

Appendix of Primary Sources

To Grover Furr, *Leon Trotsky's Collaboration with Germany and Japan*

Pages 1-9: **Confessions about Rakovsky.**

Lubianka 1937-1938 No. 11 pp. 56-60.

Russian text online at <http://istmat.info/node/29655>

and at

<http://www.alexanderyakovlev.org/fond/issues-doc/60982>

Pages 10-17: **Trotsky's 'Prediction' About Rakovsky.
Rakovsky's Testimony at Trial, March 4 - 5, 1938.**

1938 Trial, pp. 289-295.

Pages 18 -61: **Serov's Letter concerning the "Bukharin Trial."**

Protsess Bukharina 1938 g. Ed. Zh. V. Artamonova, N.V. Petrov.
Moscow: Mezhdunarodnyi Fond Demokratia, Steven Cohen and
Katrina Vanden Heuvel Fund, 2012, pp. 832-858.

Russian text online at <http://istmat.info/node/46740>

Confessions about Rakovsky

Special communication of N.I. Ezhov to J.V. Stalin Concerning Kh. G. Rakovsky with appendix of excerpts from confessions concerning his case.

Jan. 25 1937 No. 55464

Urgent – Top Secret

To Secretary of the CC VKP(b) comr. Stalin

According to materials from agents and investigations RAKOVSKY Kh. G. has remained until the present one of the active members of the counterrevolutionary Trotskyist-Zinovievist terrorist organization. According to confessions of PIATAKOV and MILL' (Okun') he had an independent line of contact with TROTSKY (and has effected this contact through ROSMER).

During exile in Barnaul until April 1934, having extremely hostile positions towards the VKP(b) and its leadership RAKOVSKY maintained counterrevolutionary organizational contact with the active members of the Trotskyist organization IUDKIS, PLISO, KASPAROVA, O. SMIRNOVA, et. al. RAKOVSKY knew of the existence of the Trotskyist-Zinovievist bloc, who was in it, and their terrorist activities (from the confessions of GAVEN, TER-VAGANIAN, ESTERMAN). According to confessions by KASPAROVA, NIKOLAEV, and ESTERMAN, RAKOVSKY's renunciation of Trotskyism was insincere at Trotsky's instigation and he remained as before in a position of active struggle against the leadership of the VKP(b).

KASPAROVA confessed that "the bloc of the Trotskyist and Zinovievist organizations was based upon the recognition of terrorist methods of struggle against the leadership of the VKP(b)" – she was informed of this by RAKOVSKY.

In 1934-35 RAKOVSKY was in contact with the secret Trotskyist POLLIAKOV, who several times brought TROTSKY'S bulletin from abroad for I.N. SMIRNOV.

In April 1935 RAKOVSKY gave to one of his agents the platform of the Trotskyists and two documents published illegally by the Trotskyists in 1928, for safekeeping.

According to materials from agents in the Main Directorate of State Security it is apparent that in May 1935 RAKOVSKY transmitted through KARMANENKO a directive "to remain intact until the moment of international complications which will inevitably occur in the near future."

In May of the same year, 1935, we know of a meeting between RAKOVSKY and a certain DAVIDSON who arrived from the USA and COUTS who came from London.

While in Moscow RAKOVSKY continuously maintained close ties with the Trotskyists PREOBRAZHENSKII, SOSNOVSKII, VINOGRADSKAIA, SOSNOVSKAIA, DANISHEVSKII and CHERNOBORODOV. The arrested terrorist NIKOLAEV – former worker of the Krestintern and member of the CC CP(b)U confessed that during a meeting with RAKOVSKY in Moscow in 1935, "RAKOVSKY surprised him (NIKOLAEV) with his hostility" against comr. STALIN. RAKOVSKY was glad to hear NIKOLAEV's report about his meeting with I.N. SMIRNOV and asked for information about DROBNIS and RAFAEL.

"For his part RAKOVSKY promised his full support in any Trotskyist work. I considered it necessary to verify with RAKOVSKY the facts communicated to me by DREITSER about the work of the Trotskyist-Zinovievist center, who was on it, and also who was in the Moscow center. RAKOVSKY confirmed all of this to me, and also confirmed the membership of the especially clandestine center." (from NIKOLAEV's confession of December 30, 1936).

NIKOLAEV's second meeting with RAKOVSKY took place at the beginning of 1936.

"At this meeting RAKOVSKY very concretely and frankly gave me clear directions concerning the development of Trotskyist work in a warlike spirit, since 'each of STALIN's blows against the

Trotskyists must be answered by a counterstroke.” (From NIKOLAEV’s confession of December 30, 1936).

At an interrogation on December 20, 1936 PIATAKOV confessed that at his personal meeting with TROTSKY in Oslo in 1935 TROTSKY told PIATAKOV that it was essential to meet with RAKOVSKY and tell him that he had to become more active. Said PIATAKOV, “I concluded from this that RAKOVSKY had some kind of special way of communicating with TROTSKY.”

On January 25 of this year the accused DROBNIS confessed at trial that he was aware from the words of MURALOV that RAKOVSKY had his own direct Trotskyist lines of communication and definitely knew “about the new tactics, Trotsky’s new directives concerning terror and diversion.”

I consider that it is imperative that RAKOVSKY be arrested. I request your permission.

People’s Commissar for Internal Affairs of the USSR N. EZHOV

APPENDIX: Excerpts from confessions in 6 pages.

EXCERPT FROM TRANSCRIPT OF INTERROGATION OF KASPAROVA of 9/21, 10/27, and 11/5 1936

That the bloc of the Trotskyist and Zinovievist organizations had at its basis the mutual acceptance of terrorist methods of struggle against the leadership of the VKP(b) I learned from Kh. G. RAKOVSKY.

RAKOVSKY informed about this in a coded letter in Saratov in 1933 not long before my arrest.

I cannot relate the exact contents of Kh.G. RAKOVSKY’s letter but I recall that in this letter, in a very few sentences, Kh.G. RAKOVSKY informed me that the basis of the bloc was the mutual terrorist activity of the Trotskyists and the Zinovievists against the leadership of the VKP(b) and, evidently knowing from I.N. SMIRNOV

about my negative attitude towards terrorist methods of struggle, that there was no other way to change the leadership of the VKP(b) and, consequently, to change the regime. The letter ended with a communication of the members of the center of the bloc – ZINOVIEV, KAMENEV, SMIRNOV, and MRACHKOVSKII.

I am aware that during the whole period of his exile RAKOVSKY took a very hostile attitude in relation to the VKP(b) and its leadership.

The letters and directives that RAKOVSKY issued in rather large numbers were distinguished by their hostility to the Party's line, oriented Trotskyists towards denying that the USSR was a dictatorship of the proletariat, gave the direct order to form a second party and led, as I have confessed, to directive concerning the transition to terror in the struggle against the Party leadership.

RAKOVSKY was considered by all of us as TROTSKY's "man in charge" in the USSR and since we knew about RAKOVSKY's contact with TROTSKY, which took place through I.N. SMIRNOV, we accepted all directives issued by him as TROTSKY's directives.

RAKOVSKY carried on a very intensive correspondence in code with the exiles and the political isolators. With the Saratov Trotskyist organization RAKOVSKY carried on this correspondence in the main through OL'GA SMIRNOVA. Documents were transmitted to him in the bindings of books.

I know that all the work of organizing a printing press and reproducing Trotskyist documents in the Kursk Trotskyist organization was carried out with RAKOVSKY's knowledge and permission. Active contact between him and Trotskyists who arrived in Barnaul was also conducted intensively.

I recall that in 1932 the Trotskyists PLIS used to come. He brought to us from RAKOVSKY an illegal document titled "Dictatorship is an Abstraction."

At the end of 1933 IUDKIS was coming to RAKOVSKY from the center of the Trotskyist-Zinovievist bloc.

RAKOVSKY's declaration of renunciation was a complete surprise to me..., his renunciation was a maneuver.

His renunciation of Trotskyism was effected by RAKOVSKY on the direct instructions of TROTSKY. The exiled Trotskyist MAKNIVEL'SON informed me about this in Alma-Ata.

