventeenth Party Congress indicate,

Molotov's enthusiasm for continued breakneck advances were ultimately tempered by more moderate elements, as a slower rate of industrial growth was finally agreed upon. This development will be discussed below in connection with Molotov's closing statement, which was presented after the debate on the Second Five-Year Plan had been completed.

Molotov's long address was immediately followed by a companion speech presented by the head of the State Planning Commission (GOSPLAN), V.V. Kuibyshev. It contained four sections entitled "Key Economic Tasks of the Second Five-Year Plan," "Raising the Standard of Living of the Broad Masses," "Mastering Technique--the Decisive Condition for Fulfilling the Second Five-Year Plan," and "Development of the Districts During the Second Five-Year Plan Period."

In a somewhat unusual opening note, Kuibyshev stated that the proletariat of the Soviet Union, under Stalin's leadership, was proceeding along the path left as a legacy of Lenin--the most brilliant leader ever brought forth by mankind. Given the host of accolades and similar superlatives heaped upon Stalin throughout the congress, a comment that put Stalin in Lenin's shadow seemed quite incongruous (p. 380).

Kuibyshev cited three key tasks in the opening section of the speech: the complete overcoming of the lagging behind of the transport industry, the "pulling up in the shortest period of time" of several branches of heavy industry still

lagging behind, and the strengthening and consolidation of the base for the radical improvement in the material well-being of the workers and development of commodity circulation between town and country.

At this point, he introduced his major theme, that "mastering the new technique, the new enterprises, is the principal link in the fulfillment of the Second Five-Year Plan and this is the point towards which all the forces of our economic, party, trade union and Komsomol organizations must be directed" (p. 383; italics added). This theme was repeatedly emphasized throughout the speech, in such words and phrases as "quality" and "mastery of technique." Thus, in his analysis of the transport industry, Kuibyshev asserted that its main shortcoming was the "unsatisfactory character of the work of the railwaymen themselves, in the lack of real day-to-day struggle for the best possible utilization of the equipment and the material means of transport" (p. 383). Elsewhere in this section, one finds similar allusions: "The quality of repairs is of tremendous importance," "Transport makes bad use of the existing stock," and "It is only necessary to cope first with the mastery" (pp.383-384).

In the realm of agriculture, Kuibyshev advanced similar points: "It is necessary to considerably increase the utilization of the tractors, as well as all other machine units existing in agriculture" (p. 391). Elaborating on problems in the cotton industry, for example, Kuibyshev

attributed poor performance to "bad utilization of the raw material, excessive expenditure of the same, and excess waste allowed" (p.393). In a short separate section entitled "Mastering Technique--the Decisive Condition for Fulfilling the Second Five-Year Plan", Kuibyshev shrewdly traced this to Stalin--citing the General Secretary's comments to the January 1933 Central Committee Plenum. As noted earlier, Stalin had promulgated this policy tack as part of a tactical retreat prompted by strong criticism in late 1932. Thus Kuibyshev was quoting the General Secretary out of context, as Stalin's speech to the congress demonstrated that line clearly had changed. Kuibyshev's stance was best summed up in his discussion of mastery of technique:

Comrades, it is necessary to understand that to fight nowadays for good woven fabrics, good shoes, good suits, good butter is no less honorable than to participate in the construction of the Dnieprostroys of heavy industry. And it is likewise manifest that after coping with the task of building Dnieprostroys, the Bolsheviks can and must cope with the problems of quality of production (p.399).

Following a lengthy and detailed accounting of specific tasks and goals by region and republic, Kuibyshev concluded his speech with a short section entitled "Under the Banner of Lenin and Stalin." While noting that the Second Five-Year Plan was the "great program of the triumph of Leninist ideas", he then stated that its realization "like everything else in our great struggle owes its existence to comrade

Stalin" (p. 413; italics added). He went on to attribute to Stalin all the decisive lines and directives of the program. For example:

The construction program of the metallurgical works is a program mapped out by Comrade Stalin. Comrade Stalin carefully and attentively examined factory after factory and pointed out the units of construction which must be built in the first order during the Second Five-Year Plan period (p. 413).

Such first-hand attention to minute details is also catalogued for many industries and items, such as aluminum, synthetic rubber, and railway trunk lines. Indeed, Kuibyshev stated "it is impossible" to enumerate all the sectors in which Stalin laid down concrete guidelines. Interestingly, in these closing comments, Kuibyshev did not attribute the "mastery of technique" line to Stalin.

In viewing the Molotov and Kuibyshev speeches as part of a "package presentation" to the congress on the Second Five-Year Plan, one is struck by the significant contrast in tone and emphasis. Whereas Molotov claimed that technical reconstruction could not be achieved without vastly developing new construction work, Kuibyshev focused on mastery of technique, consolidation of earlier gains, and improvements in the quality of work. Moreover, Molotov's calls for "Bolshevik tempo" and "shock work" are nowhere to be found in Kuibyshev's comments.

On the issue of the "survivals of capitalism in the consciousness of people," Molotov made frequent references to it, asserting that this problem was "still considerable and extremely tenacious" while Kuibyshev made passing mention of the issue, offering no judgment as to the scope or degree of the problem.

Overall, Molotov seemed preoccupied with this issue, and took his cues from Stalin concerning broader political issues to be considered in the implementation of the economic program, such as the need for vigilance. Indeed, Molotov went so far as to link a "retreat" on the economic front with the ideas of Trotsky, noting that Zinoviev drew his food from those thinking only of "retreat, retreat, retreat." Such concerns were not raised by Kuibyshev.

A number of indicators at the congress suggest that Molotov and those supporting speedy growth rates sought to disarm their critics by a series of tactical organizational moves. For example, by presenting the new figures for approval at the party congress, they put the onus of revision--and the politically tricky act of publicly airing differences--upon the moderates.

Other circumstantial evidence supports this view. The sequence of speakers, for example, was arranged so that Ordzhonikidze spoke BEFORE Molotov's presentation on the draft Five-Year program. (See TABLE 2) Given Ordzhonikidze's post as Commissar for Heavy Industry, it seems odd that he

would be a respondent to Stalin's report of the Central Committee rather than the report on the Five-Year Plan.

TABLE 2: SEQUENCE OF DISCUSSION OF SECOND FIVE YEAR PLAN

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>SESSION/TIME</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>
Ordzhonikidze	7 Evening	29 JAN	Response to Stalin
Molotov	15 Morning	3 FEB	Tasks of Second FYP
Kuibyshev	16 Evening	3 FEB	Second FYP
Ordzhonikidze	18 Evening	4 FEB	Proposed FYP changes
Molotov	20 Evening	5 FEB	Response to proposal
Kuibyshev	20 Evening	5 FEB	Proposes creation of commission on FYP
Molotov	26 Morning	10 FEB	Commission's report

As a consequence of this speaking order, Ordzhonikidze was forced to intervene to make a second presentation--the first presenter to do so. His second presentation was short and to the point, reflecting its ad hoc nature. It is nonetheless extremely revealing. Ordzhonikidze mentions in passing that "members of the Politburo" agreed with his suggested changes" (p. 435). This strongly implied that sometime between Molotov's address (Morning, Feb. 3) and his rebuttal

(Evening, Feb. 4), either Ordzhonididze had met with some of his like-minded colleagues on the Politburo, or a full meeting of the Politburo had been convened.

The details of Ordzhonikidze's short statement also shed some light, albeit indirectly, on Stalin's position on these questions. In his argument for reduced growth rates and production targets, Ordzhonikidze singled out three specific areas: iron and steel metallurgy, machine construction, and railway transport. All three had been fingered by Stalin as sectors in need of major increases.

Molotov's response to the proposed changes reflected a grudging and unyielding attitude toward the proposed revisions.

While Molotov did concede that Ordzhonikidze's changes were based on consideration of "the internal and external situation," and, as such, demonstrated "Bolshevik caution," he nonetheless emphasized repeatedly that "not a single delegate said that the program and the tempos indicated in it were impossible to be fulfilled" (p. 522). Defending his case for faster and higher rates, he added:

we must not only insure the fulfillment, but also the overfulfillment of the tasks of the Second Five-Year Plan. This must also be applied to the current year--the second year of the Second Five-Year Plan. In accepting the proposal of a 16.5 annual increase of industrial production for the Second Five Year Plan, we must retain entirely, without reducing it by one per cent or even a tenth of one per cent, the task adopted by the party and government for 1934...and this task, as is known, is fixed at 19 per cent (p. 522; italics added).

So, despite a projected reduction in the growth rates, Molotov showed little inclination to apply the new rates to the current year of the program.

At the conclusion of Molotov's rejoinder, Kuibyshev proposed the creation of a commission to further study the question--an obvious indication that the debate was far from over. The commission members included (as listed in the stenographic record):

Molotov, Stalin, Kaganovich, Kuibyshev, Voroshilov, Ordzhonikidze, Kalinin, Kirov, Kosior, Mikoyan, Yakovlev, Lyubimov, Andreyev, Pyatakov, Mezhlauk, Chubar', Goloded, Isayev, Musabekov, Kabakov, Gryadinsky, Sulimov, Rakhimbayev, Ryabinin, Pakhomov, Gaister, Rudzutak, Shvernik, and Yurkin (p. 524).

Thus, with just five days remaining in the congress, the fundamental domestic policy question had yet to be resolved.

NOTES

1. From the First to the Second Five-Year Plan, p.480. For a more thorough discussion of the rate changes, see Alexander Baykov, The Development of the Soviet Economic System. (New York: Macmillan, 1948), pp.182-84.
2. From the First to the Second Five Year Plan, p.128.
3. Ibid., pp.127-28.
4. Ibid., pp.128-29, emphasis supplied.

Chapter 6 Climax: Conflict ...and Stalemate

The public debate over the Second Five-Year Plan may well have surprised the congress delegates. After all, how often did rank-and-file party members have the opportunity to watch the party "heavyweights"--Molotov, Ordzhonikidze, and Kuibyshev--all Politburo members--engage in heated policy debate ? Such public exchanges had largely disappeared since the Fifteenth Party Congress in 1927. The creation of the Second Five-Year Plan commission on the evening of February 5 clearly reflected the leadership's desire to continue the debate behind closed doors. Presumably the commission would reach some sort of decision, as all the key party leaders were commission members--Stalin, Kaganovich, Ordzhonikidze, Molotov, Kuibyshev, and Kirov. This debate added to the usual sense of anticipation which developed during the closing days of a congress, at which time election of members to key party organs was usually held.

Coming on the heels of this open rift over economic policy, Lazar Kaganovich's report of February 6, entitled "Organizational Problems of the Party and Soviet Construction" seemed quite ironic. His lengthy speech incorporated several themes previously enunciated by Stalin at the opening session, particularly in the area of party shortcomings and the need for increased vigilance. In addition, it offered support for Molotov's position on the

Second Five-Year Plan.

