

From the Archives

Edited by Nikolai V. Zlobin

Thirteen Documents from the Secret Archives of Iosif Stalin

An archival boom is presently underway in Russia. For the first time in many decades, it is possible for scholars, journalists and public figures to gain access to previously private and secret information. Everything is not quite so simple, however. On the one hand, there is neither a legal basis for the procedures of declassifying materials, nor are there workable laws concerning government secrets and archival files. On the other hand, the archives of the central and local organs of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), the army and the KGB were never cleared for research. As a result, many basic facilities still lack, and the researcher has to work with unpolished documents, rudimentary copying machines, etc. Reading rooms are almost non-existent. Since the time of their opening, the archival reserves have grown almost twice their original size and today contain approximately 193 million files. Yet, there are still those who are hindering the attainment of complete access to these files by trying to monopolize the newly opened reserves for their own use.

In the last issue of *Demokratizatsiya* we began to publish previously unknown materials from the Russian archives. The idea of a special archival section was met with a great deal of enthusiasm and support by our readers from both sides of the Great Divide. So we decided to publish the section regularly. Our journal signed a special agreement of cooperation with one of the richest and most previously inaccessible archives—the Russian Center for the Preservation and Study of Documents of Contemporary History (RTsKhIDNI). This was formerly the Central Party Archives for the Central Committee of the CPSU. Within the framework of this agreement the officials of the archives will grant the right to our journal of first publication of the most thrilling and previously unknown materials from their reserves as well as from the reserves of other Russian archives. The journal would like to know the opinions and wishes of its readers concerning this section.

What follows are never-before published documents from the personal collection of Iosif Stalin, kept in the RTsKhIDNI (РЦХИДНИ, фонд 558 опись 1). These documents are coming to light for the first time and several of them have not even been seen by researchers. They touch upon Stalin's life as a Bolshevik revolutionary from 1914 until the beginning of 1922, that is, up to the time when he was elected general secretary of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, and show a very personal side to the Soviet dictator. In publishing these, we are not attempting to undertake any research, but simply to

circulate these new and undoubtedly interesting documents and to provide material to historians and political scientists. Therefore, we shall only make essential and brief commentaries and explanations, leaving analysis to the scholars. Our editorial comments in between original text will be, like the last time with Alexander Kvashonkin's, in *italics* and between brackets so as not to confuse the reader with the original material. The larger explanations will also be between brackets and in our ordinary font rather than our archival courier font.

—N.V.Z.

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[Letter 1: From File 53. Page 3. Stalin's letter to Lenin. 27 November 1914. Page 1 with Suren Spandaryan's written comments.]

Hello dear Vladimir Ilich! Iosif is visiting me right now and wanted me to send you our greetings. How are you? How are things going? How are you getting along? Write us what you can. We are craving your brilliant words. We shall wait for your letter.

—Suren.

P.S. Greetings to Nadezhda Konstantinovna and Grigory and all the others.

[*Spandaryan's handwritten text ends and Stalin's begins*]

My greetings to you, dear Ilich, my warmest, heart-felt regards! Hello to Zinoviev and Nadezhda Konstantinovna! How are you getting along, how's your health? I am living as before—chewing on my bread [page 2], living out this term. And how is everything with you? At your place things should be cheerier . . . I just recently read Kropotkin's article—that doddering old fool, he has entirely lost his mind. I also read Plekhanov's article in *Rech*—the incorrigible, gossipy, old chatterbox! Eech! . . . and the liquidators with their deputies—agents of the free economic society? Is there no one to fight them?, then may the devil take me! Is it possible they will remain unpunished?! Bring me joy and inform me in the near future when a new organ is in place when these nasty mugs will be lashed thoroughly and tirelessly.

If you decide to write, write to this address: [page 3] Tur. Krai [Eniseiskaya Gubernia], the village of Monastyrskoe to Suren Spandaryan.

Yours, Koba

Timofei asks me to send his sour regards to Gyed, Sambat and Vandervelde on their most splendid (ha! ha!) ministerial offices.