Accurately [transcribed]

Authorized agent, 4th Section, Main Directorate of State Security

Jr. Lieutenant of State Security EFREMOV

EXCERPT FROM TRANSCRIPT OF INTERROGATION

of PIATAKOV December 19-20 1936

"We arrived at an airport near Oslo and from there drove by automobile to a cottage where I met with Trotsky in a private apartment. The meeting lasted no more than two hours.

I should add that among the individual persons whose names TROTSKY mentioned during our talk RADEK, SOKOL'NIKOV, RAKOVSKY and others were mentioned.

Concerning RAKOVSKY TROTSKY said that it was essential to talk with him and give him a push in his work along the lines of the Trotskyist organization. From this I deduced that RAKOVSKY had some personal line of contact with TROTSKY.

After the meeting with TROTSKY I intended to meet with RAKOVSKY and pass TROTSKY'S instructions on to him, but this meeting never occurred."

Accurately [transcribed]

Authorized agent, 4th Section, Main Directorate of State Security

Jr. Lieutenant of State Security EFREMOV

EXCERPT FROM TRANSCRIPT OF INTERROGATION

of NIKOLAEV from December 30, 1936

“After the return of I.N. SMIRNOV from abroad in 1932 he informed me that he had meetings with L. SEDOV and gave me a direct order about the necessity of restoring organizational contacts with the former active Trotskyists and developing activity.

Already then, in 1932, I N. SMIRNOV had received a directive from TROTSKY through SEDOV concerning the development of terrorist activity against the leaders of the VKP(b).

In carrying out this directive I began to reestablish my contacts with the active Trotskyists RAKOVSKY, DROBNIS, BOGUSLAVSKII and others. Talks with all these persons on political subjects convinced me that they were all prepared and were all fully firm in their conviction for active work against the Party.

To my question about how to understand RAKOVSKY's _renegade renunciation DREITSER informed me “that all this was done with TROTSKY'S agreement.”

RAKOVSKY's renunciation was for strategic purposes while he maintained his old political convictions and he, RAKOVSKY, was even a member of the especially secret center. He [DREITSER] named as members, in addition to RAKOVSKY, PIATAKOV, SOKOL'NIKOV, and K. RADEK. This center exists in the event of the failure of the active center of the Trotskyist-Zinovievist center of the bloc. E. DREITSER suggested that I establish close organizational contact with it.

When AKIRTAVA asked me about things in Moscow and with whom in the Trotskyist leadership I was in contact I informed him about the situation in Moscow and that I maintained contact with RAKOVSKY.

I told AKIRTAVA that RAKOVSKY was a member of the especially secret center whose membership consists of, besides RAKOVSKY, PIATAKOV, K. RAADEK and SOKOL'NIKOV, just as E. DREITSER had told me and as RAKOVSKY himself had at one time confirmed.

My meeting with RAKOVSKY took place during the summer of 1935 in Moscow, upon his return from Barnaul, near the post office. Having learned about my arrest in 1933 he was interested in who was in the political isolator, about their state of mind, and about my intentions about returning to the Party. To this I answered that I did not intend to return to the Party again.

I had always known RAKOVSKY to be a person hostile to STALIN and to the current Party leadership, but at our last meeting he surprised even me with his hostility against STALIN. Here he specifically emphasized that they were hindering him in the People's Commissariat of Health and did not allow him to utilize his abilities. In a word the fellow almost stated directly that he had counted on something bigger when he wrote his false declaration that he had moved to the Party's political positions.

For this reason he was especially satisfied at my information about my meeting with I.N. SMIRNOV during my exile. He asked about DROBNIS and whether I was in contact with RAFAIL.

On his part RAKOVSKY promised all his support in any Trotskyist work. He also informed me that he maintained regular contact with PIATAKOV.

I considered it necessary to verify through RAKOVSKY the facts about the work of the Trotskyist-Zinovievist center told to me by DREITSER, about the members of the center, and also of the Moscow center. RAKOVSKY confirmed all of this to me, and also confirmed the membership of the especially secret center.

At this meeting RAKOVSKY very concretely and frankly gave me clear directions concerning the development of Trotskyist work in a warlike spirit, since "each of STALIN's blows against the Trotskyists must be answered by a counterstroke." RAKOVSKY suggested that I maintain regular contact with him."

Accurately [transcribed]

Authorized agent, 4th Section, Main Directorate of State Security

Junior Lieutenant of State Security EFREMOV

AP RF. F. 3. Op. 24. D. 276. L. 15-73. Original. Typewritten

On the first page there is the handwritten note: "Arch. St."

Trotsky's 'Prediction' About Rakovsky

Rakovsky's Testimony at Trial

We have examined all the other evidence relating to Rakovsky's confession concerning the Japanese government and Trotsky. It remains to study Rakovsky's version as given in his trial testimony on March 4 and 5, 1938.

In September 1934 I was sent to Tokyo at the head of the Soviet Red Cross Delegation to an international conference of Red Cross Societies, which was to take place there in October. The day after I arrived in Tokyo, I was stopped in the corridor of the Japanese Red Cross building by a certain prominent public man of Japan. I can mention his name.

THE PRESIDENT: No, there is no need.

RAKOVSKY: Very well, I will name him at the session in camera. He invited me to tea. I made his acquaintance. He held a position which had some relation to my mission. I want to say, not my mission as one who belonged to the opposition, but my governmental mission. I accepted his amiable invitation. During the conversation this person (here I omit various compliments, commonplaces, flattering remarks) said that the interests of the political trend to which I belonged in the U.S.S.R. and the interests of a certain government fully coincided, and that he personally welcomed my arrival in Tokyo because it would give him the opportunity to discuss certain questions concerning both sides; and in particular, he declared that for a certain government and for himself my estimate of the political situation in the Soviet Union would be of extraordinary value.

I must say that I did not anticipate a conversation like this, it took me unawares. I said that, firstly, I was not, nor did I belong to or take any part in the leading circles of my country. I now occupied a very modest position, a modest

post in the People's Commissariat of Public Health, and unfortunately, in this connection I could not be of any service to them. I evaded further conversation and left.

I am giving you the gist of it, of course, without vouching for every word. I wanted to ascertain the motives which prompted such a proposal. The same evening I had a talk with the Ambassador, Yurenev, whom I had known as a Trotskyite ever since 1926, when I spent a summer with him in the south of France at Saint-Jean-de-Luz. I told him of the rather strange words of the person I have mentioned. I am representing it in a somewhat more pointed form, because usually such things are wrapped up in a lot of verbiage without any pretext for protest being given. I told Yurenev that the idea here was to enlist me as a spy, as an informer for a certain government.

Then Yurenev drew a letter from his pocket and told me: "The question is decided, there is no need to hesitate." He even said: "The die is cast." He showed me Pyatakov's letter, which I myself had brought him from Moscow. It was sent to me under such circumstances that I could not know its contents.

I must tell you that when I arrived in Moscow after sending my statement to the Party, I immediately went for a cure. Then I came back, started work, and in two months left for Tokyo. During this time I had the opportunity to see only Sosnovsky, and went twice on business to the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, where I met Krestinsky, with whom I exchanged a few words. I will speak of this later. But on the whole this was the period when I was trying to get back into the Party and in general avoided any meetings with known oppositionists.

Just before my departure I received by messenger of the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry an envelope addressed to me in the People's Commissariat of Health. In this envelope there was a second envelope, addressed to Yurenev, and a note for me. The note was from Pyatakov. In this note he congratulated me on my return and asked me to

take the letter to Yurenev and insist on Yurenev's compliance with his request. The letter was not coded. The contents of this letter related to the methods used in Japan for making alloys of non-ferrous metals; Pyatakov asked Yurenev to let him know what methods were used there and at the same time to send him literature on the subject available in Japan in English and German. But when after my conversation with the well-known public man I have mentioned Yurenev drew this letter from his pocket, besides the unencoded text there was another text which had been written in invisible ink. Then Yurenev read to me first of all what concerned me. Pyatakov had written to him: Rakovsky, apart from his ill health, has another reason for being cautious; this is his desire to get back into the Party; so that in this sense we must spare him, but as far as possible utilize his stay in Tokyo. Then came literally the following phrase: "It is likely that a certain government will itself take steps in this direction" (that is, in the direction of utilizing Rakovsky). Further Pyatakov wrote to Yurenev about Bogomolov, the Ambassador in China, pointing out that a certain government was dissatisfied with his political line, that he was helping Great Britain more than he was the said government.