The speech was comprised of three main sections: "The Scope of the Organizational Work of the Party During the First Five-Year Plan Period," "The Reorganization of the Soviet Economic Organs of Management," and "The Reorganization of Mass Work and of the Party Organs."

In the opening section, Kaganovich described the enormous organizational role played by the party during the First Five-Year Plan, offering a wealth of statistics to document Bolshevik successes. For example, data were provided on the number of farms established (191,000 collective farms, 7000 Soviet farms) and the increase in universities (from 129 to 600) and technical schools (from 1033 to 3522) (p.528).

Following Stalin's lead, Kaganovich noted that such statistics should not "intoxicate" party members with their victories, but rather, be examined "in order to overhaul and sharpen our weapons for the great battles that lie ahead" (p.532).

With this in mind, the remainder of the speech provided numerous examples of bureaucratic mismanagement, poor organizational work and party mistakes. The People's Commissariat for Agriculture was one of many singled out for critical attention in this regard:

It is sufficient to say that the People's Commissariat for Agriculture has 29 boards and 202 sectors. (A Voice: Oh, Oh, Oh) That's nothing. Each sector manages the whole of the USSR. (Laughter) Consequently, in order to settle any question it is necessary to go through scores of sectors. For example, to discover...the state of sowing

in a given region, one has to enquire in at least 20-30 sectors, one has to pull 202 fine threads. Cannot you imagine, Comrade Yakovlev (Commissar for Agriculture), that had you taken all these threads and twisted them into several strands of good strong rope, you would not have the bedlam that exists in your commissariat right now? That is why you have had management and bad leadership (pp.540-541).

The party apparatus also came in for some criticism, particularly in regard to membership issues:

Needless to say, the Five-Year Plan raised us all to a higher level...and we ourselves were carried away with the fervor of construction. The workers joined the Party. We accepted them in thousands, but we did not exercise the necessary strictness in accepting them. The purging of the Party has produced great results, but it would have been far better had we been more strict in accepting members. Then we would have had to expel fewer. And it must be stated frankly that in the Party apparatus it was not only the secretaries, but even the managers of departments who failed personally to regulate the acceptance of members into the Party. (p.552)

To remedy these problems, Kaganovich revealed new amendments which called for a "more serious approach" to the membership issue, as well as the establishment of "sympathizers groups"---a training ground for those advanced strata just "one step below" the Party (pp.552-553).

The major organizational innovation announced by Kaganovich was the creation of a Party Control Commission and Soviet Control Commission to replace the Central Control Commission and the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate and the Commission for Fulfillment of Decisions. Of course,

Stalin had already proposed this reorganization in his opening speech. As described by Kaganovich, this move greatly enhanced control by the central party organs:

The members of the committees who are sent as representatives to the localities will, firstly, supervise the fulfillment of the decisions of the Party and of the Central Committee. Secondly, they will take proceedings against all those guilty of violating Party discipline and Party ethics. The members of the committees will be responsible only to the center. (p.562;italics added)

As stated, this change clearly reflected the leadership's desire to strengthen and expand its monitoring and regulatory capabilities, with the attendant benefit of intimidating local party organizations.

Kaganovich ended his address on the theme of vigilance, again focusing on a key theme previously enunciated by Stalin:

...Does the fact that we have a firm basis, a firm foundation on which to build socialist society, the fact that all conditions of victory are available, mean that the tasks of the Second Five-Year Plan will be fulfilled automatically, that we can even for a moment relax our attention towards the task of overcoming difficulties, towards the problems of the class struggle, towards the reinforcing of the proletarian dictatorship? No, not in the least. On the contrary, in his speech Comrade Stalin clearly proved that in order to completely abolish the survivals of capitalism both in the economy and in the minds of men, it is necessary more than ever to be vigilant, alert, persistent in maintaining the state of class mobilization that the Party was in at the opening of the XVII congress. (p.566;italics added)

Implicitly asserting that the former oppositionists who had addressed the congress were symptomatic of this problem, Kaganovich warned the delegates that those who "come on their knees, admitting their mistakes and asking that the Party forgive them" must not "quiet us and lull our vigilance," as "relapses are possible" (p.566). Such somber, serious notes were perfectly in tune with Stalin's call for ever-increasing vigilance.

Foiled Coup In France Reopens the Debate on Fascism

While the debate on the Second Five-Year Plan was continuing behind closed doors, the congress was rocked by news of an attempted fascist coup in France. As Kaganovich was speaking to the congress on February 6, French authorities announced that a group of fascist conspirators--with ties to Germany--had sought to exploit street riots over the Stavisky affair as a pretext for seizing power. Prior French revelations of government links to Serge Stavisky, a shady financial operator who had perpetrated a major stock fraud, and a subsequent government cover-up had spawned widespread protests--including communist party demonstrations against the government. ¹ Belatedly recognizing that their actions could have abetted a fascist bid for power, the French Communists then began a campaign against the fascists. (After some intense internal debate in the ensuing months,

the French communists began limited cooperation with their socialist party rivals. By 1936, this united front expanded to include "progressive bourgeois elements" as the fascist threat became more apparent.)²

According to Boris Nicolaevsky, the events in Paris were the subject of intense discussions at the Seventeenth Party Congress, and even prompted some interruption of the congress schedule. This is quite plausible, as the stenographic record shows there were no sessions between the morning sessions of 8 February and 10 February; among other matters, the elections to various party bodies were held during that period).³

The alleged fascist conspiracy in France could hardly have occurred at a worse time for Stalin and his Comintern backers. Indeed, just four days earlier the head of the Comintern, D.Z. Manuilskiy, had addressed the assembled congress delegates unequivocally endorsing the Stalin line. In a section entitled "Could the Fascist Dictatorship in Germany Have Been Prevented?," he argued that the rise of fascism in Germany could be attributed to the failure of the German Social-Democrats to join the communists because the Social Democrats "shared common ground" with them (the fascists), namely, the preservation of capitalism (p.313-314). Manuilsky then reiterated the authoritative Comintern view on tactics:

The way to unity of the working class does not lie through the creation of new, intermediary internationals, but through the political liquidation of social democracy as the party which betrays the working class (p.322;italics added).

This Comintern tack flowed from Stalin's interpretation of the fascist phenomenon. As stated in Stalin's opening address to the congress, fascism was a symptom of the breakdown of capitalism, and as such, represented a step forward on the path to communist revolution (p.11).

This in turn served as the rationale for Stalin's open-minded tack in dealing with fascist Germany. Stalin made it clear that good relations could be established--if such ties were in the interests of the USSR. Indeed, Stalin was actively promoting such ties. For example, Karl Radek later claimed that his discussion of Nazi Germany in Pravda and Izvestiya articles during the spring of 1934 was commissioned by Stalin to draw Berlin closer to Moscow. ⁴

The events in France seemed to call into question Stalin's interpretation of fascism and its corresponding policy implications. Other developments further highlighted the inherent difficulties of Stalin's line on fascism. For example, the Nazis in Germany were continuing their assault on communists, even as the congress was in progress. Indeed, Pravda was still reporting on the aftermath of the Reichstag fire trial as the congress was in session. Georgiy Dmitrov, a Bulgarian communist, had been acquitted in the trial, only to remain in Nazi prisons. Stalin failed to mention this

highly-publicized trial in his discussion of Nazi Germany, just as he failed to mention Hitler or the anti-Bolshevist tenets of Nazism.

Stalin's rather conciliatory tack toward Nazi Germany is all the more noteworthy when viewed against the statements of his Foreign Minister. Just weeks before the congress, Maxim Litvinov addressed the Central Executive Committee and described "the poisoning of our relations by the systematic persecution, by every kind of German authority, of Soviet institutions and citizens." He also had no illusions about the efficacy of doing business with Adolf Hitler:

A new politician came into power...preaching rapprochement with the West with the object of making a combined attack on the Soviet Union. He founded a political club to carry on this idea and he...devoted a book to developing in detail his conception of German foreign policy. According to this, Germany was, by fire and sword to cut a road for expansion to the East, which was not to stop at the Soviet frontier, and to enslave the Soviet peoples...I thought it necessary to speak frankly, because attempts to attribute the change in relations to us are not infrequently made by the German side..." 5

The tone and thrust of Litvinov's comments revealed a critical wariness, in which the Germans represented a threat "at the gates of Moscow."

At that same meeting, Stalin's position was defended by Molotov: "The Soviet Union still adheres to the principles which had contributed to the recently friendly relations between the USSR and Germany." 6

Kirov may also have been a key player in this debate over policy toward Germany. Since Kirov had no formal responsibility for foreign policy, it is not surprising that his speech does not address the problem of relations with Germany. Still, Kirov managed to give some indication of his basic orientation on this question. During the congress, he addressed a large workers' delegation and parade in Red Square--he had been selected to speak for the Politburo--and in the company of the entire Politburo, he offered the following observation:

On the squares of their cities the fascists burn the works of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin, forgetting that in the millions of hearts of the toiling and oppressed, the teachings of our great founders are indelibly impressed. Comrades, we must do all in our power to give victorious and unshakeable resistance should our enemies on the East or on the West venture to violate the sacred boundaries of our sacred Soviet Union. ⁷

The striking similarity between these comments and those of Bukharin--who had presented his speech the day before--could not be missed; likewise, the reference to the fascist bookburners could only be an allusion to the Nazis.

Litvinov's statements as Foreign Minister, Bukharin's blatant distrust of Hitler, and Kirov's indirect allusion to the Nazi "bookburners" all attest to the unease within high-level circles of the party over the implications of fascism for Soviet security and the proper tactics to counter the Nazi menace. And, although the congress formally adopted

Stalin's position on the fascism question--by virtue of Kirov's proposal to adopt Stalin's speech as party law--subsequent developments suggest that the debate on fascism and tactics was still open. Bukharin's appointment as editor of Izvestiia just ten days after the congress clearly indicates his views had struck a resonant chord among those "uneasy" elements, who presumably felt Bukharin could sustain the debate through the pages of Izvestiia--as well he did.

Confirmation of this debate over policy toward Nazi Germany was provided by Molotov in an unusual public acknowledgement in 1936. He noted that there had been contentious debate between supporters of "thoroughgoing irreconcilability" toward fascism and the group which sought "improvement in Soviet-German relations." 8

In any event, Stalin's views prevailed, and became the official party position, as reflected by its inclusion in the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), Short Course, which was published in 1938. 9

Robert Slusser has argued that the Short Course treatment of fascism--more specifically, the discussion of the factors and tactics leading up to the Brest-Litovsk agreement of 1918--strongly suggested that Stalin's preferred policy was to engage the Nazis, and not build serious anti-Nazi alliances.