[The original is in Stalin's handwriting. The letter, signed with his *nom de guerre* **Koba**, was written in exile, where Stalin was sent after his arrest in Petrograd in February 1913. His exile was in the Turukhansky *Krai* (the northern part of the Krasnoyarsk *Krai* today), until the beginning of 1917. **Vladimir Lenin** (1870-1924) at this time was living as an emigré in Europe. **Suren Spandaryan** (1882-1916) was a revolutionary, Bolshevik Party member and was in exile at this time. **Nadezhda Konstantinovna**: Nadezhda Krupskaya (1869-1939), Lenin's wife. **Grigory**: Grigory Zinoviev (1883-1936, his real name, Radomyslsky), who was a revolutionary, Bolshevik Party member, future Communist Party Politburo member, the chairman of the Communist International Executive Committee. **Pyotr Kropotkin** (1842-1921), a prince, revolutionary, anarchist theorist, an emigré from 1876 to 1917. **Georgy Plekhanov** (1856-1918), a revolutionary, philosopher, one of the founders of the Bolshevik Party and considered one of the fathers of Russian Marxism, who opposed the revolution of October 1917. **Rech**-a daily newspaper from 1906 to 1917, the central organ of the Constitutional Democrats, closed by the Bolsheviks. **Liquidators**: a part of the Menshevik Party which came out in favor of the liquidation of the underground and the creation of a legal party of the Russian proletariat. **Timofei**: Spandaryan's Party name. **Jule Gyed** (1845-1922, real name, Bazil) was one of the founders of the French Workers' Party, and from August 1914 to October 1915 a state minister. **Marcel Sambat** (1862-1922) was one of the leaders of the French Socialist Party, a journalist, and from August 1914 to September 1917, minister of public works. **Émile Vandervelde** (1866-1938) was one of the leaders of the Belgian Workers' Party, entered the government in 1914 and in 1937 was appointed minister of foreign affairs and of justice.]

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 [Letter 2: File 55. Stalin's letter to O. Alliluyeva dated 25 November 1915. Page 3.]

To Olga Yevgenievna

I am extremely grateful to you, my dearest Olga Yevgenievna, for your good and pure feelings for me. I will never forget your thoughtful and solicitous treatment. I am waiting for the moment when I will be liberated from exile and return to Petersburg and personally thank you, and Sergei as well, for everything. All in all, in fact, I have two years remaining here.

I received the parcel. Thank you. I ask only one thing- don't waste any more money on me-you need it yourselves. I would be content if from time to time you could send [page 2] pictures of landscapes and nature. In this damnable spot, nature is outrageously stingy-in

the summer, there is the river and in the winter, snow. That is all there is here. And I am foolishly yearning for the sight of nature that is not on paper.

Greetings to the lads and the girls. I wish them all the best.

I am living as I was before. I am feeling quite well and healthy. I must have grown accustomed [page 3] to this wintry weather. And now the weather is so severe: three weeks ago it reached 45 degrees below. Until the next letter.

Respectfully yours, Iosif

[The original is in Stalin's handwriting. The letter was written in exile in the village of Kureika in the Eniseiskaya *Gubernia* of the Turukhansky *Krai*. **Olga Yevgenievna** was Sergei Alliluyev's wife. **Sergei Alliluyev** (1866-1945) was a worker, revolutionary, Bolshevik Party member. The Alliluyevs were a large family. One of their daughters, Nadezhda (1901-1931) became Stalin's wife. Stalin returned to Petrograd in March 1917.]

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[Letter 3: File 4547. Stalin's memorandum by direct cable to Leon Trotsky. 1918. Page 1.]

1-1 11:35 a.m.

A memo for Trotsky: Brest. The Romanian embassy was arrested last night. An ultimatum was issued by radio fully supporting the glavkoverkh. This report has been delayed for a good reason. The American embassy today has offered to give an explanation. Lenin and I ask you to be there in order to immediately attest as to the results of the negotiations with the American embassy. Things are going well with us as before.

-Stalin

[The original is in telegraph ribbon. The memorandum was sent directly from Moscow to **Brest-Litovsk** where the peace talks took place between Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria and resulted in the famous Brest peace treaty. In December 1917 Romania invaded Bessarabia and began to disarm Russian troops there. On 1 January 1918, Lenin by radio appealed to the Romanian government with an ultimatum and gave the order for the immediate arrest of the Romanian embassy personnel along with Ambassador Diamandi. Several hours later the dean of the Diplomatic Corps, the U.S. Ambassador Francis, raised a strong protest. On 13 January 1918, the Soviet of People's Commissars decided to break off relations with Romania and to deport all Romanian representatives. **Lev (Leon) Trotsky** (1879-1940, real name, Bronstein) was a famous revolutionary, the founder of Trotskyism and of the Red Army, and the leader of the Russian delegation at the talks at Brest-Litovsk.

In 1917 and 1918 he was the people's commissar of foreign affairs, and from 1918 to 1924 was the people's defense commissar. **Glavkoverkh** is the abbreviation for commander-in-chief, adopted in Russia during World War I. At the time, a Bolshevik, N. Krylenko held this office. There is an inscription on the telegraph ribbon in unknown handwriting: "The cable was broken at Brest-Litovsk last night. We have nothing to change it with."]

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[Letter 4: File 5385. Stalin's Memorandum to L.D. Trotsky, 1918. Page 1.]

Comrade Trotsky!