Further it was pointed out that Yurenev must try to make all possible use of Sabanin, the director of the legal department of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, while he was in Tokyo. Finally, Yurenev said, reading the letter: "But this is what I find difficult to do." The letter contained instructions that he must take advantage of the well-known negotiations concerning the sale of the Chinese Eastern Railway so that something might accrue to the benefit of the Trotskyites.

I have told you approximately the contents of Pyatakov's letter to Yurenev. Yurenev was connected with the Trotskyite underground in Moscow, with Pyatakov.

On the second or third day after my conversation with Yurenev, after a certain banquet to which all the delegates

to the Red Cross Conference had been invited, at the end of the dinner somebody approached me and said that a certain personage of high standing, present at this dinner, wished to make my acquaintance.

The official personage stated that he was very pleased to make my acquaintance, etc. Then he went on to say that our interests coincided with the interests of a certain state, that an agreement had been reached between the Trotskyites in the U.S.S.R. and the representatives of a certain state, but that we did not know the exact terms of this agreement yet.

The prominent public man who had spoken to me did so, as I learnt, on the instructions of this high personage. After this I had two more meetings with the public man...

THE PRESIDENT: Excuse me, accused Rakovsky. Seeing that it is now ten o'clock and your evidence will last another hour at least, you will conclude tomorrow.

The Court is adjourned until 11 a.m.

MORNING SESSION, MARCH 5, 1938

COMMANDANT OF THE COURT: The Court is coming, please rise.

THE PRESIDENT: Please be seated. The session is resumed. Accused Rakovsky, you may conclude your evidence.

RAKOVSKY: Yesterday I concluded with the statement that, after my conversation with the high personage who was close to the Japanese government, I had three talks with the public man of whom I have spoken, the man at the head of a big public organization in Japan.

During the second and third meeting with the public man who headed a big public organization in Japan we established the nature of the information which I promised to supply to the agents of the Japanese intelligence service in Moscow and also the technique of transmitting this information. While still in Tokyo, I drew into this work Dr. Naida, secretary of the Red Cross Delegation, of whom I

already knew that he was a member of the underground counter-revolutionary terrorist organization. I sent Dr. Naida with my card to the public man and he arranged with him as to how and with whom Dr. Naida was to meet in Moscow; it was he who acted as liaison agent between me and the Japanese intelligence service. In Tokyo I had yet another meeting, with a third person. All such international conferences, as you probably know, are accompanied by all kinds of receptions, dinners, shows, meetings, which usually serve as a background for very serious conversations, quite legitimate, but sometimes not legitimate, I have in mind recruiting for various purposes. I was introduced to this third person by the second high personage. He asked me to take coffee with him -- this was after dinner; we sat down at a table and began to talk.

I shall not reproduce the whole conversation, and it is not necessary either; I shall give it to you in substance. He started the conversation by saying: "We are aware that you are a very close friend and adherent of Mr. Trotsky. I must ask you to write to him that a certain government is dissatisfied with his articles on the Chinese question and also with the behaviour of the Chinese Trotskyites. We have a right to expect a different line of conduct on the part of Mr. Trotsky. Mr. Trotsky ought to understand what is necessary for the certain government. There is no need to go into details, but it is clear that an incident provoked in China would be a desirable pretext for intervening in China." I wrote to Trotsky about all this—about my negotiations in Tokyo, about my conversations with Yurenev, about my meetings, and, of course, about this last proposition.

I also kept Yurenev informed of all my talks. During the last week I fell ill owing to an inflammation of the veins of my right leg, and I stayed in the Embassy. I am mentioning this because it gave me and Yurenev an opportunity to see more of each other. He would come to me—the other members of the delegation were, of course, away at such times—he would come to me and we would talk about our common

Trotskyite affairs. Yurenev was very much worried by one circumstance. "We have gotten," he said, "into such a mess that sometimes one does not know how to behave. One is afraid that by satisfying one of our partners we may offend another. For instance, here at present, antagonism is arising between Great Britain and Japan in connection with the Chinese question, while we have to maintain connections both with the British and Japanese intelligence services"...

VYSHINSKY: Who do you mean, "we"?

RAKOVSKY: The Trotskyites. "The Moscow centre, in this case Pyatakov, is complaining that Bogomolov is taking the side of the British. And here I have to find my bearings in all this."... I told him: you are exaggerating the difficulty of your position. What do we have to proceed from? We Trotskyites have to play three cards at the present moment: the German, Japanese and British. It was not quite clear to me, at that time at least, what the German card promised. Personally I thought that the possibility was not excluded that Hitler would seek a rapprochement with the government of the U.S.S.R. I cited the policy of Richelieu: in his own country he exterminated the Protestants, while in his foreign policy he concluded alliances with the Protestant German princes. The relations between Germany and Poland were still in the stage of their inception at the time. Japan, on the other hand, was a potent aggressor against the U.S.S.R. For us Trotskyites the Japanese card was extremely important, but, on the other hand, we should not overrate the importance of Japan as our ally against the Soviet government. Even if Japanese aggression could force its way into the territory of the U.S.S.R., it would be lost in the vast spaces, and in the taiga. As for Great Britain, the situation was rather more serious. At that moment Great Britain was antagonistic to Japan. I am telling you about our private conversations which ought to show why we pursued one line or another. At the moment there was antagonism between ourselves and Japan, but it should not be forgotten that England once

headed a coalition against the French Revolution and fought on for twenty-five years.

THE PRESIDENT: You should dwell less on the past and speak more about the Trotskyite organization.

RAKOVSKY: Thus, the conclusion was that it was necessary to maintain the connection with the British Intelligence Service, but to pay attention to the Japanese intelligence service at the present time.

VYSHINSKY: I did not quite get you. You say: it was necessary to maintain the connection with the British Intelligence Service and to pay attention to the Japanese intelligence service.

RAKOVSKY: To pay the main attention.

VYSHINSKY: Hence, to serve both the Japanese and British intelligence services, and in addition also the German.

RAKOVSKY: According to my personal opinion at the time, this latter was a mere prospect.

VYSHINSKY: From Krestinsky's evidence you saw that it was not a mere prospect.

What intelligence services were you personally connected with?

RAKOVSKY: The British and the Japanese.

VYSHINSKY: And Krestinsky? Accused Krestinsky, what intelligence service were you connected with?

KRESTINSKY: The German.

VYSHINSKY: Prospectively or actually?

KRESTINSKY: Actually.

VYSHINSKY: Actually? Proceed, please.

RAKOVSKY: I returned from Tokyo with the credentials of a Japanese spy in my pocket. In my present state of mind I do not find it difficult to say so openly, to admit openly before the people's Court what formerly I would not bring myself to admit to my own conscience. It took me a short time, only a few months one might say, to consummate that evolution

of Trotskyism which it took other Trotskyites several years to consummate. (1938 Trial, 289-295)

Serov's Letter concerning the Bukharin Trial

From *Protsess Bukharina 1938 g.* Ed. Zh. V. Artamonova, N.V. Petrov.
Moscow: Mezhdunarodnyi Fond Demokratii, Steven Cohen and
Katrina Vanden Heuvel Fund, 2012.

/ 832 /

Report of I.A. Serov, Chairman of the Committee of State Security
[KGB] attached to the Council of Ministers of the USSR, Concerning
the Trial in the Case of the "Anti-Soviet Bloc of Rights and
Trotskyites."

July 7 1956

Top secret

To Comrade V.M. MOLOTOV.

I hereby present to you the report concerning the questions
outlined in the protocol of the Commission of the CC of the CPSU of
July 2 1956.

I. Serov

July 7 1956. No. 1687-C

Report Concerning the Materials in the Case of the Antisoviet "Bloc
of Rights and Trotskyites."