Verdict on the Second Five-Year Plan

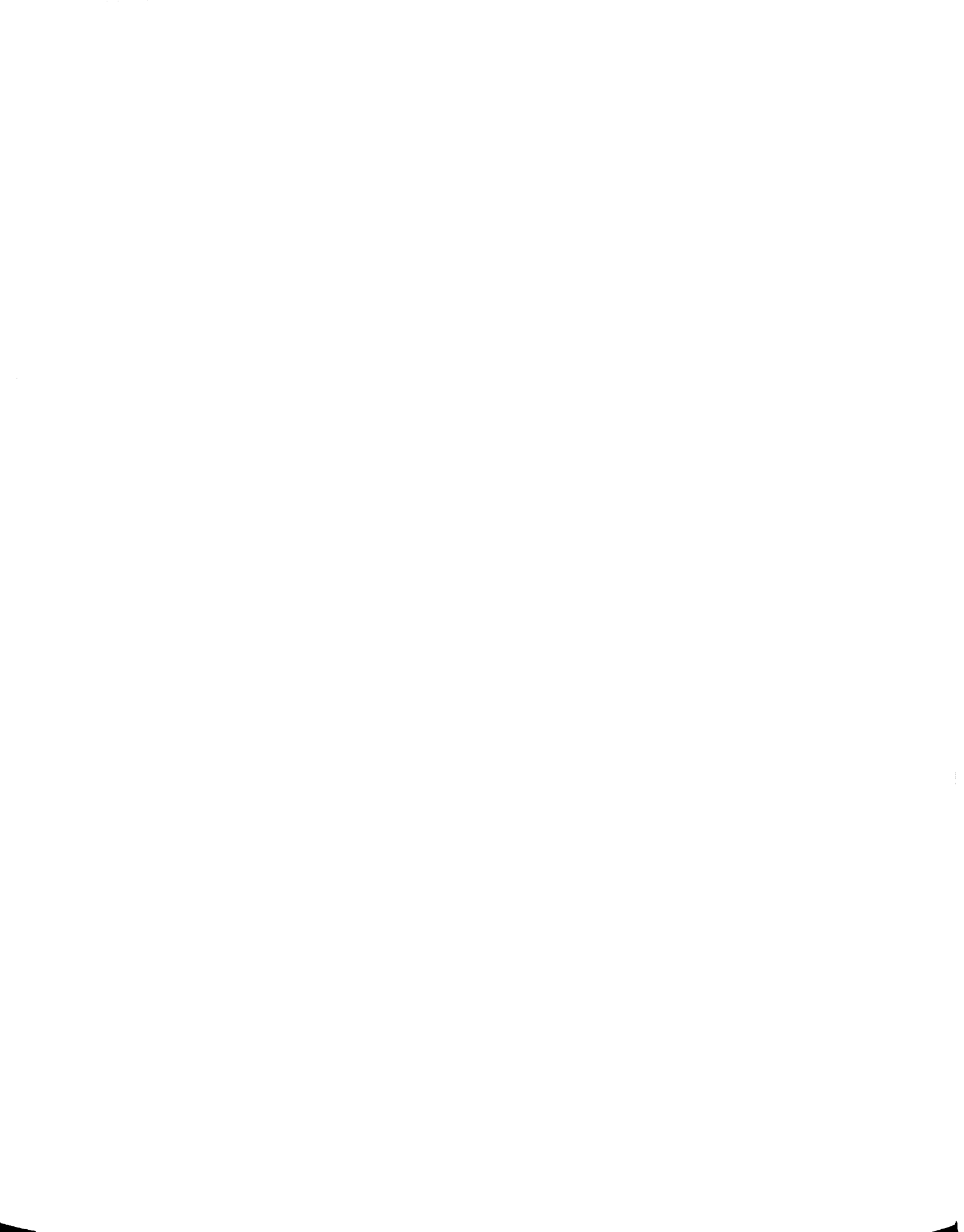
At the last session of the congress on February 10--five days after the commission on the Second Five-Year Plan was created--Molotov presented the commission's decisions. In a rather short and terse announcement, he quickly listed the basic changes in each category. He then announced that the overall growth rate for industry as a whole was to be 16.5 per cent, representing the annual average of industry producing the means of production (14.5 per cent) and industry producing goods for consumption (18.5 per cent) (p. 523).

This, of course, meant that the the advocates of the somewhat slower growth rates had won the day. However, Molotov added that the "extent of capital work in all of the national economy, will not be changed by one per cent or even one tenth of a per cent." (p.523) This less than gracious posture only reinforced the sense that the growth rates question has not been fully resolved.

Given the acrimony over this issue, Stalin's position on this question becomes an important factor in assessing the congress. Opinion is divided over Stalin's view. J. Arch Getty and Jerry Hough argue that Stalin supported the more moderate position represented by Ordzhonikidze and the technocrats, while other standard

histories of the period view the reduced rates as a setback for Stalin. ¹¹ Getty's argument that Stalin supported the reduced rates is based on Stalin's 1933 joint plenum speech. However, as discussed earlier, that particular speech must be seen in the context of early 1933--a time when Stalin felt compelled to offer concessions to buy support and time--and hence not necessarily one which reflected Stalin's real views.

Moreover, accepting Stalin as a supporter of the more moderate growth rates raises more problems than it answers. Indeed, as Getty himself asks, "one might think that after Stalin's intervention in January 1933 the matter of industrial targets had been settled." ¹² The fact they were not settled suggests Stalin wanted the 1933 figures changed. After all, would Molotov propose a major revision upwards -- which, on paper seemed to go against Stalin's line as enunciated in 1933--without the General Secretary's blessing? More likely, Molotov was fronting for Stalin, thereby giving the leader the semblance of "remaining above the fray." By presenting the newly revised figures at the congress, Molotov enjoyed the tactical advantage of putting the onus of revision--and the politically tricky act of publicly airing differences--upon those seeking the slower rates. The order of speakers at the congress supported such a strategem; as detailed in the last chapter, the speaker sequence clearly served Molotov's position.



Party Elections, Party Statutes and Stalin's Power

The elections held at the conclusion of the XVII Party Congress have been the subject of much discussion and controversy, in part because the Politburo and Central Committee elected at this congress were largely decimated in the subsequent period of the Great Purge. ¹³ Indeed, Khrushchev's 1956 secret speech, in which he acknowledged that 70 per cent of the 1934 Central Committee had been subsequently purged--as were over half of the delegates in attendance at the XVII congress--seemed to confirm earlier suspicions that Stalin had been engaged in a broadly-based "war" against the party during the mid-to-late 1930s. ¹⁴ In addition, the disappearance of the title "General Secretary" next to Stalin's name in the listing of party secretaries after this congress has fueled considerable controversy and attention on the congress elections. ¹⁵ Before addressing these issues, it is important to review the basic factual data provided in the documentary record of the party congresses, namely the stenographic record.

The 1934 Congress elected 71 full Central Committee members and 68 candidate members. Among the more important and noteworthy changes were the promotion of G. G. Yagoda, acting head of the OGPU, from candidate to full member

status, as well as the naming of N. I. Yezhov to full member status. Former Right Oppositionists N. I. Bukharin, A.I. Rykov and M. P. Tomsky were all demoted, from full Central Committee status to candidate members.

The Politburo retained its size--10 full members and 5 candidates--and saw but one major change in personnel--the addition of P. P. Postyshev as a candidate member. Yan Rudzutak was re-admitted to the Politburo, as a candidate member (he had been dropped completely, from full membership status in 1932), while A. A. Andreyev moved from candidate to full member status. (See above, pp.133-135, for further comment on the anomalies concerning Rudzutak's status in the Politburo from 1932-34.)

The Secretariat was somewhat reduced in size, making it the smallest one since the XIV Congress in 1924. It went from 5 full members and 2 candidates in 1930 to simply 4 full members: Stalin and Kaganovich, who maintained their previous slots, and two new members, S. M. Kirov and A. A. Zhdanov. Dropped from the Secretariat were full members K. Y. Bauman, P. P. Postyshev and V. V. Molotov, presumably because of their other duties; similarly, I. M. Moskvina and N. M. Shvernik were not renamed as candidate members.

The turnover in the leading bodies left Stalin and Kaganovich as the senior leaders in the party. They were the only ones to retain their previous positions on the Politburo, Secretariat and Orgburo. Only one other party

member joined them as a member of all three bodies: Sergey Kirov.

Others who appeared to be on the rise were N. I. Yezhov and A. A. Zhdanov. Yezhov, who became a full member of the Central Committee and Orgburo had not served on any leading party bodies or as a Central Committee candidate prior to this congress. Zhdanov had been a full member of the Central Committee since 1930, but now joined the Secretariat and Orgburo.

The elections to the newly-created Party Control Commission clearly signaled Stalin's intent to reassert control over party cadre policy. Most obvious in this regard was the unceremonious dumping of Yan Rudzutak, who was replaced by a trusted Stalin lieutenant, Lazar Kaganovich. A more ominous move, though not immediately apparent, was the appointment of N. I. Yezhov as first deputy to Kaganovich; this now appears to have been a move to groom Yezhov for further purge duties. As police chief from 1936 to 1938, he presided over the worst years of the Great Purge, the "Yezhovschina". Kaganovich and Yezhov reportedly opposed the moderates, and worked to raise Stalin's suspicion of the moderate line. ¹⁶ If this was in fact true, their positions in the Party Control Commission would be invaluable as an organizational means by which to intimidate their rivals, not to mention gaining access to, and control over, local party records and internal personnel problems.

Changes in the size and composition of the newly created Party Control Commission reinforce the view that Stalin was seeking to reassert his authority. The new Party Control Commission numbered 61, whereas its predecessor had 187 members. Even more dramatic is the fact that, of the 61 members elected to the Party Control Commission, 42 were new members, that is, they had not been on the previous Central Control Committee.

More intriguing, perhaps, was the discussion of party membership statutes that developed in the closing days of the congress. None of the Party Congresses after 1921 had addressed these questions, despite the succession struggle and ouster of Trotsky from the party. The consideration of new party laws at a time of relative quietude within the party makes this all the more curious. It seems quite likely that, given the acrimony over dealing with Riutin, Stalin felt a need to review and update the existing statutes. The ongoing differences over the status of the former oppositionists was probably another related factor in this legal move.

Like the original 1921 ruling, the new statutes stated that demotion of Central Committee members to candidate member status or expulsion from the party required a two-thirds vote of a plenum of the Central Committee, with invitations to candidate members and members of the control commission. 17 Retention of the existing party statute on

expulsion probably reflected the continuing efforts of Kirov, Rudzutak and others to retain Leninist practices on such sensitive issues. In this context, it is noteworthy that both Rudzutak and Kirov--in contrast to Stalin--made frequent reference to the "Leninist party" and "Leninist principles" in their speeches.