In view of Mirbach's evasive reply to the Ukrainian and Finnish matters (especially regarding the German invasions into Orlovskaya, Kurskaya and Voronezhskaya gubernii and the Crimea), V. Ilich [*Lenin*] considers it vital to arrange a private meeting (with your participation) devoted to the possible and necessary measures to be taken on the borders (to the north and to the south). We ask you to arrive at the Kremlin in Lenin's office for the aforementioned meeting.

—Stalin. 11:00 p.m.

P.S. If Anton has not already left, bring him to the meeting.

[The original is in Stalin's handwriting. This memo was written in Moscow during the second half of February 1918. **Wilhelm Mirbach** (1871-1918) was a duke and served as a German diplomat in Moscow since April 1918. He was killed by a Left social revolutionary. The German invasion began in 18 February 1918 and continued until the Brest peace treaty was signed on 3 March 1918. **Antonov:** Vladimir Antonov-Ovseyenko (1883-1939) was a Bolshevik Party member. From 1917 until 1919 he was commander-in-chief of the Soviet troops in southern Russia.]

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[Letter 5: File 504. Stalin's Memorandum to S. Mitskevich. 28 March 1918, page 2.]

(Dictated by telephone. Signed. Dvinsk. To Mitskevich. 2PM).

This is to inform you that Obliskomzap will no longer exist. Today Myasnikov and Kalmanovich have been at my office here in Moscow and we have finally settled the question. Several officials of Obliskomzap will enter the Byelorussian Soviet government which will be announced in several days. The Minskaya, Vitebskaya, Mogilevskaya,

Grodnenskaya gubernii and perhaps Smolenskaya will be given to Byelorussia [page 2, there is an inscription: "on account of the People's Commissar of Nationalities. 28-III. 2 o'clock."]. Lithuanian territory will remain sovereign and no one will disturb you any further. Myasnikov will soon come and will furnish you with the details. Concerning TsIKA's resolution on the western oblasti, they should be considered canceled.

—Stalin.

[The original is in unknown handwriting on a cable form. It was sent to **Dvinsk** (as the city Daugavpils was named 1893-1917). At that time Stalin was the people's commissar of nationalities affairs. **Sergei Mitskevich** (1869-1944) was a revolutionary, Bolshevik Party member, a physician, worked for the People's Commissariat of Health Care. **Obliskomzap**: *Oblast* Executive Committee of the western-area soviets (territorial and administrative units from 1918 to 1919), including the Smolenskaya, Vitebskaya, Minskaya, Mogilevskaya, Vilenskaya, and Pskovskaya *gubernii*, or provinces, the center being located at Vitebsk after January 1918. **Alexander Myasnikov** (1886-1925, real name, Myasnikyan) was a revolutionary, Bolshevik Party member, in 1918 he headed the combat operations against the Germans on the Western front. In 1919 he became the chairman of the Central Executive Committee of Byelorussia and of the Central Committee of the Byelorussian Communist Party. **Moisei Kalmanovich** (1888-1937) was a Byelorussian revolutionary, Bolshevik Party member since 1917; until then he was a social revolutionary. In 1917 and 1918 he was the food commissar of Obliskomzap and in 1919 he was Myasnikov's deputy. The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and its government were formed on 1 January 1919. By resolution of the Central Executive Committee of 9 December 1917, Obliskomzap was formed by merging the *Oblast* Executive Committee of the western front and the Executive Committee of the peasants' soviets of the Minskaya and Vilenskaya *gubernii*. It was headed by N. Rogozinsky.]

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[Letter 6: File 155. Stalin's letter to the Narkomyust—the People's Justice Commissariat—1918. Page 1.]

To the People's Justice Commissariat
The Cassation Complaint

On April 16 of this year the verdict was passed by the Moscow Revolutionary Tribunal, to which I am making my complaint that L. Martov (Tsederbaum) should not be under the jurisdiction of the Revolutionary Tribunal. I consider this verdict which violated the decree of the court on the 24th of November to be unjust. In light of this, I beseech the Narkomyust for the revocation of the verdict of

the Moscow Revolutionary Tribunal of April 16.

April 17. People's Commissar of Nationalities Affairs. I. Stalin.

[The original is in Stalin's handwriting. On the document there is the inscription: "#2600 1918." Written in Moscow. The **People's Justice Commissariat** was established in November 1917. At that time Pyotr Stuchka headed the Commissariat (in Stalin's letter there is a note about receiving this letter on 17 April 1918). **Revolutionary tribunals** were special courts established in 1917 to fight counter-revolutionary activity and to impose summary punishment, often execution. They were abolished in 1922. **L. Martov** (1873-1923, real name, Julius Tserdbaum) was a revolutionary, one of the Menshevik leaders, after 1917 was the leader of the left Menshevik wing. On 24 November 1917 the decree "On the Court" was adopted by the Soviet of People's Commissars which set up two judiciary systems; the people's courts and the revolutionary tribunals. **All-Russian EC**: the All-Russian Executive Committee, which was the highest body of state power in Russia from 1917 to 1938 during the intervals of the Congresses of soviets.]