The origins of the case

In the case of the anti-Soviet "bloc of Rights and Trotskyites" the
following persons were brought to justice sentenced by the Military
Collegium of the USSR Supreme Court:

/ 833 /

- 1) BUKHARIN Nikolai Ivanovich
 - 2) /RYKOV, Aleksei Ivanovich
 - 3) IAGODA, Genrikh Grigor'evich
 - 4) KRESTINSKII Nikolai Nikolaevich
 - 5) ROZENGOL'TS Arkady Pavlovich
 - 6) IVANOV Vladimir IVANOVich
 - 7) CHERNOV Mikhail Aleksandrovich
 - 8) GRIN'KO Grigorii Fedorovich
 - 9) PESHKOV Isaac Abramovich
 - 10) IKRAMOV Akmal'
 - 11) KHODZHAEV Faizulla
 - 12) SHARANGOVICH Vassilii Fomich
 - 13) ZUBAREV Prokopii Timofeevich
 - 14) BULANOV Pavel Petrovich
 - 15) LEVIN Lev Grivor'evich
 - 16) KAZAKOV Ignatii Nikolaevich
 - 17) MAKSIMOV-DIKOVSKII Veniamin Adamovich (Abramovich)
 - 18) KRIUCHKOV Petr Petrovich
- to the supreme criminal punishment – execution by shooting;
- 19) PLETNEV Dmitrii Dmitrievich - to 25 years in prison;
 - 20) RAKOVSKY Khristian Georgievich - to 20 years in prison and
 - 21) BESSONOV Sergei Alekseevich - to 15 years in prison.

As can be seen from the materials of the case, before the arrests of BUKHARIN N. I., RYKOV A.I., KRESTINSKII N.N. and others, the organs of the NKVD and of the USSR Prosecutor's Office did not possess any verified facts on organized activities of these individuals and on the existence of a so-called "Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites."

The confessions of ZINOVIEV, KAMENEV, SOKOL'NIKOV and REINGOL'D that was available at that time concerning the criminal activity of BUKHARIN and RYKOV were rejected by the USSR Prosecutor's Office as unreliable. A. Ia. Vyshinskii, Prosecutor of the USSR, conducted a special investigation and concluded that there was no evidence against BUKHARIN and RYKOV, and in this connection on 23 September 1936 he sent for approval to J.V. STALIN a draft resolution concerning the cessation of criminal proceedings against BUKHARIN and RYKOV that had arisen on the basis of materials in the trial of the "Trotskyite-Zinovievite Center."

However, after that the NKVD began a storm of activity to collect new "evidence" of the existence of organized anti-Soviet activity on the part of the Rights and, in particular, by BUKHARIN, RYKOV and TOMSKII. During December 1937 — February 1938 participants in the so-called BUKHARIN "school" were arrested and confessions by ASTROV, TSEITLIN, ALEXANDROV and others appeared. At the same time RADEK, already convicted in another case, began to testify against BUKHARIN, RYKOV and TOMSKII.

Once they had become acquainted with the materials brought against them, BUKHARIN and RYKOV categorically denied any guilt in the conduct of anti-Soviet activities. They acknowledged only that in 1928-1929 they had fought against the party's general line but insisted that in recent

/ 834 /

years they had sincerely supported the party leadership and had no fundamental differences with it. In denying his guilt BUKHARIN, in particular, pointed out serious contradictions and absurdities in the

testimony of those arrested and requested that a special commission of inquiry be appointed to verify them.

In February 1937, after EZHOV'S report to the Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU(b), BUKHARIN and RYKOV were arrested.

Somewhat earlier RAKOVSKY Kh. G. had been arrested on a criminal charge.

In a special communication to J.V. STALIN, asking for his consent to arrest RAKOVSKY, the NKVD of the USSR pointed out that he had been exposed as one of the active participants of the Trotsky-Zinoviev terrorist organization .by the testimony of PIATAKOV, KASPAROVA, NIKOLAEV, TER-VAGANIAN and others, as well as by material from undercover agents.

In fact, there were no materials in the possession of the NKVD from agents concerning criminal activities by RAKOVSKY, while the confessions of the above-named persons were vague and uncertain in their reliability.

Thus, TER-VAGANIAN, citing SMIRNOV I.N., confessed that in 1932 RAKOVSKY "wrote a new counterrevolutionary document." But there were no confessions by SMIRNOV along these lines.

The prisoner NIKOLAEV gave vague confessions that RAKOVSKY belonged to a reserve "especially secret center" consisting of PIATAKOV, SOKOL' NIKOV and RADEK, about which he supposedly learned from DREITSER. However, none of the individuals named by NIKOLAEV stated this in their testimony.

KASPAROVA confessed that RAKOVSKY hypocritically announced his departure from the opposition, but in reality did not break with it and in 1933, outlining his anti-Soviet views, informed her in his letters about the creation on a terrorist basis of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc.

To RAKOVSKY'S case was also attached an excerpt from the testimony of PIATAKOV in which it is stated that "RAKOVSKY has

his own line of contact with TROTSKY." In reality PIATAKOV did not give any such testimony.

From March to May 1937 BESSONOV S.A., ZUBAREV P.T., IAGODA G.G., BULANOV P.P. and KRESTINSKII N.N. were arrested.

Concerning BESSONOV there were confessions by BUKHARTSEV that he had recruited BESSONOV in 1936 into the Trotskyist organization, as well as testimony by KUSHNER that had characterized BESSONOV as "unexposed enemy of the party", who had permitted slander against the leaders of the CPSU(b).

Against ZUBAREV before his arrest, according to the materials attached to the case, there were confessions by YULIN, MEDNIKOV and ELKOVICH. They named him as one of the leaders of the counterrevolutionary organization in the Urals.

It has not been possible to establish from the case file what materials served as the basis for the arrest of KRESTINSKII, BULANOV and IAGODA.

Between October and December 1937 on the testimony of IAGODA KRIUCHKOV and LEVIN were arrested on the basis of LEVIN'S testimony.

/ 835 /

PLETNEV, KAZAKOV and MAKSIMOV-DIKOVSKII were arrested at the same time. They were accused of the villainous murders of V.V.KUIBYSHEV, V.R. MENZHINSKII, M. GOR'KII and his son, M.A. PESHKOV.

ZELENSKII I.A., SHARANGOVICH V.F., GRIN'KO G.F., IKRAMOV A. and KHODZHAEV F., who were also defendants in the case under review, were arrested between July and September 1937.

The grounds for the arrest of ZELINSKII were the confessions of the accused LOBOV and KOMAROV (both rehabilitated at the present time) that he had attended anti-Soviet gatherings of members of the organization of Rights.

With respect to SHARANGOVICH there were in fact only the confessions of RACHITSKII, who named him among the members of an anti-Soviet organization.

KHODZHAEV was arrested on the basis of confessions of RYSKULOV and RYKOV.

RYSKULOV testified that in 1930 he and KHODZHAEV joined the anti-Soviet pan-Turkic center, which later established contact with the organization of the Rights and endorsed their terrorist plans. But RYKOV said of KHODZHAEV that he "more or less" sympathized with the Rights.

At the time of IKRAMOV'S arrest there were confessions of ANTIPOV, RUMIANTSEV (both rehabilitated), BUKHARIN, IRMATOV and BALTABAEV that he was one of the leaders of the anti-Soviet nationalist organization in Uzbekistan.

In addition the prisoner APRESOV confessed that as an agent of British intelligence he learned in 1932 about the involvement of IKRAMOV with British intelligence.

In October and November 1937 ROZENGOL'TS A.P., CHERNOV M.A. and IVANOV V.I. were arrested

LOGANOVSKII and RAKOVSKY had confessed about ROZENGOL'TS before his arrest.

LOGANOVSKII asserted that ROZENGOL'TS, as People's Commissar of Foreign Trade, maintained suspicious contacts with representatives of the Polish Embassy in Moscow and conducted sabotage activities in the field of foreign trade.

According to RAKOVSKY'S testimony ROZENGOL'TS serves as an agent of British intelligence.

CHERNOV'S arrest was made on the basis of the confessions of RADCHENKO that since 1931 he had been "organizationally linked with the center of the Rights" and had been conducting sabotage

activities, and of statements by GALEVIUS and GAISTER that as Commissar of Agriculture CHERNOV had extended protection to participants of an organization of agricultural saboteurs.

Concerning IVANOV there were confessions of KAMINSKII and GOROKHOV, arrested in other cases, that they knew from the words of others about his belonging to the anti-Soviet organization of Rights, and the confession of SOBOLEV that in his presence IVANOV had made anti-Soviet statements.