However, a new proviso was added to the statutes. It stated that a Party member could be "liable to immediate expulsion" if he or she refused to answer questions posed by the Party Control Commission (p. 680). The phrase "immediate expulsion" leaves it unclear whether the member in question could thus be ousted without a two-thirds vote of a joint meeting of the Central Committee and the Party Control Commission. If the new proviso did allow Stalin to circumvent this procedure, it represented a setback to those seeking to safeguard the rights of party officials. Similarly, it suggested a clear upgrading of the Party Control Commission's powers and authority. As such, it could be viewed as an ominous sign. not only for defeated oppositionists, but potential "new" oppositionists.

Was Stalin's Leadership Under Attack?

Several anomalies in the official record of the congress have raised questions about Stalin's leadership role in the the mid-1930s. For the first time since a collective leadership was formed after Lenin's death in 1924, Politburo

members were not listed alphabetically; instead, there appeared a rank ordering, with Stalin's name appearing first. Yet in the listing of Secretariat members--also listed in rank order--the phrase "General Secretary" did not appear next to Stalin's name; that title always appeared next to his name in all of the congress protocols since his appointment in 1922.

Apart from these unusual signs, several accounts of the congress elections allege that Stalin received almost 300 negative votes in the balloting for Central Committee membership. ¹⁸ If this is true, it must have reconfirmed to Stalin that his position as "leader" did not bring with it the unanimous support of his Bolshevik brethren, and that malcontents, e.g., those willing to disagree with Stalin, abounded in the uppermost ranks of the party.

While some analysts have discounted the veracity of these reports, it is not unreasonable to believe that such dissatisfaction was manifested. ¹⁹ Inasmuch as the balloting was secret, anonymity was possible. Furthermore, those people casting ballots were the same local leaders and party members who had to implement Stalin's harsh policies in their respective oblasts, etc.; as such, it is not surprising that they would vote to remove Stalin's heavy hand.

In any event, the existence of major policy differences at this congress, and Stalin's inability to prevail over his hand-picked Politburo on central policy

issues, strongly suggest that Stalin probably perceived his leadership as under challenge; thus, even if no one actually sought to remove Stalin, the possibility that he perceived this to be the case is what actually matters.

Inasmuch as the anomalies in the listing of Secretariat and Politburo members cited above are not accidental in a Soviet political context, they have prompted considerable debate among students of this period; as with many events of the 1930s, these anomalies have been interpreted as a major setback as well as a sign of increased authority.

The noted Kremlinologist Boris Nicolaevsky argued that it was impossible to believe that Stalin had voluntarily relinquished his title--and its corresponding perquisites of power--and that loss of the title could only have been part of "a great struggle behind the scenes at the congress, and the defeat of Stalin in this struggle." 20

Myron Rush countered this view, positing that Stalin chose to abolish the post, and rule by "prescriptive right." Through this arrangement, according to Rush, Stalin was assuring himself that:

one could not assault his position by using the Central Committee to deny him election as General Secretary, that is, a literal invocation of Lenin's testament, such as Riutin attempted in 1932...By making his office prescriptive instead of elected, Stalin altered the means by which he could be removed; what was needed was not votes against the General Secretary, but violence against the "vozhd." 21

In his 1973 biography of Stalin, Adam Ulam similarly

maintained that Stalin chose "not to emphasize the existence of the office, so that in the case of his resignation from the Secretariat, no one would draw the wrong conclusions or expect someone else to succeed him as the General Secretary." 22 Ulam dismisses the notion of a plot to remove Stalin at the congress, which he views as one of extreme harmony and "excessive praise" of Stalin; rather, he views Stalin as having been "in a generous mood" at the congress, and that he may have been contemplating laying down his administrative duties. 23

Official Soviet accounts have supplied additional information bearing on this debate. The 1962 edition of the official History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union stated explicitly that "many Congress delegates, particularly those who were familiar with Lenin's testament, held that it was time to transfer Stalin from the office of General Secretary to another post." 24 This point was also noted in a Pravda article which appeared on the thirtieth anniversary of the Seventeenth Party Congress; the article's characterization of Sergey Kirov as the "splendid Leninist and favorite of the whole party" immediately after the passage on the talk of transferring Stalin implicitly suggested that Kirov was regarded as his likely successor. 25

In reviewing the record of the Seventeenth Party Congress, certain elements of these interpretations appear in retrospect to be quite accurate, though not always for the

reasons cited by the authors. A key point not included in these analyses is the reorganization of the Central Control Commission and the naming of staunch "Stalin men"--Kaganovich and Yezhov--to head the important Party Control Commission. This turn to the tried and proven method by which he had bested formidable adversaries in the twenties--the use of the party bureaucracy to shape "cadre" issues through demotion and appointment--strongly suggests that Stalin himself perceived that his power had yet to be thoroughly consolidated.

Although some of the policy differences that emerged at the Seventeenth Congress were in some cases a matter of degree rather than irreconcilable differences, they nevertheless served to underscore that Stalin's power was less than absolute. Indeed, the 1932 Riutin episode, the defeat on the Second Five-Year Plan rates, and the debate over the disposition of former oppositionists at the congress indicate that Stalin was unable to shape a working majority on several important policy issues, despite the fact that most of the Politburo members were men Stalin had personally elevated during the 1920s. Such setbacks must be considered as a major factor in assessing the congress. As T.H Ribgy has stated in a recent study of Stalin's patronage patterns, "one can scarcely believe that he [Stalin] would have been content to rule at the pleasure of his Politburo colleagues and of a Central Committee with quasi-parliamentary powers,

needing constantly to court support rather than compel it and face the constant possibility that the doubts and misgivings among his supporters could blossom into a move to replace him." 26 Clearly, the events of the thirties, from the Riutin episode to the Great Purge manifest an incredible drive for absolute authority.

In this context, a very plausible scenario can be reconstructed to support the view that Stalin decided to abolish the General Secretary post. Recognizing that he could not count on the Politburo on key issues, and wary and suspicious by nature, Stalin could have eliminated the post as a defensive, pre-emptive move to prevent a would-be challenger from legitimately gaining access to the organizational reins of the Party. That Stalin would choose to divest himself of a key organizational "lever" at the very moment that he was seeking to re-assert his influence over the Party Control Commission attests to the defensive nature of the move. If, as Nicolaevsky stated, Stalin had been forcibly removed, it seems hard to believe that the story of his ouster would not have leaked; indeed, Khrushchev could have cited it as an example of the party's unsuccessful effort to combat the cult of personality in the thirties. It seems more likely that Stalin would have voluntarily surrendered the post--in the belief that such a move would ultimately strengthen his position. Moreover, eliminating the position was a relatively cost-free gesture. It did not

diminish his senior status or authority; the listing of the Politburo, Orgburo and Secretariat members, not to mention the cult-like praise heaped upon Stalin at the congress, made it clear who was ranked number one in the Party. As the General Secretary for twelve years, there could be little doubt as to who was the "senior secretary" in the Secretariat. Thus, Myron Rush's point concerning the shift to "prescriptive power" seems quite apt.

The timing of the Stalin's gambit lends some credence to the revelation in the 1962 History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union that many congress delegates felt it was time to transfer Stalin from the post of General Secretary. ²⁷ Stalin may have heard of speculation concerning a possible "transfer" or of potential successors. Such rumors presumably would have prompted such a pre-emptive stroke. This does not mean there necessarily was an actual plot to remove Stalin. The stenographic record and other primary sources offer little evidence to support such a scenario. Moreover, the behavior of Ordzhonikidze and Kirov at the congress reflects their desire to avoid major rifts in the party. Having survived the difficult years of the early thirties, they probably wanted to see their "victory" of building socialism consolidated--albeit at a somewhat slower pace--and a new divisive struggle would have been inimical to that cause. Besides, they seemingly enjoyed a consensus within the ruling Politburo and thus had little

need to start a major confrontation with the sensitive Stalin. Still, as T.H. Rigby has argued:

"even if there were only a few puffs of smoke here with little or no flame behind them, Stalin would have had to be a very trusting and complacent leader to assume his position was beyond challenge at this point. Being anything but trusting and complacent, he perceived the possible dangers and took what for a man of his character were entirely appropriate countermeasures." 28

Ulam's discussion of a hypothetical "plot-by-adulation"--which Ulam ultimately rejects--may be not far from the mark on this score. By praising Stalin, and assuaging his ego, those resisting Stalin's policy positions might have hoped that such reassurances would mollify Stalin as they tampered with and fine-tuned the actual course of policy. After all, they were not radically altering basic policy. Thus, there was no real need to launch a frontal assault on Stalin or remove him. Indeed, even the samizdat accounts agree that Kirov had no desire to seize Stalin's mantle. Thus, if there was talk of transferring Stalin from the post of General Secretary, it was probably just that--talk or idle speculation about who would succeed Stalin once he left the scene--certainly not an unusual discussion topic among professional politicians.

NOTES

1. For details on the Stavisky affair and its impact on the French political scene, see D. W. Brogan, The Development of Modern France 1870-1836 (New York: Harper Books, 1966), pp. 653-668 and Gordon Wright, France in Modern Times: 1870 to the Present (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1960), pp. 473-476.
2. See Armstrong, Politics of Totalitarianism, pp.35-37 for discussion of the response of the French Communists and Comintern to the fascist problem in France. See also Max Beloff, The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia (Vol. I, 1929-1936) (London: Oxford University Press, 1947) pp. 186-189 and Franz Borkeuau, World Communism (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1971), pp.389-390._
3. Nicolaevsky, Power and the Soviet Elite, p. 88.
4. Radek told Krivitsky of this assignment. See Krivitsky, In Stalin's Secret Service, pp.10-11.
5. Jane Degras, ed., Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, Vol.III, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), pp.55-56 (*italics added*).
6. Ibid.
7. Pravda, 1 February 1934, p.1.
8. For the Molotov comments, see Degras, ed., Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, Vol. III, p.184. This comment was first noted by Robert Slusser, and subsequently acknowledged and discussed in Cohen, Bukharin, pp. 359-360, 469.
9. Short Course, p.302.
10. Slusser, "Role of the Foreign Ministry," pp.218-225.
11. Getty, Origins of the Purges, pp. 14-17; Hough and Fainsod, How the Soviet Union is Governed, p. 165. Among those arguing that Stalin opposed the reduced rates are Leonard Schapiro, The CPSU, pp. 401-402 and Jeremy Azrael, Managerial Power and Politics in the Soviet Union, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966) see especially pages 96-98.
12. Getty, Origins of the Great Purges, p.16.

13. Zbigniew Brzezinski, in The Permanent Purge, offered one of the earliest statistical assessments of the disposition of the Central Committee elected in 1934. Most accounts of the period cite Khrushchev's secret speech in connection with the purge of the party.