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[Letter 7: File 188. Stalin's Memorandum to Lenin, Trotsky, Tsyurupa, Sverdlov, Kobozev and Nevsky. 1918. Page 3.]

Tsaritsin. Received 9-6. 22:30 p.m.

Seventy-five million, in small denominations if possible, must be sent by Chokprod's order for the immediate procurement and dispatch to Moscow of ten million puds [*1 pud=16 kg*] of wheat, ten thousand herds of cattle and thirty-five million quantities of a variety of other goods as well—pitchforks, axes, nails, nuts, window panes, tea sets, tableware, mowers and their spare parts, rivets, harvesters, reapers, binders, matches, harnesses, footwear, cotton, tricot, calico, coarse calico, nainsook, indian rubber, sateen, cheviot, ladies' and soldiers' cloth, lather, tea, scythes, ploughs, tarpaulin, galoshes, paints, varnishes, blacksmiths' and joiners' tools, files, carbolic acid, turpentine, and sodium carbonate. Chokprod has fifteen million all together and ten million of the goods. All the money and the enumerated goods must be sent without delay. Trotsky shall send cable orders to all the regiment commanders at the front and to Snesarev's headquarters not to capture food cargo, but to let our trains rendering assistance to our food committees pass unscathed. A copy is to be sent to Stalin. The TsIK shall immediately order the Kuban, Tersky, and Stavropol soviets by cable not to break set prices and not to hoard food, but to distribute it to the gubernii, uyezdi and volosti [*provinces, regions and rural districts*] and to render all assistance possible to Stalin's agents and to Chokprod. A copy is to be sent to Stalin.

Kobozev and Nevsky shall immediately alert all railroad agents of the southern railroads not to receive wheat cargos not directed to Nachokprod and Komprod and not to receive passengers with bags of bread. A copy is to be sent to Stalin. Kobozev and Nevsky shall also alert the agents of the Volga steamships in the same manner. A copy is to be sent to Stalin. The Narkomprod shall send an order to all the gubprodkoms and soviets, and especially to Orekhovo-Zuevo and other industrial areas not to send their agents to the south to get their bread, for we shall transport all stored bread to Moscow by roads and to Nizhny by water. A copy is to be sent to Stalin. We insist on the anonymous transportation of cargo from the south, entirely handing over the task of distribution to Narkomprod and limiting storage and transportation to Moscow and Nizhny, the suggested centers of all-Russian stocks and distribution boards. The Turkestan and Astrakhan gubernii near Baku are excluded, for we shall attempt to supply them directly. The construction of the Kizlyarsky line has begun.

People's Com., Stalin. Chokprod chair, Yakubov.
Tsaritsin. June 9, 1918.

[The original is in Stalin's handwriting. It was sent from **Tsaritsin** (after 1925 this city was named Stalingrad, and after 1961—Volgograd) where Stalin presided as the chief commissar of food matters in southern Russia and the commander of the Red Army units. **Chokprod**: Extraordinary *Oblast* Food Committee. **Narkomprod**: people's Chokprod. **Alexander Tsyurupa** (1870-1928) was a Bolshevik Party member, from 1918-1921, the people's food commissar. **Yakov Sverdlov** (1885-1919) was a revolutionary and Bolshevik Party member. After the Revolution he was the chairman of the All-Russian Executive Committee, the secretary of the Bolshevik Central Committee, the chairman of the first Russian Constitution Draft Commission. **Pyotr Kobozev** (1878-1941) was a Bolshevik Party member. In 1917 he became the extraordinary commissar of Siberia and Central Asia and in 1918 he was the people's commissar of transportation and then the chairman of the Turkestan Executive Committee. **V. Nevsky** (1876-1937, real name, Feodosy Krivobokov) from 1918 to 1921 was the people's commissar of transportation. **Andrei Snegarev** (1865-1937) was a military commander, before the Revolution he was a lieutenant general, in May he joined the Red Army as a volunteer, then became a military chief of the North Caucasus Military District. The **Kuban Soviet** was a body of power in the Kuban Republic which existed in April and May of 1918, when it was incorporated into Russia and then amalgamated as the Kuban-Black Sea Republic with Ekaterinodar (since 1912, Krasnodar) as the capital. It is presently the territory of the Krasnodar *Krai* of the Russian Federation. **Tersky Soviet**: the executive body of the Tersky Soviet Republic which was incorporated into Russia. It existed from March 1918 until February 1919 with Pyatigorsk as its capital first, then Vladikavkaz. **Gubprodkom**: *gubernia*

(province or regional administration) food commission. **Nizhny:** Nizhny Novgorod. **Komprod:** food committee. **Turkestan:** the Central Asian region where Turkic and some Persian peoples lived during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In April 1918 the Turkestan Soviet Socialist Republic was formed which existed until October 1924, when the Uzbek and Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republics, and the Tajik, Kara-Kirgiz and Kara-Kalpak autonomous republics were created in its stead. **Kizlyar** is a town in Dagestan at the delta of the Terek River. **Kamil Yakubov** (1894-1919) was a revolutionary, Bolshevik Party member, in 1918 was a member of the Central Bureau of the Communist Organizations of the Eastern Peoples, attached to the Bolshevik Party Central Committee.]