II. The essence of the charges

BUKHARIN N.I., RYKOV A.I., IAGODA G.G. and the others involved in the present case were convicted of the following offenses:

1. On the instructions of foreign intelligence services they had organized a conspiratorial group called the "Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites" that set as its goal

/ 836 /

the overthrow of the existing Soviet socialist social and political system, the restoration in the USSR of capitalism and the power of the bourgeoisie, the dismemberment of the Soviet Union and the separation from it of the Ukraine , Belarus and the Central Asian republics, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Primorye in favor of foreign states;

2. Systematically engaged in espionage on behalf of foreign countries, providing their intelligence services with very important secret state information.

In particular, KRESTINSKII and CHERNOV were accused of belonging to the German intelligence services, ROZENGOL'TS to the German and British intelligence services, RAKOVSKY to the British and Japanese intelligence services, SHARANGOVICH to the Polish intelligence service and GRIN'KO to the Polish and German intelligence services;

3. Systematically organized and carried out acts of sabotage and diversion in various branches of industry, agriculture and transport;

4. Organized terrorist acts against S.M. KIROV, V.V.KUIBYSHEV, V.R MENZHINSKII, A. M.GOR'KII, his son, M.A. PESHKOV, and also attempted to accomplish the poisoning of EZHOV.

BUKHARIN, moreover, was found guilty in the fact that during the period of the conclusion of the Brest peace a group of so-called "Left" Communists headed by him, together with a group of TROTSKY's and of "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries tried to disrupt the conclusion of the peace treaty, to arrest V.I. LENIN, Ia.M. SVERDLOV, and J.V. STALIN and form a new government of Bukharinists, Trotskyites and "Left" SRs.

During the preliminary investigation and the judicial proceedings in the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR all those arrested pleaded guilty to the charges against them.

III. / Analysis of investigative and intelligence materials /

In the course of the verification of the case against the members of the so-called "Anti-Soviet bloc of Rights and Trotskyites" the investigative materials relating to the case have been studied as have agents' materials stored at the KGB of the USSR. At the same time all the accused who were brought to trial in the present case have been verified in the state historical archives and special archives where are stored materials of the Tsarist secret police and captured archives from the German, Polish and French intelligence and counterintelligence agencies.

All the accused convicted in the present case pleaded guilty to the charges against them. However, the verification process revealed that for the most part, these confessions had been made under compulsion and did not reflect the truth.

For example, RAKOVSKY Kh. G., who confessed his active participation in the "Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites" and his collaboration with Japanese and British Intelligence?

/ 837 /

services, after the trial repeatedly protested his innocence and claimed that during the investigation he was forced to give confessions known to be false. / Agent "Anri" / who was held together with RAKOVSKY in the Orel prison, reported on March 17, 1940 that RAKOVSKY:

"completely denies his guilt and considers everything that took place at the trial and in the investigation was nothing but a farce. Sometimes he casually asserted that he gave all his testimony under pressure "(Arch. case number 300956, v. 9, l.d.181 [=archival 'delo' number, volume number, page number])

Another, / agent "Dima" /, who was also with RAKOVSKY in the same cell, reported on April 2, 1941 that in conversations with him RAKOVSKY had categorically denied any involvement in the Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites, said that his interrogation protocols had been falsified and then declared "I was indignant when ARONSON (investigator) wrote the protocol that stated that we wanted to restore capitalism. "Listen, -- I said -- that is illiterate." He threw the crumpled protocol in my face. Generally, when I did not write the way they wanted me to, they always did that..."(ibid, l.d. 322)

Questioned on July 3, 1956 former employee of the NKVD ARONSON Ia.A. confirmed that the investigation against RAKOVSKY was indeed conducted in an atmosphere of serious violation of the norms of socialist legality.

After the trial RAKOVSKY, citing his advanced age and illness, repeatedly made applications in which he petitioned for clemency. However, RAKOVSKY's requests remained unsatisfied.

In this regard, on May 17, 1941 RAKOVSKY said to / agent "Finn" /: "I have decided to change my tactics. So far I have only asked for pardon, but have not written about my own case. Now I will write a statement calling for review of my case, with a description of all the "secrets of the Madrid court" — Soviet investigation. At least let the people through whose hands all statements pass know how exaggerated cases and trials are concocting out of personal political revenge. Even though I may soon die, even if I am a corpse, remember ... sometimes even corpses will begin to speak." (Arch. case number 300956, v. 9, l.d. 239-240)

RAKOVSKY's testimony about his alleged criminal activity is also refuted by the fact that the men he named in interrogations as his accomplices, GVAKHARIA, BABAYAN and SABANIN have now been rehabilitated and their cases closed. BOGOMOLOV, whom RAKOVSKY named as a member of a counterrevolutionary organization, pleaded not guilty at his trial.

During the investigation KRESTINSKII stated that he was an active participant in the "anti-Soviet bloc of Rights and Trotskyites" and in October 1933 while on holiday abroad, with the assistance of BESSONOV had met with Leon TROTSKY and SEDOV in the city of Meran. During this meeting TROTSKY, according to KRESTINSKII, gave him a directive on the establishment in the Soviet Union of the combined forces of the Trotskyites, Rightists and military conspirators, the need to employ terror, sabotage, and subversion in the struggle, as well about the conclusion of agreements with foreign governments for the overthrow of the Soviet state system.

However, these confessions of KRESTINSKII'S are not supported by the operational materials of the Foreign Division of the NKVD, whose agents were monitoring TROTSKY abroad. In the archival documents of the Foreign Division of the NKVD there is no information about any visit by TROTSKY and SEDOV to Meran, nor is there any information about any meeting with KRESTINSKII at all.

After the publication of the materials of the trial TROTSKY declared to a correspondent of the newspaper "New York Herald Tribune" that he

".. had not had any relations with KRESTINSKII since 1927, and had not met, nor corresponded with him either directly or through a third party.

... he had never been to Meran and until he obtained the information today from his secretary had not known where this place was ..." (Arch. case number 13005, vol. 3, l.d.285)

BESSONOV, who had confirmed during interrogations that KRESTINSKII had met with TROTSKY and SEDOV in 1933 in Meran, declared after the trial that all his statements were false.

On May 6, 1939 / Agent "Blagin" /, who was confined with BESSONOV in Solovki prison, reported that BESSONOV responded about the trial of "anti-Soviet bloc of Rights and Trotskyites" as follows:

"The whole trial is a complete invention of the NKVD. In reality none of the accused committed any crimes..." (Arch. case number 101492, Vol. 1 l.d. 27)

On September 29, 1939 another / agent "Nikitin" / reported:

"Concerning the trial of the center of Rights and Trotskyites (1938) BESSONOV said that it was all a complete swindle and a very crude falsification. That, for example, KRESTINSKII really did take money from the German government in 1922 and subsequent years and pass it on to TROTSKY, but that all this did not represent anything counter-revolutionary since, by the Treaty of Versailles, Germany was unable to train military officers on its territory so she conspired with the Soviet Union to organize several military schools in Kazan' and other cities of the USSR and paid money for this to KRESTINSKII, the envoy, for TROTSKY, who was Commissar for the Army and Navy. This was known among the circles of Party and Soviet leaders." (Arch. case number 101492, Vol. 2, l.d. 83-84)

On April 29, 1939 / agent "Grachev" / wrote about the same subject: "Describing the trial as a "farce," prisoner BESSONOV said that everything that the accused said at the trial was coerced testimony and in fact none of them had plotted anything against Soviet power. (ibid, vol. 1, l.d. 22)

During the process of verification other facts have also been obtained that give indisputable evidence that the testimony of KRESTINSKII and BESSONOV was false.

During the interrogation of October 28 1937 KRESTINSKII, for example, testified that participants in the bloc of Rights and Trotskyites, in preparing the overthrow of the Soviet

/ 839 /

regime, discussed the formation of a new government in which they intended to include their accomplices: RUDZUTAK, ANTIPOV, AKULOV, LOBOV, UNSHLIKHT, KAMINSKII, BOLOTIN, KALMANOVICH, UKHANOV and ANTONOV-OVSEENKO.