An excellent unpublished Ph.D. dissertation by Slava Lubomudrov, "The Origins and Consequences of the Purge of the Full Members of the 1934 Central Committee," Indiana University, 1975, provides the most thorough, comparative analysis of the Central Committees elected in 1930, 1934, and 1939. It also examines the various theories put forth to explain the decimation of the 1934 Central Committee; these include Robert Tucker's psychological or "personality" approach, the "opposition/intra-elite conflict" interpretation offered by Robert Conquest, Robert Slusser, and John Armstrong, and Brzezinski's "elite circulation/permanent purge" explanation.

14. See Khrushchev, "The Crimes of the Stalin Era", in The New Leader, pp. S20-S21.

15. This omission was first noted by Boris Nikolaevsky in an article in Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik, in December 1956. The author interpreted the omission to mean that Stalin had been forcibly removed from that post, that he was, in effect, just one of four secretaries, stripped of his special rights, and that this "could only have been the result of a great struggle behind the scenes at the congress, and the defeat of Stalin in this struggle."

16. Nicolaevsky, Power and Elite, p.49.

17. See note 12 above.

18. See Medvedev, Let History Judge, pp.155-157 and Antonov-Ovseenko, Portrait of a Tyrant, pp.113-118. Medvedev reports that there were 270 negative votes. Antonov-Ovseenko, who had access to those involved with the investigation of the XVII Congress elections, reports that 292 ballots were cast against Stalin and that Kaganovich then ordered the electoral commission to destroy 289 of the votes--thus leaving Stalin with the same number of "no" votes as Kirov. According to Antonov-Ovseenko, this would account for the discrepancy between the stenographic record and the official summary of the congress concerning the number of voting delegates; The stenographic record lists 1225, while the summary cites 935--a difference of 289.

19. See Ulam, Stalin, p. 374. Ulam is skeptical about the reports from Medvedev and other earlier chroniclers. In particular, Ulam notes their unfamiliarity with voting

procedures--and that more than half, e.g., over 600 would have had to vote against Stalin to oust him from the Central Committee. (Other accounts claim that the number of people on the ballot was equal to the number of available slots, thus guaranteeing all those listed a seat regardless of the voting.) Regardless of the procedures actually used, the important point here is that the voting reflected a good deal of dissatisfaction with Stalin's leadership; the impact of this incident on Stalin's psyche--and his future policies vis-a-vis the party--is in itself a significant factor which must figure in Stalin's desire to eliminate the vast majority of those present at this congress.

20. Boris Nicolaevsky, "On the History of the Yezhovschina", in Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik, May 1958.
21. Myron Rush, personal correspondence to Boris Nicolaevsky, dated June 4, 1958, pp.3-4. I am indebted to Professor Rush for making this exchange available to me. A preliminary, less complete account of the loss of Stalin's title appeared in an appendix to Myron Rush, The Rise of Khrushchev (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1958) p. 95.
22. Ulam, Stalin, p. 375.
23. Iddid., pp. 373-375.
24. Istoriya Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuz, 1962, p. 486.
25. L. Shaumyan, Pravda, February 7, 1964, p.2.
26. T.H. Rigby, "Was Stalin a Disloyal Patron?," in Soviet Studies, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 3, July 1986, p.315.
27. Istoriia Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuz, 1962, p. 486.
28. Rigby, "Was Stalin a Disloyal Patron?," p. 323.

Chapter Seven: Conclusions

The Seventeenth Party Congress was unlike any congress preceding it. Gone was the acrimony and viciousness that characterized most of these gatherings, both before and after the 1917 revolution. This self-proclaimed "congress of victors" appeared to be just that--a savoring of the victory over the hardships, opposition, and skepticism that accompanied the policies of rapid industrialization and collectivization. The Stalin cult seemed to reach its apogee at this congress, one unprecedented in the annals of party history. Indeed, a random turn to any of the seven hundred plus pages of the stenographic record will produce at least one worshipful reference to Stalin: "Stalin, the great helmsman"; "Stalin, the outstanding genius of the era"; "Stalin, the leader of progressive mankind." Kirov's proposal that the report of the General Secretary be adopted, unchanged, as party statute underscored the God-like adulation heaped upon Stalin at this congress.

This facade of unanimity masked a serious struggle--not a struggle to oust Stalin, but rather to circumscribe his power, to establish a form of *Rechtstaat* under which the party could conduct a rational debate of the issues at hand without fear of political or personal retribution. Indeed, the lack of a combative-style discussion that had enriched earlier congresses attests to the new

political environment that had developed since Stalin's emergence as party leader by 1929. His victory over the Left, United and Right oppositions in the mid-to-late 1920s helped shape this environment, one in which it became increasingly difficult to openly voice dissenting views. The need to maintain a facade of unwavering solidarity during the traumatic period of collectivization in the early thirties reinforced this tendency. Those who did criticize in direct, concrete fashion during this period--even full members of the Central Committee, such as Syrtsov and Lominadze--found themselves labeled as "oppositionists." ¹ Consequently, one had to be more circumspect and indirect when raising points of disagreement or debate. This need to be circumspect and cautious in discussing policy in turn fueled Stalin's suspicions that such discussions could be a form of plotting or oppositional activity.

The main force shaping this new environment was Stalin himself. His extreme personal sensitivities and need for flattery and praise--traits apparent to, and exploited by some of those around him--made it all the more imperative to present arguments or points in a positive way, so as to avoid the appearance of criticizing or challenging Stalin or his policy views. It is in the context of this new political environment that the speeches to the Seventeenth Congress must be read.

While it remains difficult to ascertain exactly how

Stalin viewed the mood of celebration and moderation that generally characterized the proceedings of the Seventeenth Party Congress, it is possible to see how his perceptions and strategy vis-a-vis that mood had changed between 1933 and 1934. This shift in strategy can be detected not only by contrasting the general tone of Stalin's speech with that of other congress speeches, but more importantly by comparing it with his last major party speech--one to the joint plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission in January, 1933.

Among the 1934 Congress speeches, Stalin's stood alone in its somber, joyless and suspicious tone. He had little good to say about anyone; nowhere was there a reference to the good work of the party in overcoming the incredible hardships of the past four years. A certain amount of pride was evident in his discussion of the economic output, but even that was tempered by lists of flaws, defects and criticisms.

Stalin's comments on the party were so replete with suspicion, warnings, and calls for vigilance that one might have thought the party had yet to begin the First Five-Year Plan. Equally disturbing were the allusions to "this" or "that" sector of the party that had strayed or was straying from the party line. The anonymity of such accusations could only produce more anxiety among the party leaders.

In a very real sense, Stalin did not participate in

the celebration of "victory" and relief that surrounded the Seventeenth Congress. When viewed against most of the other speeches, with the possible exception of those of Molotov and Kaganovich, Stalin's address is not in keeping with the spirit of the congress.

Although Stalin's speech was somewhat out of tempo with other presentations at the congress, it was probably--in Stalin's mind--in accord with the political realities of the time. Clearly, there were real problems to confront. The memory of forced collectivization, requisitioning, famine and terror were still fresh. There were new debates over policy and an obvious mood of moderation was sweeping the party--and those who supported such views were not just former oppositionists and Rightists, but Stalin's hand-picked men who had seen him through the power struggles of the 1920s. ² For Stalin, then, this was no time to be lulled into a false sense of security by a good harvest and praiseful hosannas at a party congress.

The contrast between his conciliatory 1933 address and his rather somber congress speech suggests Stalin felt much more in control, that his position had been significantly bolstered by the positive turn of events in 1933-1934. The calls for vigilance and militant preparedness, as well as his reorganization of the Central Control Commission were all signs of this strength. The contrast between Stalin's congress speech and the joint plenum report

offers an interesting paradox that reflects Stalin's sharp sense of political acumen. At a time when the party was fighting for its very survival, when vocal opposition was apparent throughout the party, one might have expected Stalin to call for a further closing of the ranks, for increasing vigilance and a general tightening up of the party's line. Sensing the severity of the crisis at hand, however, Stalin may have considered the wisdom of Lenin's famous stratagem, "one step back, two steps forward." He therefore decided to play the role of conciliator and offer the necessary compromises--but only because it was the sole option that offered a realistic way out of the crisis.

It is in this context that one can better appreciate Stalin's otherwise enigmatic tack at the Seventeenth Party Congress. Yes, victory had been achieved. There could be no doubt as to the party's survival or the establishment of a socialist foundation. Having survived the crisis of 1933, Stalin now felt secure in his position and took the offensive again; he could now pick up the attack on "deviationists" and critics that had been interrupted by the economic-political crisis of 1932-33.

A significant indicator of Stalin's renewed sense of self-confidence was the absence of references to Lenin in his congress speech; Stalin no longer felt the need to invoke the spirit of Lenin to defend himself or to legitimize his position on various issues, as he did in January 1933. Stalin

had gained his breathing space by virtue of his tactical concessions at the joint plenum of January 1933. Thus, while many felt that a breathing space had just begun after the successful summer harvest of 1933, Stalin's "respite" had begun considerably earlier. By the time the Seventeenth Congress convened, it was clear that Stalin was ready to take on new challenges in the party.

If, as his congress speech suggests, this indeed was Stalin's vantage point as the congress proceedings began, he must have been taken aback by developments at the congress. More specifically, differences over four key issues could be perceived as a not too subtle and insidious challenge to his authority:

- the growth rates and targets for the Second Five-Year Plan
- intra-party governance and related cadre matters
- fascism and its implications for Soviet foreign policy
- the nature of Stalin's leadership role

In the case of the Second Five-Year Plan growth rates, these differences were immediately apparent because of revisions and changes offered during the congress. The debate over intra-party governance and the issue of fascism was more subtle and indirect, but clearly identifiable nonetheless. Finally, Stalin's speech, as well as anomalies in the media and the elections, suggests that many--including Stalin

himself--had doubts about Stalin's "staying power" as leader of the party.

While Stalin appeared to be overruled in the debates on the Second Five-Year Plan and fascism, perhaps the most serious setback was on the question of intra-party governance. From the General Secretary's vantage point, details about a Five-Year Plan or foreign policy tactics could be easily remedied; controlling the party cadre and assuring unquestioned support was a more difficult and awkward business.

The disposition of former, now repentant, oppositionists was the primary vehicle for the debate over party cadre policy. Stalin's views on this issue were clearly enunciated in his congress speech. His admission that there were differences over the disposition of Party "aristocrats who had rendered services in the past" clearly signaled the ongoing debate on this question. Stalin's preferred policy on this question was to remove from from their leading posts, degrade them from their positions, and announce this in the press.