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[Letter 8: File 241. Page 1. Stalin's cable to G. Chicherin. 1918, which contained, like many of Stalin's personal writings in Russian, several grammatical and other mistakes.]

To Chicherin, Moscow, Kremlin. From Tsaritsin. 5-7.
11:10 a.m. 1918.

I cannot write an appeal to the Georgian people, for I do not want to appeal to the lost. If Germany does not recognize the republic of Kuban, it means that it does not recognize Russia, for the Kuban Republic is a part of Russia. We must insist on the inviolability of Kuban as a part of Russia, providing that we recognize Georgia if Germany would officially recognize Kuban, Armenia, and Aderbendyasan [as written] as purely internal matters where Germany should not interfere and we must firmly and resolutely insist on it, for with the continuing success of Baku forces and the present Persian occupation of Turkey, it is the only feasible political stance. In Turkestan a new Murman is rising, but the Turkestan soviets are not infected by Anglomania. We must position our forces on the Afghan borders where England is entering. Tsaritsin is out of danger; only the line to the south of the city has been broken, but it will be reestablished soon. It saddens me that you engage in private talks with Kulman and Ioffe, but there has not yet been an official note of it. This is a bad sign.

-Stalin.

[A typed original with an inscription by Chicherin:] To Trotsky, 5-II [and a seal:] People's Commissariat on Military Affairs [and:] The office of the people's commissar of military affairs, July 16, 1918 #7298. [**Georgy Chicherin** (1872-1936) was a Party leader, from 1918 to 1930 he was the people's commissar of foreign affairs of Russia, then of the USSR. Under German orders, Georgia seceded from the Caucasian Federation and from 1918

to 1921 was an independent state. After Georgia left, the Caucasian Federation split completely and the independent republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan emerged. In April 1920, Red Army units entered Azerbaijan and established Soviet rule (for a detailed account of this see the archival section of the previous issue of this journal). In Armenia the Dashnak government was overthrown in November 1920 and Soviet power was also militarily established. **Murman:** the city of Murmansk, an all-year open port of the Kolsk Peninsula where British, American and French troops landed in March 1918, thereby beginning the Entente invasion into Russia. **Adolf Ioffe** (1883-1927) was a Bolshevik Party member, in 1918 was the chairman of the Soviet delegation at the Brest-Litovsk negotiations and was later the plenipotentiary representative at Berlin. **Von Kulman** was the state secretary of the German government, the head of the German delegation at the Brest-Litovsk negotiations. Relations with Persia, Afghanistan and Turkey were established in early 1921 when treaties were signed.]

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[Letter 9: File 1812. Stalin's letter to L. Trotsky. 1918. Page 3.]

To Trotsky. A copy to Lenin.

As I am short on time, I shall write briefly and to the point. 1. We have all made a mistake by declaring a separate Cossack mobilization: a) we are late in comparison with Krasnov, b) we have no revolutionary nucleus to consolidate the Cossack masses for Soviet power (the "Don Soviet government" is a hoax; under pressure from other towns and small groups it declared itself dismissed yesterday). This, in fact, explains how our mobilization has helped Krasnov: the mobilized Cossacks, having received weapons and cannons went over to Krasnov and now form the bulk of the Krasnov "army."

2. Those familiar with the situation unanimously agree that our base in the Don Oblast is comprised of "those from other towns" and we can only consider total mobilization without picking out the Cossacks separately. That is the only way to utilize the Cossacks as a military force. The "Cossack Committee" based in Moscow has lost touch with reality and has no concept of the actual local conditions.

3. Separate Cossack mobilization has caused us damage not only in Don, but in Kubano-Tersky as well. Armed and subordinate to their former esauls, the Cossacks have been engaging in partial mutinies, blowing up railroads throughout the northern Caucasus. We have every reason to believe that they are supplied with pyroxylin not only by Krasnov's agents, but by English and French agents as well.

4. The situation becomes even more complex since the Sevkaokr headquarters have proved to be unadaptable to the struggle against the counter-revolution. Our "experts" are not only psychologically incapable of resolutely fighting the counter-revolution, but as officers supposedly capable of drawing plans and directing

organization, they are indifferent to operations, supplies, control [page 2] over commanders, and in general feel like strangers or guests. The military commanders have not been able to fill this gap. Zedin is not bright; not understanding the situation, he simply goes with the flow. Anisimov is more conscious and active, but he is alone. And the *voenkomp* and his assistants are so apathetic about their work that two days after the break in the Tikhoretsky line, Snesev and Zedin were going off to Baku (uninvited) and only my protest (I began to accuse them of desertion) forced them to postpone their trip, and I must note that after remaining in Tsaritsin, they made no attempts to restore the broken line.