These individuals were arrested and prosecuted on charges of organizing anti-Soviet activities. During 1955-1956 the cases against RUDZUTAK, ANTIPOV and the other persons named above were verified and terminated by the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court for lack of evidence of criminal activity by the accused.

At the present time GAMARNIK, KNORIN, RUMIANTSEV, VEGER, and others about whom KRESTINSKII testified as "enemies of the people" have been rehabilitated.

In light of these facts the confessions of RAKOVSKY, KRESTINSKII and BESSONOV about the crimes allegedly committed by them cannot be considered truthful.

Of BUKHARIN, in addition to participation in the anti-Soviet bloc of Rights and Trotskyites, it was charged that in 1918, acting in collusion with TROTSKY and the leaders of the Left SRs, he

organized a conspiracy that aimed to disrupt the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, to overthrow the Soviet government, and to arrest and kill V. I. LENIN, J.V. STALIN and Ia. M. SVERDLOV. At the same time BUKHARIN was accused of guilt in the villainous assassination attempt against V.I. LENIN by the SR F. KAPLAN.

This accusation was based on the testimony of MANTSEV, KARELIN, KAMKOV, IAKOVLEV and OSINSKII, arrested in other cases.

During the preliminary investigation, as is stated in the indictment signed by Vyshinsky, BUKHARIN "under the weight of evidence" confessed:

"I must admit that we had direct contact with the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries which was based on a platform of the violent overthrow of the Soviet government, headed by LENIN, STALIN and SVERDLOV, to be followed by the arrests of LENIN, STALIN and SVERDLOV and the creation of a new government of the "Left" Communists and "Left" SRs." (Arch. case number 967582, vol. 5, l.d. 122)

The question of BUKHARIN's collusion with the "Left" SRs was under investigation even before the arrest of BUKHARIN, during which the latter categorically denied that he had ever had any criminal ties with the "Left" SRs. At the confrontation with the arrested ASTROV which took place on January 13, 1937 at the Central Committee of the CPSU(b), BUKHARIN answered a question of J.V. STALIN's thus:

"What's the point of my lying about the Brest peace? Once the Left SRs came and said, "Let us form a cabinet. We will arrest of LENIN and form a cabinet." Afterwards I told this to Ilyich. "Give me your word that you will not mention this to anyone," Ilyich said. Then, when I was fighting alongside you against TROTSKY, I cited this as an example: Look, this is what factional struggle leads to. At that time it was a bombshell."

BUKHARIN changed his testimony significantly during the course of the preliminary investigation and admitted that in 1918 he had been in an agreement with the "Left" SRs. However, at the trial in his closing statement BUKHARIN made such corrections to his previous testimony that they essentially negated his admission about the intention, in a bloc with the "Left" SRs, to arrest and murder LENIN, STALIN and SVERDLOV. In particular BUKHARIN declared:

I admit that there was one conversation with KARELIN and KAMKOV in which the initiative with regard to the arrest of LENIN for twenty-four hours and a subsequent bloc with the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries proceeded from the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries. But in the first conversation the reply was negative. As regards the fact that negotiations were subsequently conducted through PIATAKOV with the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries and this may be considered, as Citizen Procurator, if I am not mistaken, formulated it, an attempt to overthrow the Soviet power by forcible means—this I admit; it was the case. As to the plan of physical extermination, I categorically deny it, and here the logic to which the State Prosecutor referred, namely, that forcible arrest implied physical extermination, will not help in the least..." (Arch. case № 967582. Trial transcript p. 684)

The confessions of the arrested MANTSEV regarding BUKHARIN's collusion with the "Left" SRs for the overthrow of the Soviet regime and the arrest of LENIN, STALIN and SVERDLOV cannot be considered reliable because MANTSEV gave them after having been sentenced to death. According to the material in the file on MANTSEV it is clear that he was arrested on October 22, 1937 on the charge of belonging to a Trotskyist terrorist organization. He pleaded guilty to this and confessed that his active anti-Soviet activity was preceded by the struggle against the party in a group of so-called "Left Communists" led by BUKHARIN. However MANTSEV did not confess anything at that time about any connection between BUKHARIN and "Left" SRs in 1918.

On December 25, 1937 MANTSEV was sentenced to death by the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court. In accordance with the law of December 1 1934 the sentence against MANTSEV was to be carried out immediately, as was specifically mentioned in the text of the sentence. Nevertheless, this sentence was not carried out for a long time, and on January 31, 1938 confessions were obtained from MANTSEV that in 1918 BUKHARIN had conspired with the "Left" SRs to overthrow the Soviet regime and to arrest LENIN, STALIN and SVERDLOV. After MANTSEV had given such testimony, his sentence of execution was canceled by a protest of the President of the Supreme Court and his case was remanded for further investigation. Four months after the trial of the anti-Soviet bloc of Rights and Trotskyites, where MANTSEV had acted as a witness, he was again sentenced to the supreme penalty without further investigation and was shot on August 19, 1938.

Another prosecution witness, speaking at the trial in the case of the anti-Soviet bloc, former member of the Central Committee of the "Left" SRs KAMKOV B.D. according to the testimony of the arrested BRIUKHANOV, held together with him in the same cell, said to him:

/ 841 /

"All three of the recent trials are the same kind of swindle as the previous ones. There is not a drop of truth in them. Neither ZINOVIEV nor BUKHARIN was involved in any counter-revolutionary conspiratorial work. Espionage, diversion, sabotage, terrorism, killing - this is all a complete sham, fabricated by the NKVD. Confessions were extracted from the accused by torture, blackmail, beatings, threats, threats against their families, the arrests of their wives etc. by means of physical and mental pressure. At the same time they used bribery, appeasing the defendants, promises not to execute them, etc... "(Arch. case number 967389, separate packet).

After the trial of BUKHARIN et al. KAMKOV was put on trial on the charge that he belonged to an illegal terrorist organization in Arkhangel'sk and was spreading "vile slander in connection with the trials of the Rights and Trotskyites" among those in prison."

On August 29, 1938 at the review of his case in the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court KAMKOV pleaded not guilty to all charges and was sentenced to death.

While BUKHARIN was in custody the prisoner ZARITSKII N.D. had been in the same cell and when questioned on July 3, 1956, testified:

"I spent 4-5 months with BUKHARIN before he was executed...

During the investigation, and especially during the trial, BUKHARIN expressed indignation at the injustice of the accusations against him. He told me that he was accused of plotting to commit terrorist acts against the leaders of the Party and the Government, in an attempt to commit a terrorist act against LENIN.

He tried to convince me that during his last years he had been very close to LENIN, was well received in his family, was essentially in the position of a son, and that he could not even think of committing any act directed against LENIN.

He also told me that he had good personal relations with STALIN, that in a number of instances STALIN had given him and his family assistance in domestic matters, and therefore he never could never even think of murdering him.

BUKHARIN was indignant that he was being questioned about some kind of criminal ties with whom he had never known.

During the trial itself BUKHARIN told me that people were making fictitious confessions to the court, talking about the existence of a center in which he was allegedly included, although he had no idea that it even existed."

Before his arrest, and under investigation BUKHARIN for a long time did not admit guilt to anything. During this time he wrote a lot of letters and petitions addressed to J.V. STALIN in which he gave his alibis. This, together with the facts cited above, suggests that we ought not to treat BUKHARIN'S subsequent confessions with confidence. Especially since the verification process has established

that a significant part of his testimony has been refuted beyond doubt as false. Specifically, 15 Party and Soviet workers who appear in BUKHKARIN'S confessions as his accomplices have been fully rehabilitated.

/ 842 /

During the investigation and at trial RYKOV acknowledged that he was a leading participant in the anti-Soviet bloc of Rights and Trotskyites and was carrying out hostile activity.

However, the verification has established that these confessions of RYKOV's are, in the overwhelming majority of cases, false.