Yet, it may be that Stalin had been forced to reach a compromise on this issue before the congress. Why, for example, were such prominent former oppositionists permitted to address the congress at all? Clearly, they seemed out of place at a meeting billed as the "congress of victors." Their appearance may have signaled that Kirov's views had

previously won the day, and that former oppositionists would be permitted a role in the mainstream of Party life. The repentant tone and lavish praise of Stalin in most of the former oppositionists' speeches may have been the quid pro quo for their participation in the congress. Indeed, Stalin may even have solicited such statements to highlight the thoroughness of his victory, and as vindication of his tough line during the difficult years of the early thirties. Still, it seems a bit incongruous that Stalin would encourage their participation in the congress, given the call in his speech for the demotion or downgrading of this particular group of individuals.

Anomalies in the stenographic record and the media treatment of the former oppositionists also suggest the contentious nature of the discussion of this problem. For example, the former oppositionists were accorded a downgraded status when compared to other participants in the congress. Pravda ran photographs of most of the congress speakers, but, as noted in Table 1, most of the former oppositionists were not accorded such treatment. (Ironically, former Trotsky supporters who had made their peace with Stalin in the mid-1920s received somewhat better treatment than Kamenev, Zinoviev and members of Bukharin's Right Opposition.) Similarly, most of this group did not receive introductory applause as did the majority of speakers at the congress.

TABLE 1: Former Oppositionists at XVII Party Congress

<u>NAME</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>INTRO.APPLAUSE</u>	<u>END APPLAUSE</u>		
	<u>(S.O.)</u>	<u>(S.O.)</u>	<u>S.O.</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>
Bukharin*	Voting del.	None	app.	prol.app	prol.app.
Kamenev	None	None	app.	app.	app.
Lominadze	None	None	app.	app.	app.
Preobrazhensky	None	None	None	None	None
Rykov	advisory del.	None	None	app.	app.
Tomsky	advisory del.	None	None	None	None
Zinoviev	None	None	app.	app.	app.
Piatakov #	advisory del.	None	prol.app.	app.	app.
Radek #	advisory del.	None	app.	app.	app.

S.O.=Stenograficheski Otchet, XVII s"ezd, 1934.

app.= Applause, prol.app.= Prolonged applause

RELATED COMMENTS:

* = listed in S.O. delegate list, p. 685, as K.I. Bukharin (presumably an error for N.I. Bukharin, who joined the party in 1904.)

indicates photo appeared in Pravda

The case of Nikolai Bukharin, in particular, contains several contradictions and anomalies which suggest a high-level tug of war concerning his future role in party life. For example, both Pravda and Izvestiia noted that Bukharin received "prolonged applause" at the end of his congress address, more than any of the other former oppositionists. (The stenographic record of the congress, however, only notes "applause.") Yet, Bukharin was demoted to Central Committee candidate member status at the conclusion of the congress; this was somewhat curious, given the fact he had not suffered this indignity at the Sixteenth Party Congress in 1930, which, logically, would have been the place to do so, in view of his defeat as leader of the Right Opposition in 1928-1929. Then, just twelve days after the Seventeenth Congress adjourned, Izvestiia offered a brief statement noting that Bukharin was now the editor of the newspaper. ³ This high-profile position which offered an important vehicle for editorializing and shaping public opinion hardly seemed in keeping with his Central Committee demotion--or with Stalin's call for demoting and publicly castigating old "aristocrats."

Clearly, Bukharin's case indicates he enjoyed significant high-level backing within the leadership. One of his principal supporters almost certainly was Politburo member Sergo Ordzhonikidze. In his capacity as Commissar for

Heavy Industry, Ordzhonikidze had offered Bukharin some refuge, as a research director in the Commissariat for Heavy Industry (and its predecessor organization, the Supreme Economic Council) since 1930. By 1932, Bukharin was even listed as a member of the Commissariat's governing presidium, and of the commission working on the new five-year plan. ⁴ Given Ordzhonikidze's outspoken advocacy of reduced growth rates and targets for the Second Five-Year Plan at the Seventeenth Congress, Bukharin's position within Ordzhonikidze's Commissariat becomes all the more intriguing.

Bukharin's quiet "supporters" may have had been at work well before the Seventeenth Party Congress. For example, Bukharin may have been functioning in a responsible, if unofficial capacity with Izvestiia as early as 1932. A young Izvestiia reporter, hired in 1932, recalled that Bukharin had interviewed and hired him. ⁵ Here again, it is hard to imagine Bukharin holding such responsibilities without broadly-based high-level support.

Similarly, the apparent promotion of Rudzutak to Politburo candidate member status after the congress may have been made over Stalin's objections. The promotion does not square with the fact that Stalin proposed a reorganization of the Central Control Commission--which Rudzutak had headed--and that Rudzutak was excluded from the new bodies which replaced the commission. Indeed, official Soviet biographical data suggests that Rudzutak had fallen in disfavor as early

as 1932; the Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia notes that he served as a full Politburo member from 1926 to 1932, and was subsequently made a candidate member in 1934. ⁶ Here again, those arguing for moderation--led presumably by Kirov and Ordzhonikidze--appear to have engaged in a subtle tug-of-war, conceding only partly to Stalin's wishes while exercising their collective influence to temper his policies. These contradictions strongly suggest that compromises had indeed been forced upon Stalin, and that Stalin did not enjoy total, unchallenged authority to rule by decree.

Overall, Stalin may have viewed himself as "stalemated" at the Seventeenth Party Congress. While he certainly remained a most powerful leader, he was not yet omnipotent. The congress manifested this stalemate in a mix of setbacks and gains for the General Secretary. On the negative side of the ledger, Stalin suffered defeat on the rates of growth for the Second-Five Year Plan, compromised on cadre policy, and felt obliged to divest himself of his General Secretary title to preempt any would-be successors.

At the same time, Stalin had made some important organizational gains--the creation of a Party Control Commission and insertion of new language on party membership statutes--which later enabled him to resolve this tug-of-war struggle over policy. By packing the leadership organs of the newly created Party Control Commission with his most loyal clients, such as Kaganovich, Stalin was returning to

the tried methods by which he had bested his formidable adversaries during the 1920s.

The Congress of Victors: A Conflict in Perceptions

Stalin and his Politburo colleagues came to the Seventeenth Party Congress with distinctly different vantage points--and with differing interpretations of the victory that was being celebrated. While both sides were victors in the sense that the party had survived and the country was on a socialist course, what that victory meant in terms of future policy was not as well-defined. For Kirov, Ordzhonikidze, Rudzutak and like-minded leaders, it meant that some element of moderation could be introduced in the party's economic programs--as well as in the governance of the party itself.

For Stalin, the victory was only a partial one at best. The party had survived and a socialist foundation had been laid, but there were still voices in the party that questioned Stalin's views--and his leadership. Such manifestations, in Stalin's view, only confirmed his dictum--stated in his congress report--that "the closer one gets to the classless society, the more intense becomes the class struggle." For Stalin, then, the spirit of euphoria and moderation that prevailed at the congress only highlighted the need to recommence and intensify the battle against all deviations--and potential ones--within the party. Hence the

endless call for vigilance, the references to new struggles, battles, and liquidation of class enemies. This veritable call to arms reflected Stalin's view that the party was still in danger.

The fact that Stalin had to compromise or was overruled on various issues at this congress attests to an important clash of perceptions concerning Stalin's role as leader of the Party. It is clear from the decisions adopted that many in the Politburo felt that decision-making was, as in Lenin's time, still a process of consensus; in such a system, Stalin's views were important, but represented only one voice among many. (It is worth recalling that Lenin was outvoted a number of times on very important issues, such as the initial rejection of his positions following his return to Russia in April 1917 and the original defeat of his position on peace with Germany in December 1917. In Lenin's case, however, he was able to build a consensus through the power of persuasion and the logic of his argument. Stalin, in contrast, lacked these essential skills).

As Robert Tucker has argued in his psychohistorical biography of Stalin--convincingly, in my view--Stalin's self-perception of his role as leader was quite different than that of those around him. ⁷ Believing that his position and seniority--achieved by defeating a host of powerful rivals in the twenties--should bring with it unquestioned authority, Stalin was almost certainly frustrated that his view of

himself was not shared by the others around him--a reality painfully evident in his inability to impose his desired policies on the Party. ⁸

To extend Tucker's logic to the 1930s, one could hypothesize that continued challenge to Stalin's self-perception at a time when he felt politically stronger than at any point in the previous four years convinced him to embark on yet another battle--to transform the views of those around him to correspond with his own self-image. The most direct route toward this end was to replace those who did not share his views with new cadres who would.

A comparative review of the full Central Committee members elected at the XVI, XVII, and XVIII Party Congresses supports such an interpretation.

<u>CONGRESS</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>FULL CC MEMBERS</u>	<u>FULL CC MEMBERS WHO SERVED IN PREVIOUS CC</u>
XVI	1930	71	57 (80.3%)
XVII	1934	71	56 (78.9%)
XVIII	1939	71	16 (22.5%)
XIX	1952	125	33 (26.4%; would be 46.4% if CC remained at 71)

For more details on the specific party members and their status, See Appendix I: FULL CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS ELECTED AT XVII PARTY CONGRESS AND THEIR STATUS AT XVI CONGRESS (1930) AND XVIII CONGRESS (1939).

These figures underscore Khrushchev's comments concerning the decimation of the Central Committee elected at the XVII Party Congress. Khrushchev also noted that over half--1108 out of the 1961--of the XVII Congress delegates were subsequently arrested on charges of "anti-revolutionary crimes." ⁹

Moreover, of the 66 Central Committee candidates named in 1934, 60 had dropped from sight before the 1939 congress. ¹⁰

The survival rate of those on the Politburo named at the XVII Congress is equally revealing. Half of the 16 full and candidate members were dead--by assassination, suicide, "poor health" or by execution as "enemies of the people"--before the 1939 congress convened.

A number of scholarly studies have uncovered other interesting statistical trends concerning party membership during this period. ¹¹ For example, Old Bolsheviks (those party members who had joined prior to the Revolution) comprised 85.9 per cent of the 1934 Central Committee, and only 32.3 per cent of the 1939 Central Committee. ¹² A similar trend could be seen in the overall party experience of delegates attending the XVII and XVIII party congresses. While only 2.6 per cent of the delegates to the 1934 meeting had joined the party in 1929 or later, that group comprised 43 per cent of the 1939 congress delegates. ¹³

In light of these statistics the "congress of victors" might better be called the "congress of the vanquished."

Given Stalin's aberrant personality, and the frustration he endured at this congress on a wide range of key issues, it is not surprising that so many delegates to this congress suffered the dictator's wrath during the purge years. Ironically, it was the failure of the party leaders at this congress to agree on the meaning and implications of their "victory" that contributed to the catastrophe that was to overtake them.