5. All of this, compounded by the food matters in the south (my field), forced me to interfere in headquarters' matters. Not even mentioning that the delegates from the fronts and from the local headquarters demanded that I interfere as the Sevkaokr headquarters had obviously neglected supplies. I sent three comrades (recommended by locals) to the headquarters, one of whom was approved as the chief of the Control Department (Rukhimovich) and by my demand, two others (Vadim and Parkhomenko) as his assistants. These men have revealed a number of unpardonable omissions, having found cannons and armored vehicles which Zedin had denied possessing and which the front has desperately needed for two or three weeks. Discoveries have only begun. Then there is the common sickness: there are a great deal of chief commanders at the headquarters who cannot (or do not want to) be subordinate to one commander. If not for this illness, the break in the line would not have happened. I cannot look on without emotion when Kalnin's front is cut off from the supply points in the north and the grain regions. I shall correct these omissions in the provinces and I shall dismiss the officers and commanders responsible even if any difficulties with formalities should arise. It is clear that I am taking full responsibility in face of the authorities.

6. Tsaritsin is being transformed into an equipment base. *Voenkomi* as inept as Snesev will not be suitable there. Do you have any candidates? The *voenkomi* must be able to lead the experts in all military affairs [page 3], which is what we do not have here in Tsaritsin (Give Anisimov another man -better than Zedin).

7. Trifonov has "submitted" and is loyal, but he is not cut out to be a *voenkomp*. We are sending him to you as a military goods pusher—that seems to be the job for him. Avtonomov has friends among the French, and as rumor has it, closes his eyes to the Cossacks' destruction of the railroads. The headquarters' doors, for some reason, are open to members of the French mission, and as our comrades testify, the exploits of our fellow Kubans against the Germans are engineered by the French. I swear that if they are captured, I will not free them.

8. Why are the sailors vegetating in Tsaritsin and not being used to fight the Czechs?

People's Commissar. Tsaritsin. July 11, 1918.

[A typed original. The letter was sent from Tsaritsin To Moscow. The formation of "Red" **Cossack** units and detachments was carried out in the spring of 1918

on the territories of the Don, Kuban-Black Sea and Tersky republics formed in March and April of 1918. The resolution of the Soviet of People's Commissars, "On Cossack Mobilization," was adopted on 31 May 1918. **Pyotr Krasnov** (1869-1947) was a military chief, lieutenant general. In May 1918 he was elected the leader (ataman) of the Don Army. He was the founder of the Don Army which displaced Soviet power along the Don River. In 1919 he emigrated. **The Don government:** the government of the Don Soviet Republic, active until May 1918 and after the White Cossacks captured Rostov, the capital, and overthrew Soviet power, it then emigrated to Tsaritsin. It declared itself dissolved and was liquidated by the decision of the All-Russian Executive Committee in September 1918. **"Of another town":** the Cossacks living in Cossack lands. **The Cossack Committee:** the administrative body governing the Cossack territories. Formed by decree by the Soviet of People's Commissars on 31 May 1918. **Esaul** is a rank equal to a cavalry captain. **Sevkaokr** is an abbreviation of the North Caucasus Military District, which formed in May 1918 in the Don, Tersky and Dagestan *oblasti*. The headquarters were located near Tsaritsin since June 1918 and were dismissed in September 1918 after the southern front was established. Stalin was a member of the district military council. **A. Snasarev** was the military chief of the district from May until September 1918. **Voenkomb** (*Voeny komissar*), the abbreviation for military commissar. **Karl Zedin** (1885-1919, real name, Ziedinsh) was a military leader, Bolshevik Party member. From May until July 1918 he was the military commissar of the North Caucasus Military District. **Nikolai Anisimov** (1892-1920) was a military figure, member of Bolshevik Party, in June-July 1918 was a military commissar of the North Caucasus Military District. **Tykhoretsk:** a town in the Krasnodar *Krai* of Russia. **Moisei Rukhimovich** (1889-1938) was a Party and state officer, in 1918 and 1919 was a military commissar of the Central Department on the Formation of the Ukrainian Red Army, a member of the Ukrainian Soviet of People's Commissars. **Alexander Parkhomenko** (1886-1921) was a military chief, Bolshevik Party member, a commander of the armored train in southern Russia after May 1918. **Karl Kalnin** (1884-1938) was a military chief, Bolshevik Party member, from May to August 1918 was the commander-in-chief of the North Caucasus Red Army which existed from January until October 1918. **Evgeny Trifonov** (1885-1937) was a military man, a writer, Bolshevik Party member, in the summer of 1918 was engaged in administrative work in the south of Russia. **Alexei Avtonomov** (1890-1919) was a Red Army commander, the commander-in-chief of the Kuban Republic's armed forces. **Czechs:** the mutiny of the Czech troops (about forty thousand men, former war prisoners) took place in May-August 1918 along the Volga River, in Siberia, and in the Urals, and for a while by default came to be the most powerful armed contingency on the territory of Russia.]