On August 9, 1937 RYKOV, for example, stated:

"In previous interrogations I testified about the reserve cadres of our organization but I did not talk about the main issue, namely that acting on a directive of the center of the Rights and specifically, on a directive that I gave to ANTIPOV, a reserve center of the organization of Rights was created. The structure of the center included: ANTIPOV, SULIMOV, UKHANOV, SYRTSOV, and KHALATOV" (Arch. case number 967582, v. 1, l.d. 138)

These confessions of RYKOV's are entirely fictional, because, as the verification process has determined, ANTIPOV, SULIMOV, UKHANOV, SYRTSOV and KHALATOV had been arrested without basis on charges of belonging to a counterrevolutionary organization of the Rights, and therefore in 1955-1956 they were fully rehabilitated. During his interrogation of 23 June 1937 RYKOV confessed:

"... The central figure in the organization of the Rights in the Urals was KABAKOV, whom we carefully kept very secret. I personally brought KABAKOV into the organization of the Rights during a process of repeated conversations... I kept KABAKOV, as a very important member of our organization, up to date with our conspiratorial plans. In particular, KABAKOV was informed by me

of the plan of the so-called palace coup." (Arch. case number 967582, vol. 1, l.d. 97-99)

In 1937 KABAKOV was arrested on the basis of this evidence and sentenced to death. KABAKOV had now been rehabilitated.

During the investigation RYKOV also confirmed that a center of the organization of Rights which included ANTIPOV, LOBOV, KOMAROV, ZHUKOV, UGAROV, KODATSKII and CHUDOV had existed in Leningrad since 1928.

Upon verification it has turned out that these confessions of RYKOV'S too are untrue. All of the above persons have now been rehabilitated.

According to RYKOV'S testimony KARAKHAN, allegedly a member of an organization of Rights, held talks on TOMSKII's instructions with representatives of fascist Germany, to whom he made it clear that in the event the bloc of Rights and Trotskyites came to power certain concessions would be made in favor of the capitalist countries.

These confessions of RYKOV'S too have not been confirmed since KARAKHAN, brought to trial in 1937, refused to confess to any of the charges.

In RYKOV'S confessions comrade P. Togliatti also figures as a person who shared the views of Rights and was sympathetic to their struggle against the CC CPSU(b). The falsehood of these confessions speaks for itself.

Of those among his associates who figure in RYKOV'S testimony more than 30 people have far been rehabilitated.

/ 843 /

Defendant SHARANGOVICH also gave unreliable confessions about criminal activity.

Thus, during the interrogation of August 13 1937 SHARANGOVICH said that he had been recruited to the organization of anti-Soviet

activity in 1932 by Sulimov, and that in 1933 the former third secretary of the Communist Party of Belarus ZHEBROVSKII had recruited him to work for Polish intelligence.

Later SHARANGOVICH changed his testimony somewhat and began to claim that he had been drawn into collaboration with Polish intelligence by VNOROVSKII, an employee in the Soviet Embassy in Warsaw.

However, the verification has determined that SULIMOV and ZHEBROVSKII have now been rehabilitated as having been condemned although they were innocent. As for VNOROVSKII, no information about his links with the Polish intelligence service have been found among the archival materials of the intelligence agencies of bourgeois Poland.

In addition SHARANGOVICH claimed during the investigation that he was allegedly linked in espionage work to BOGUTSKI and SLAVINSKI. BOGUTSKI and SLAVINSKI, convicted in the past as traitors and spies, have now been rehabilitated.

Also terminated for lack of evidence of a crime are the cases of a number of individuals whom SHARANGOVICH named as members of the counterrevolutionary organization, including GOLODED, the former chairman of the Council of People's Commissar's of the Byelorussian SSR.

During the investigation ROZENGOL'TS, GRIN'KO, CHERNOV, IKRAMOV, and KHODZHAEV also made confessions that do not inspire confidence.

In pleading guilty to belonging to the anti-Soviet bloc of Rights and Trotskyites ROZENGOL'TS confessed:

"After the arrest of RYKOV I maintained contact with the Rights through RUDZUTAK and partly through ANTIPOV and ZHUKOV...

I told RUDZUTAK about the sabotage that I was carrying out in foreign trade and about my ties with TROTSKY. At the end of 1936 (or early in 1937), I had a detailed conversation with RUDZUTAK

about the last period of my relations with RYKOV and the blueprint of the future government agreed upon earlier." (Arch. case number 967582, vol. 6, l.d. 38-39)

As ROZENGOL'TS confessed further, RUDZUTAK proposed to include ANTIPOV, LOBOV, ZHUKOV, KODATSKII, and KOMAROV in the new government.

Those whom ROZENGOL'TS named— RUDZUTAK ANTIPOV, LOBOV, ZHUKOV, KODATSKII and KOMAROV, as already mentioned above, have now rehabilitated.

In 1955-1956 the cases against MURADYAN, ELIAVA Sh, RABINOVICH, SHINDEL', BELEN'KII B.S., KANDELAKI, SUD'IN, VEITSER and others whom ROZENGOL'TS named during the investigation as his accomplices in enemy activity have been terminated for lack of evidence of a crime.

The same must be said about the confessions of GRIN'KO and CHERNOV. The latter, for example, asserted during the investigation that in the summer of 1936, at the direction of RYKOV, he got in touch with LIUBIMOV, a member of the reserve center of the Rights, and learned from him that BUBNOV and

/ 844 /

BAUMAN were part of this center... CHERNOV further confessed that in his enemy activity he contacted the Trotskyists through RUKHIMOVICH.

All these people have now been rehabilitated since it has been established that they were all convicted on the basis of false materials.

The verification established that GRIN'KO and CHERNOV signed fictional confessions concerning 46 persons who were responsible Soviet and Party workers, the cases against whom have now been terminated for lack of evidence of a crime.

During the investigation IKRAMOV gave very confusing confessions. Initially IKRAMOV argued that, being one of the leaders

of a nationalist organization, he had established communication with the center of the Rights in 1935 through ANTIPOV.

According to IKRAMOV, ANTIPOV then informed him that: "In the struggle against the Soviet government the leadership center of the Rights considers it necessary to use all available ... means such as armed insurrection, sabotage in various sectors of the economy, diversion and terror against the leaders of the Party and the Soviet government." (Arch. case number 967582, v. 12, l.d. 94)

At the same time IKRAMOV admitted that according to his directives subversive activities on a large scale were carried out in Uzbekistan. However, attention should be paid to the fact that in some cases IKRAMOV'S confessions about specific sabotage activities were clearly far-fetched. Thus, at the interrogation October 10-12 1937 IKRAMOV said that he and his accomplices "... deliberately disrupted Party education at the expense of the Marxist-Leninist education of the masses; we advocated the need to study general subjects, or, as we said to each other, to raise the overall level without Marxism ...

We sold half of the political education book by Ingulov, published in the Uzbek language, in other republics, despite the dire need it in Uzbekistan." (Arch. case number 967582, v. 12, l.d. 55)

During the interrogation of February 28 1938 IKRAMOV, without explaining why, substantially changed his testimony about the time and circumstances of the establishment of the bloc with the Rights, saying that he had established contact with the center of the Rights not in 1935 but in 1933, and not through ANTIPOV but through BUKHARIN. At the same time IKRAMOV testified that the center of the Rights was comprised of BUKHARIN, RYKOV, TOMSKII and UGLANOV.

It is well known that TOMSKII committed suicide in 1936. In his suicide letter addressed to J.V. STALIN TOMSKII stated that he had read the ruling of the court concerning including him in the investigation in connection with the testimony of those arrested in the case of the "United Trotskyite-Zinovievite terrorist center" and

rejected the accusations against him as defamatory. Without denying his past political mistakes TOMSKII at the same time wrote that he could not bear being put alongside fascists and therefore was committing suicide and wished the party new victories.

Named by IKRAMOV as a member of the center of the Rights UGLANOV was arrested and confessed at trial that he had carried out opposition activities until 1933 but after that had not carried out any anti-party work.

Serious doubts have also arisen concerning the credibility of KHODZHAEV'S confessions about his criminal activities. Specifically, KHODZHAEV asserted

/ 845 /

that in 1928 he had been drawn into criminal work concerning the separation of Uzbekistan from the USSR by the former chairman of the State Planning Committee of the Uzbek SSR BURNASHEV.

It has been established by the verification we have conducted that BURNASHEV, referred to in KHODZHAEV'S testimony, had been convicted though innocent, in connection with which the Chief Military Prosecutor has now raised the question of his rehabilitation.