NOTES

1. See R.W. Davies, "The Syrtsov-Lominadze Affair" in Soviet Studies, Vol. XXXIII, No. 1, January 1981, pp. 29-50 for a detailed review of this case.
2. Barmine, One Who Survived, pp.246-248.
3. Izvestiia, February 22, 1934.
4. Cohen, Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution, pp.353-354.
5. See Mikhail Solovyev, Zapiski Sovetskogo Voennogo Korrespondenta, (New York, 1954). In a personal interview with me in 1978, the author stated that Bukharin had interviewed and hired him. In reviewing his memoir, it is clear that the author was in fact working for Izvestiia in 1932.
6. BSE, Vol. 22, 1975, pp. 348-49.
7. Robert Tucker, Stalin as Revolutionary 1879-1929: A Study in History and Personality, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1973).
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 488-493.
9. Khrushchev, "Crimes of the Stalin Era," p. S21.
10. Candidate Central Committee members had a difficult time retaining their status throughout the 1930s. Robert Daniels noted that 30 of the 66 candidates named in 1930 retained their posts or were promoted at the 1934 congress. He attributes this to the difficulties associated with implementing collectivization and the first-five year plan. See Robert V. Daniels, Conscience of the Revolution: Communist Opposition in Soviet Russia (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1969), pp. 384-388.
11. See, for example, Rigby, Communist Party Membership in the USSR, pp. 197-235; Brzezinski, The Permanent Purge pp.98-115; and Slava Lubomudrov, "The Origins and Consequences of the Purge of the Full Members of the 1934 Central Committee", Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University, 1975.
12. Ludomudrov, "Origins and Consequences," pp. 112-113 and 118-119. The author notes, however, that those Old Bolsheviks who did survive the 1930s went on to hold a disproportionate number of high party positions in the 1940s and 1950s. On the other hand, by 1939, only Stalin could claim to have served on the Central Committee before the October Revolution, thus

making him the senior Old Bolshevik, by virtue of experience and years in tenure on the Central Committee.

13. Brzezinski, Permanent Purge, p. 105.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I:

FULL CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS ELECTED AT XVII PARTY CONGRESS
AND STATUS AT XVI CONGRESS (1930) and XVIII CONGRESS (1939)

<u>NAME (1934 FULL CC)</u>	<u>1930 STATUS</u>	<u>1939 STATUS</u>
Alekseev, P.A.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (fate unknown)
Andreev, A.A.	FULL MEMBER	FULL MEMBER
Antipov, N.K.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Badaev, A.E.	FULL MEMBER	FULL MEMBER
Balitskii, V.A.	-----	Dropped (purged)
Bauman, K.Ia.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Beriia, L.P.	-----	FULL MEMBER
Bubnov, A.S.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Vareikis, I.M.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Voroshilov, K.Ye.	FULL MEMBER	FULL MEMBER
Gamarnik, Ia.B.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Yevdokimov, Ye.G.	-----	Dropped (purged)
Yezhov, N.I.	-----	Dropped (purged)
Yenukidze, A.S.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Zhdanov, A.A.	FULL MEMBER	FULL MEMBER
Zhukov, I.P.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Zelenskii, I.A.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Ivanov, V.I.	CAND.MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Ikramov, A.	CAND.MEMBER	Dropped (purged)

Kabakov, I.D.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Kaganovich, L.M.	FULL MEMBER	FULL MEMBER
Kaganovich, M.M.	-----	FULL MEMBER
Kalinin, M.I.	FULL MEMBER	FULL MEMBER
Kirov, S.M.	FULL MEMBER	Assassinated-1934
Knorin, V.G.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Kodatskii, I.F.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Kosarev, A.V.	CAND.MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Kosior, I.V.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Kosior, S.V.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Krzhizhanovskii, G.M.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Krinitiskii, A.I.	CAND.MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Krupskaia, N.K.	FULL MEMBER	Died-1939
Kuibyshev, V.V.	FULL MEMBER	Died-1935
Lavrent'ev, L.I.	-----	Dropped (purged)
Lebed', D.Z.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Litvinov, M.M.	-----	FULL MEMBER
Lobov, S.S.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Liubimov, I.Ye.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Manuilskii, D.Z.	FULL MEMBER	FULL MEMBER
Mezhlauk, V.I.	CAND.MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Mikoian, A.I.	FULL MEMBER	FULL MEMBER
Mirzoian, L.I.	CAND.MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Molotov, V.M.	FULL MEMBER	FULL MEMBER
Nikolaeva, K.I.	CAND.MEMBER	FULL MEMBER
Nosov, I.P.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)

Ordzhonikidze, G.K.	FULL MEMBER	Suicide-1937
Petrovskii, G.I.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped
Postyshev, P.P.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Pyatakov, G.L.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Piatnitskii, I.A.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Razumov, M.O.	-----	Dropped (purged)
Rudzutak, Ya.E.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Rumiantsev, I.P.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Rukhimovich, M.L.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Ryndin, K.V.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Stalin, I.V.	FULL MEMBER	FULL MEMBER
Stetskii, A.I.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Sulimov, D.Ye.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Ukhanov, K.V.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Khataevich, M.M.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Khrushchev, N.S.	-----	FULL MEMBER
Chernov, M.A.	-----	Dropped (purged)
Chubar', V.Ya.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Chuvyrin, M.Ye.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Chudov, M.S.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Shvernik, N.M.	FULL MEMBER	FULL MEMBER
Sheboldaev, B.P.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Eikhe, R.I.	FULL MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Yagoda, G.G.	CAND.MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Yakir, I.E.	CAND.MEMBER	Dropped (purged)
Yakovlev, Ya.A.	-----	Dropped (purged)

KEY:

Cand.Member= Candidate Member

Purged= arrested and/or executed Died: natural causes death

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APPENDIX II:

Listing of Speakers at XVII Party Congress by Session and
Media TreatmentKEY:

Pravda, Izvestiia = Pravda, Izvestiia. 28,5= Jan. 28, p.5, etc.

Photo = 1st letter = Pravda photo, 2nd letter = Izvestiia photo (Y=Yes,N=No)

Int = Introductory response noted in Sten.Ot. (Y=Yes,N=No)

End = End applause. Y-Y-Y = Sten.Ot.-Pravda-Izvestiia

Session 1 January 26 EveningCHAIRMAN: M.I. Kalinin

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
V.M. Molotov	-	-	-	-	-
N.S. Khrushchev	-	-	-	-	-
I.V. Stalin	27,28	27,28	Y-Y	Y	Y-Y-Y

Session 2 January 27 MorningCHAIRMAN: M.I. Kalinin

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
M.F. Vladimirsky	28,5	28,5	Y-Y	Y	Y-Y-Y
P.F. Amosov	29,2	29,2	N-N	N	N-N-N
P.I. Eikhe	29,2	29,2	Y-N	Y	Prol. Appl.
B.P. Pozern	29,4	29,2	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
B. Bykin	29,4	29,2	Y-N	N	Y-Y-N
A.P. Serebrovsky	29,2	29,2	Y-N	N	Y-N-N
F.A. Vodovozenko	29,2	29,2	Y-N	N	Y-N-N
N.G. Kolotilin	29,4	29,2	Y-N	N	N-N-Y
I.G. Makarov	29,4	29,2	N-N	N	Y-Y-N
M.K. Amossov	29,5	29,2	Y-N	N	Y-Y-N

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Session 3 January 27 AfternoonCHAIRMAN: M.I. Kalinin

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
M.I. Zimin	29,5	29,2	N-N	N	Y-N-Y
P.P. Postyshev	29,3	29,3	Y-Y	Prol. Stand Greet	Storm Prol. Appl.
N.F. Gikalo	30,2	29,3	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
N.K. Krupskaja	29,4	30,1	Y-Y	Stormy Prol. Appl.	Storm Prol. Appl.
M.M. Khataevich	29,5	30,2	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-
A. Ye. Badaev	30,2	30,2	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
A. Ikramov	30,2	30,1	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y

Session 4 January 28 MorningCHAIRMAN: P.P. Postyshev

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
N.N. Kolotilov	30,4	30,2	N-N	N	Y-Y-Y
A.G. Shlikhter	30,2	30,2	N-N	N	Y-Y-Y
L.I. Mirzoyan	30,2	30,2	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
I.M. Vareikis	30,3	30,2	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
V.I. Ivanov	30,3	30,2	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
P.I. Struppe	31,2	30,2	N-N	N	Y-Y-Y
A.S. Kalygina	30,3	30,2	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
K. Ya. Bauman	30,4	30,3	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
V.V. Ptukh	30,3	30,3	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y

Session 5 January 28 EveningCHAIRMAN: P.P. Postyshev

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
A.S. Bubnov	30,4	30,3	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
A.S. Yenukidze	30,4	30,3	Y-Y	Y	Y-Y-Y
V.V. Lominadze	30,5	30,3	N-N	N	Y-Y-Y
A.V. Kosarev	30,5	30,3	Y-Y	Y	Y-Y-Y
N.I. Bukharin	31,2	31,2	N-N	N	Y-Y-Y
L.P. Beriia	31,4	30,4	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y

Session 6 January 29 MorningCHAIRMAN: P.P. Postyshev

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
A.I. Krinitsky	31,3	30,4	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
E.I. Petrovsky	31,4	30,4	Y-Y	Y	Y-Y-Y
I.P. Rumiantsev	31,2	30,4	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
N.S. Khrushchev	31,4	30,4	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
B.P. Sheboldaev	31,4	30,4	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
A.A. Zhdanov	1,4	30,4	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
P.N. Yakovlev	31,5	31,2	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y

Session 7 January 29 EveningCHAIRMAN: P.P. Postyshev

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
A.D. Sarkisov	1,4	31,3	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
I.P. Nosov	2,5	31,3	Y-N	N	N-Y-Y
S.A. Dobrova	31,2	31,2	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
G.K. Ordzhonikidze	1,3	1,2-3	Y-Y	Y	Y-Y-Y
A.I. Mikoian	2,2-3	2,3-4	Y-Y	Y	Y-Y-Y

Session 8 January 30 MorningCHAIRMAN: P.P. Postyshev

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
V.P. Shubrikov	2,5	3,4	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
L.K. Shaposhnikova	2,3	31,3	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
F.N. Antipov	3,3	3,4	N-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
S.V. Kosior	2,5	2,4	Y-Y	Y	Y-Y-Y
A.A. Andreev	2,4	2,5	Y-Y	Y	Y-Y-Y
A.I. Rykov	3,3	3,3	N-N	N	N-Y-Y

Session 9 January 30 EveningCHAIRMAN: P.P. Postyshev

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
M.I. Razumov	3,3	3,4	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
P.A. Yurkin	3,3	2,6	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
K.Ye. Voroshilov	4,1-2	4,1-2	Y-Y	Y	Y-Y-Y

Session 10 January 31 MorningCHAIRMAN: P.P. Postyshev

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
Preobrazhenskii	3,4	3,4	N-N	N	N-N-N
N.M. Shvernik	3,4	3,3	Y-Y	Y	Y-Y-Y
I.D. Kabakov	3,4	3,3	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
M.P. Tomskii	4,6	4,2	N-N	N	N-N-N
S.M. Kirov	3,2	3,2	Y-Y	Y	Y-Y-Y