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[Letter 10: File 252. Stalin's letter to Tsyurupa. 1918. Page 2. Notes on the margins in Tsyurupa's handwriting: "to V. I. Lenin and L.D. Trotsky," and "It is true one-hundred fold"].

To Comrade Tsyurupa.

Dear comrade, since I have little time I shall get straight down to business.

1. There is a lot of grain (old) in the south, the harvest is unprecedented, and more than sixty trains are prepared, but cannot be moved because of the broken line (To V.I. Lenin and L. D. Trotsky).

2. It is stockpiled very poorly because Yakubov appointed lay people plenipotentiaries due to a lack of competent men and this is detrimental to the storage. There is a possibility of remedying this—we are selecting the necessary people and are already sending some to the important spots (To Lenin and Trotsky).

3. Shentyagin and co. have proved to be either babblers or enemies desiring to snatch power from Chokprod on the basis of the famous decree (remember the shady side of that decree). Needless to say, this company will be smashed into the ground. They have rejected our proposal to join Chokprod. To hell with them (It is true one-hundred fold).

4. [page 2] The people you sent will be used to work in storage once the road is opened.

5. We have decided to squeeze the peasants economically, taking all manufactured products for ourselves so that they will go naked and barefoot without wares: only under such conditions will they surrender and open their granaries (as they are doing now!). For this purpose Tsentrotkan must cease distributing fabric to different organizations (in any case, we shall requisition all fabric given out in this manner). The guard at Kamyshin has revealed to us an entire world illegally arranged by speculators with their agents and barges. We have already procured fifteen wagons of textiles for the time being. And our requisition commission has managed to requisition 95 wagons of grain for June.

6. We have already received vehicles and textiles, but they are stuck in Tsaritsin due to the broken line. We are sending part of it via Kizlyar.

7. We have opened a new grain center south of Tsaritsin. In several days we should receive about 40 wagons, but this wheat (all or part) will be sent to Tsaritsin or to the front where they are in dire need due to the lack of deliveries from the south.

8. This food problem compounds the military one: if the roads are not soon free from bandits, famine is inevitable. Pressure Trotsky to send the promised munitions. If they are delayed, it will be too late.

Copy to V.I. Lenin and L.D. Trotsky. -A. Tsyurupa.

[A typed original. The letter was sent to Tsaritsin. **Kamyshin**: a town in the Volgograd *Oblast*, a river port. **A famous decree**: the decree of the All-Russian Executive Committee of 11 June 1918 "On the Organization of the Poverty-stricken in the Villages and on Supplying Them with Grain, Agricultural Equipment and Other Essentials" adopted by Lenin's initiative. **Tsentrotkan**: the administrative body of textile plants subordinate to the state.]

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 [Letter 11: File 4547. Stalin's letter to Anvelt. 1918. Page 1]

Comrade Anvelt!

Forgive me for not having the time to go into details. I am writing only the essentials.

1. You ought to know that you have our complete and total support. If you have any doubts about that, it would be a sin.
2. In our new decree concerning Estland's independence, we neglected the railroad matter, for it is closely linked with the strategic problems of the entire Baltic region. We believe that it will only be to your advantage. Certainly from a formal point of view, it is not appropriate for the government to have no commander-in-chief, but you can always designate a *voenkom* (as you seem to be in control of the armed forces at Estland), keeping in mind that such a designation should split the strategic unity in the occupied territories.
3. You must advise the agents of "Rosta" not to write: "our troops have occupied this or that," but instead: "the Estland troops have liberated this or that." I ask "Rosta" to please cooperate and not to write in this manner any longer.
4. Comrade Sheffer will be linking Sovnarkom to you. This is to arrange everything for his appeals for Sovnarkom. And I in turn shall supply you with the information.
5. On the seventeenth, two new Soviet governments are likely to come onto the scene—Latvian and Lithuanian.

I shake your hand. Regards to Pegelman and Kingisep.

—Stalin

P.S. Please inform me of the date the soviets are to be held.