Session 11 February 1 MorningCHAIRMAN: M.F. Shkiriakov

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
Ya.E. Rudzutak	4,3-4-5-6	4,3-6	Y-Y	Y	N-Y-Y

Session 12 February 1 EveningCHAIRMAN: M.F. Shkiriatov

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
Ya.E. Rudzutak	4,3-6	4,3-6	Y-Y	N	Y-Y-Y
M.I. Ulianova	3,5	4,7	Y-Y	Prol. Appl.	Y-Y-Y
G.G. Baichurin	3,5	4,7	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
Ye. Yaroslavskii	3,5	4,7	Y-Y	Y	Y-Y-Y
K.V. Sukhomlin	3,5	4,7	Y-N	N	Y-N-N
N.I. Yezhov	2,1	2,1	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y

Session 13 February 2 MorningCHAIRMAN: K.I. Nikolaeva

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
D.Z. Manuilsky	5,1-3	5,2-3	Y-Y	Prol. App.	Y-Y-Y

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Session 14 February 2 Evening

CHAIRMAN: P.P. Postyshev

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
Van Min	5,3		N	Stormy Prol. Appl.	Y-Y
Okah	4,7		Y	" "	Y-Y
G.P. Hekkert	4,7		N	" "	Y-Y
Dolores	4,7		N	" "	Y-Y
Belevskii	5,3		N	" "	Y-Y
Rist	4,7		N	and ovation Prol.	Y-Y
Bela Kun	4,7		Y	Appl. Prol.	Y-Y
V.G. Knorin	4,6		Y	Appl. Prol.	Y-Y
S.A. Lozovsky	5,4		Y	Appl. Appl.	Y-Y

Session 15 February 3 Morning

CHAIRMAN: M.I. Kalinin

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
V.M. Molotov	6,1-4	6,1-4	Y-Y	Y	Y-Y-Y

Session 16 February 3 Evening

CHAIRMAN: G.I. Petrovsky

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
V.V. Kuibyshev	7,2-5	7,1-5	Y-Y	Y	Y-Y-Y

Session 17 February 4 MorningCHAIRMAN: S.V. Kosior

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
F.P. Griadinskii	5,4	8,2	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
V.Y. Chubar'	6,5	6,5	Y-Y	Prol. Appl.	Y-Y-Y
I.F. Kodatskii	5,4	7,5	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
D.Ye. Sulimov	5,5	5,3	Y-Y	Prol. Appl.	Y-Y-Y
G. Musabekov	6,5	8,2	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y

Session 18 February 4 EveningCHAIRMAN: S.V. Kosior

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
Ye.I. Ryabinin	5,4	6,5	Y-N	N	Y-N-N
G.K. Ordzhonikidze	7,1	7,5	N-N	Stand. Prol. Stand. Ovation	Y-Y-Y
V.D. Isaev	8,2	9,3	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
A.I. Mikoyan	7,5	7,5	N-N	Prol. Appl.	Y-Y-Y
N.M. Goloded	8,2	8,3	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
I.Ye. Liubimov	8,4	8,2	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
G.L. Piatakov	9,2	9,3	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
M.N. Tukhachevsky	9,3	10,2	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y

Session 19February 5MorningCHAIRMAN: V.Ya. Chubar'

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
S.S. Lobov		10,2	-N	Y	Y- -Y
M.M. Kaganovich	8,3	9,2	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
N.I. Pakhomov	8,2	8,2	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
V.F. Larin	6,5	6,5	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
F. Khodzhaev	8,2	10,2	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
G.F. Grin'ko	8,3	9,2	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
N.A. Bulganin	8,3	9,3	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
M.L. Rukhimovich	9,2	8,3	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
G.A. Zinoviev	8,4	8,3	N-N	N	Y-Y-Y

Session 20February 5EveningCHAIRMAN: V.Ya. Chubar'

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
Ya.P. Ivanchenko	9,3	9,2	Y-N	N	N-Y-N
T.P. Zelensky	9,2	10,2	Y-N	N	N-Y-Y
Barsukov	8,5	8,2	Y-N	Procl. Appl.	Y-Y-Y
Artem'ev	8,5	8,2	Y-N	Y + workers stand	Y-Y-Y
Novoselov	8,5	8,2	Y-N	Procl. Appl. + Ovation	Y-Y-Y
A.P. Rosengol'ts	9,2	10,2	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
S.M. Budenny	8,3	9,2	Y-N	Stormy Appl.	Y-Y-Y
A.V. Zhukov	8,3	9,2	N-N	N	N-N-N
L.B. Kamenev	8,4	8,3	N-N	N	Y-Y-Y
V.M. Molotov	7,1	7,1	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y

Session 21 February 6 MorningCHAIRMAN: P.P. Postyshev

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
L.M. Kaganovich	12,1-6	12,1-6	Y	Y	Y-Y-Y

Session 22 February 6 EveningCHAIRMAN: P.P. Postyshev

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
L.M. Kaganovich	12,1-6	12,1-6	Y-Y	Y	Y- -Y
R.M. Khitarov	8,5	10,4	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
K.I. Nikolaeva	8,5	10,5	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y

Session 23 February 7 MorningCHAIRMAN: V.M. Molotov

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
V.Ya. Furer	8,5	10,4	N-N	N	Y-Y-Y
I.A. Likhachev	9,3	10,5	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
A.I. Ugarov	9,4	10,4	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
M.I. Kalinin	8,1	8,1	Y-Y	Y	Y-Y-Y
Kim Afanasy	9,3	10,3	N-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
S.Ya. Andreev	10,5	10,3	N-N	Y	Y-Y-Y

Session 24 February 7 Evening

CHAIRMAN: V.M. Molotov

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
G.D. Veinberg	9,4	10,4	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
T.G. Makarov	9,3	10,5	N-N	N	Y-Y-Y
M.F. Shkiriatov	9,4	10,4	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
V.I. Polonskii	9,5	10,4	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
Podrezov	9,1	9,1	N-N	Stormy Prol. Appl.	Y-Y-Y
Val'kova	9,1	9,1	N-N	Prol. Appl.	Y-Y-Y
Yefremov	9,1	9,1	N-N	Prol. Appl.	Y-Y-Y
M.A. Karpova	9,4	10,2	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
G.N. Kaminskii	9,4	10,4	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
A.D. Bruskin	9,3	10,5	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y

Session 25 February 8 Morning

CHAIRMAN: M.I. Kalinin

<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>	<u>Photos</u>	<u>Int</u>	<u>End</u>
E.K. Pramnek	9,3	14,3	N-N	N	Y-Y-Y
A.I. Stetsky	9,5	9,3	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
F.I. Panferov	10,4	11,5	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
K.B. Radek	10,4	10,5	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
V.K. Bliukher	11,5	11,5	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
S.A. Saltanov	10,5	14,3	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
V.V. Osinsky	10,4	10,5	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
M.A. Shaburova	10,3	11,5	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y
G.M.Krzhizhanovsky	10,3	10,3	Y-N	Y	Y-Y-Y
P.F. Yudin	10,4	14,3	Y-N	N	Y-Y-Y

Session 26 February 10 Morning

CHAIRMAN: M.I. Kalinin

SPEAKER

Pravda

Izvestiia

Photos

Int

End

V.M. Molotov

L.M. Kaganovich

APPENDIX III: Former Oppositionists at XVII Party Congress

<u>NAME</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>INTRO.APPLAUSE</u>	<u>END APPLAUSE</u>		
	(S.O.)	(S.O.)	S.O.	<u>Pravda</u>	<u>Izvestiia</u>
Bukharin ^a	Voting del.	None	app.	prol.app.	prol.app.
Kamenev	None	None	app.	app.	app.
Lominadze	None	None	app.	app.	app.
Preobrazhensky	None	None	None	None	None
Rykov	advisory del.	None	None	app.	app.
Tomsky	advisory del.	None	None	None	None
Zinoviev	None	None	app.	app.	app.
Piatakov *	advisory del.	None	prol.app.	app.	app.
Radek *	advisory del.	None	app.	app.	app.

S.O.=Stenograficheskiĭ Otchet, XVII s"ezd, 1934.

app.= Applause, prol.app.= Prolonged applause

RELATED COMMENTS:

a = listed in S.O. delegate list, p. 685, as K.I. Bukharin (presumably an error for N.I. Bukharin, who joined the party in 1904.)

* indicates photo appeared in Pravda

APPENDIX IV: Politburo Members at XVII Party Congress:
Performance According to Stenographic Record

ANDREYEV

Intro: applause
End : applause

KAGANOVICH

Intro: Stormy, long and unceasing ovation; all standing; cries of hurrah; salutary exclamations in honor of comrade Kaganovich spread throughout the hall; congress delegates appear around Kaganovich at the tribunal, greeting him anew with a stormy and prolonged ovation.

End: Loud applause, cries of hurrah, all stand, singing the "International."

KALININ

Intro: Stormy, prolonged applause, reviving several times with new strength. Congress gives comrade Kalinin an ovation; all standing, cries of hurrah, salutary greetings.

KIROV

Intro: Stormy, prolonged applause; all standing, ovation throughout the hall.

End: Stormy, long, unceasing applause; fervent ovation throughout the hall, all standing.

KOSIOR

Intro: Prolonged applause; all standing.

End: Stormy, prolonged applause.

KUIBYSHEV

Intro: Stormy, prolonged applause throughout the hall; delegates standing.

End: Stormy, prolonged applause.

MOLOTOV

Intro: Stormy, prolonged applause throughout the hall; all stand and offer comrade Molotov a fervent ovation.

End: Stormy, unceasing applause, all standing; prolonged ovation throughout the hall; salutary exclamations and cries of hurrah in honor of comrade Molotov.

ORDZHONIKIDZE

Intro: Stormy, prolonged applause, all standing; ovation throughout the hall.

End: Stormy, prolonged applause turning into an ovation; all stand greeting comrade Ordzhonikidze.

STALIN

Intro: The entire hall stands; stormy prolonged applause, turning into a prolonged ovation. Exclamations: Hurrah, long live our Stalin.

End: Stormy, prolonged applause throughout the hall; the congress stands in ovation to comrade Stalin; singing of the "International." At conclusion of "International," ovation recommences with new strength. Exclamations: Hurrah to Stalin; long live Stalin; long live the Central Committee of the party.

VOROSHILOV

Intro: Stormy, prolonged applause turning into an ovation. Cries of hurrah; all stand fervently greeting comrade Voroshilov.

End: Burst of applause; cries of hurrah; stormy ovation to comrade Voroshilov, merging with stormy ovation to comrade Stalin; enthusiastic cries of hurrah.

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