[The original in Stalin's handwriting. The letter was sent from Moscow. At this time Stalin was the commissar of nationalities affairs and a Revolutionary Military Council member. **Jaan Anvelt** (1884-1937) was a revolutionary and an Estonian writer. In 1918-1919 he was the chairman of Estland Executive Committee, the head of the military department of the Estland Labor Commune

Soviet. **Estland:** Estland Labor Commune, a Soviet republic in Estonia which existed from November 1916 until June 1919 with Narva as its capital. At the end of 1918, the Russian government recognized the sovereignty of the republic in a special decree. "**Rosta**" was the Russian telegraph agency from 1918 to 1925. **Sovnarkom:** the Soviet of People's Commissars, where Stalin held an office. **Pegelman:** Hans Pöggelman (1875-1941), revolutionary, an Estonian writer, in 1918 was a member of the Estonian government (Estland Labor Commune), the chief of the Estonian section of the People's Commission on Nationalities Affairs of the Russian Federation. **Kingisep:** Viktor Kingissepp (1888-1922) was a revolutionary, Bolshevik Party member, one of the founders of the Estonian Bolshevik Party, in 1918 he worked on the Extraordinary Commission and on the Supreme Revolutionary Tribunal of Russia. The Soviet government of **Latvia** was formed on 17 December 1918 and existed until early 1920. The Soviet government in **Lithuania** existed from December 1918 until August 1919.]

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 [Letter 12: File 5033. Stalin's letter to V. Lenin. 1921. Page 2.]

Comrade Lenin!

I am answering in regards to Sorin's letter.

1. Sorin was enlisted with the Agitation Department of the Central Committee for it is "empty" and "boring" there: they need people like him there to help ease the "boredom." The "emptiness" of Agitotdel is an argument for Sorin's staying (not the opposite).

2. Sorin has been working all-in-all two days at Agitotdel (he is entrusted with keeping an eye on the provincial press) and it is already boring to him! We must drum it into the heads of these bored Chekhov heroes that our work may be boring in the future as well and the time has come to grow accustomed to everyday, slow, constructive work.

3. Sorin entered Agitotdel with a contract. To my suggestion, to enter Agitotdel in a month, in order to find, within a month's time a deputy able to replace him at *Sputnik Kommunista*, he answered: "After reading Agitotdel's proposal, I consider it more advisable to go to Agitotdel immediately, as I think I would be quite useful. . ." And now after only two days he is complaining of boredom. Sorin is not free from the impression which is so typical of many of our young Communists.

4. I suggest that we let the Central Committee decision on Sorin remain as is: in the course of his work at Agitotdel, he will lose his impressionism and we shall be able to fashion a good Party officer-constructor out of him.

-Stalin.

[The original is in Stalin's handwriting. The letter was written in Moscow. **Vladimir Sorin** (1893-1944) was a Bolshevik Party member, chairman of the Eastern Front Revolutionary Tribunal. From 1920 until 1925 he was a Communist member of the Moscow Party Committee Bureau, the chief of the magazine *Sputnik Kommunist*, a social and political magazine of the Bolshevik Party Communist Committee. It was published in Moscow from 1921 until 1930.]

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 [Letter 13: File 2256. Chicherin's letter to L. Kamenev and Stalin's Resolution. 9 February 1922.]

To Comrade Kamenev

Very Esteemed Lev Borisovich!

The plenipotentiary representatives of the NKID to Novorossysk, Comrade Peterson, reminds you that according to departmental instructions, NKID representatives are authorized to allow military vessel crews to go ashore if the VChK representatives agree. In such a case, the vessel is subject to customs control, particularly in examining the vessel and radio station. The commander of the American torpedo boat N234 began to protest after receiving this news regarding the radio station regulations. In light of the fact that ARA representatives are coming soon, any confusions should be clarified. I myself shall try to see how matters stand regarding existing rules and International Law.

With Communist regards, Chicherin.

ARA Torpedo boats must observe all the tenets of International Law; There will be no indulgences in this respect.

L. Kamenev, I. Stalin, V. Molotov

[The original in Chicherin's handwriting. The signatures are original. The document was written in Moscow and several weeks later Stalin was elected secretary general of the Central Committee. He would be the secretary general of the Party until his death in 1953. **Lev Kamenev** (1883-1936, real name, Rosenfeld) was a Bolshevik Party member. In 1918-1926 he was the chairman of the Moscow Soviet; in 1922-1924, the deputy chairman; in 1924-1926, the chairman of the Labor Defense Council, a Politburo member (1919-1926). **NKID**: People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs. **Karl Peterson** (1877-1926) was a Party figure and a member of the Presidium of the All-Russian Executive Committee. The **VChK**, known in English as the Cheka, was the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission to Fight Counter-Revolution and Sabotage (from

August 1918). **ARA:** American Relief Administration. This organization was established to render assistance to the European countries devastated in World War I. It was headed by Herbert Hoover from 1919 to 1923. In 1921 it was allowed into Russia. **Vyacheslav Molotov** (1890-1986) was a Party figure; in 1921-1930, a Communist Party Central Committee secretary; in 1921-1957, a Politburo member.]