Although ZELENSKII, IVANOV and ZUBAREV pleaded guilty to all counts of the indictment, their confessions about the conspiracy of the Rights do not inspire confidence. More than 30 of the Soviet and party activists about whom ZELENSKII, IVANOV and ZUBAREV confessed to being accomplices to criminal activities, have now been rehabilitated because their innocence has been completely proven.

ZELENSKII, IVANOV and ZUBAREV, in addition to participation in the anti-Soviet bloc of Rights and Trotskyites, were also accused of collaboration with the Tsarist secret police.

It has been established by the verification that the testimony of ZELENSKII, IVANOV and ZUBAREV about their collaboration with

the Tsarist secret police cannot be sufficiently confirmed by the materials in the State historical archives where the records of police and gendarme corps of tsarist Russia are kept.

According to the archival facts agent "Slepoi" — Isaiah Abramovich ZELENSKII — collaborated with the Samara provincial gendarmerie beginning in 1916. The defendant in the present case, Isaac Abramovich ZELENSKII, was exiled from Sormovo to three years under police surveillance in Irkutsk province in 1915 by order of the Special Session of the Minister of the Interior for belonging to the RSDLP.

From the documents of the State Historical Archives it may also be seen that ZELENSKII had a brother named Isaiah.

With respect to IVANOV and ZUBAREV no documents have been found in the archives that might even indirectly confirm their involvement in the tsarist secret police. However ZUBAREV was specifically accused at trial by the confessions of former police officer VASSILIEV, who testified that he had recruited ZUBAREV.

Given such materials we cannot give a definitive opinion concerning the involvement of ZELENSKII, ZUBAREV and IVANOV with the tsarist secret police at the present time. These circumstances are subject to additional verification.

In the practical criminal activity attributed to the defendants in the case of "anti-Soviet bloc of Rights and Trotskyites" the killings of A.M. GOR'KII, V.V. KUIBYSHEV, V.R. MENZHINSKII and GOR'KII's son M.A. PESHKOV, as well the attempt to poison EZHOV, occupy a very important place.

/ 846 /

This accusation was brought against the leaders of the Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites, including IAGODA, against the well-known doctors PLETNEV D.D., LEVIN L.G., KAZAKOV I.N., former secretary of the NKVD USSR BULANOV, KRIUCHKOV P.P., secretary to A .M.

GOR'KII, and MAKSIMOV-DIKOVSKII V.A., assistant to V.V.KUIBYSHEV, who were brought to justice in this case.

All the defendants named pleaded guilty to the charges. However, the available materials indicate that these confessions are invalid.

PLETNEV, who during the investigation and at trial admitted his guilt in the organization of killing A.M. GOR'KII and V.V.KUIBYSHEV on the instruction of IAGODA, after the conviction on June 11, 1939 addressed the following statement to Comrade VM Molotov:

"I was sentenced in the Bukharin case. During the investigation I admitted the accusations against me, and at trial I did not renounce them. I was slandered. The indictment leveled against me is false. My mind was under compulsion. But I did not consider it possible to make this statement at trial like Krestinskii. I have been in prison since December 1937. I am suffering morally to the ultimate degree. My health has deteriorated sharply. I am already 66 years old. The point around which the indictment was built was my meeting with Iagoda, where he allegedly threatening me and my family and demanded my involvement in the killing of Gor'kii. This meeting never took place either in August or, according to the next version, in June. Altogether I saw Iagoda only once in my life during his attack of angina pectoris. I saw him only in medical consultation. I never had any conversations with IAGODA except about his illness. All my life since October of 1917 I have been loyal to the Soviet regime and under the leadership of the party have given all my strength and knowledge to my homeland. Now I am deprived of all this. I swear to my innocence by all that is holy to me. I ask for a review of my case. I ask to be interviewed for this purpose or that that I be given an opportunity to submit a detailed statement in a sealed envelope." (Supervisory production № 7343-9, l.d. 6)

This declaration was transmitted by the Secretariat of comrade MOLOTOV V.M. to Beria.

Subsequently PLETNEV repeatedly made similar statements. About one of them former USSR Prosecutor BOCHKOV informed the Secretariat of Comrade V.M. MOLOTOV:

"The arguments set out in the complaint of PLETNEV D.D. and, in particular, his retraction of his testimony, are a provocation and a continuation of his hostile work ... review of the case is denied, of which PLETNEV D.D. has been informed." (Supervisory production, № 7343-9, l.d. 26)

In confirmation of the charge of murder brought against IAGODA, PLETNEV, LEVIN, KAZAKOV, KRIUCHKOV, BULANOV and MAKSIMOV-DIKOVSKII, eminent medical practitioners V.N. VINOGRADOV, Professor N.A. SHERESHEVSKII and others were called as experts at the trial. They drew the conclusion that GOR'KII, MENZHINSKII, KUIBYSHEV and PESHKOV died as a result

/ 847 /

of the clearly wrong medical treatment applied to them by PLETNEV, LEVIN and KAZAKOV.

With regard to the attempted assassination of EZHOV the experts concluded: "...it must be taken as absolutely established that the poisoning of Comrade N. I. EZHOV by mercury absorbed through the respiratory tract, the most potent and dangerous method of chronic mercurial poisoning, was organized and put into execution." (Court proceedings, p. 547 (621))

Professor VINOGRADOV and Professor SHERESHEVSKII were interviewed in 1956 and stated that no documents were submitted to them confirming the incorrect treatment of KUIBYSHEV, GOR'KII, MENZHINSKII, and PESHKOV, that they reached their conclusion only on the testimony of the defendants, who admitted their guilt completely. Thus VINOGRADOV in particular pointed out:

"Conclusions were drawn by myself and the other experts on the basis of general questions without the presentation of any detailed documentation (medical history with detailed logs, analyses and pictures). Thus, our answers to these questions were of a purely theoretical nature. We could not assert the authenticity of this fact on the basis of the materials that were before us."

Concerning this matter SHERESHEVSKII said:

.. our conclusion was derived from the testimony of the accused and could not serve as additional proof of their guilt, inasmuch as there were no medical documents presented to us confirming the fact that the patients had been treated in the way mentioned in the testimony of the accused."

At the same time SHERESHEVSKII and VINOGRADOV described PLETNEV as an outstanding scientist of world renown. And with regard to LEVIN, accused of killing GOR'KII, SHERESHEVSKII said: "LEVIN was GOR'KII's attending physician and, as far as I know, loved him greatly. When he talked about him, he was simply transformed. And that is not at all compatible with the accusation against him of the deliberate murder of A.M. GOR'KII. "

Upon verification it was also revealed that the materials on the so-called "poisoning" of EZHOV were completely falsified.

In an interrogation of April 16 1939 FRINOVSKII testified about this: "NIKOLAEV-ZHURID, with my participation and as directed by EZHOV, fabricated the case of the so-called mercury poisoning of EZHOV. NIKOLAEV personally directed the case. EZHOV gave out the idea that he was ill from poisoning, and NIKOLAEV seized on it, and under great pressure got confessions about this from BULANOV, then from IAGODA's courier ... and then from IAGODA himself.

From somewhere or other NIKOLAEV obtained a pharmacy jar with mercury, which he turned into material proof of the mercury poisoning of EZHOV. NIKOLAEV provided the corresponding expert opinion of the poisoning." (Arch. case number 975181, Vol. 2, l.d. 62)

EZHOV confirmed these confessions of FRINOVSKII'S.

/ 848 /

According to verification in the special State archive of the USSR no materials have been found indicating a connection of persons in this case with foreign intelligence agencies.

Persons brought to trial in this case, as well as those in the previous public trials, were accused of carrying out their criminal activities on the instructions of TROTSKY. Concerning this, TROTSKY in his article "The outcome of the process," of March 12, 1938 wrote:

"According to the results which Vyshinsky must draw from the latest series of trials the Soviet state is revealed as a centralized apparatus for state treason.

The heads of the government and the majority of people's commissars (Rykov, Kamenev, Rudzutak, Smirnov, Iakovlev, Rosengolts, Chernov, Grin'ko, Ivanov, Osinsky, et al.); the most important Soviet diplomats (Rakovsky, Sokol' Nikov, Krestinskii, Karakhan, Bogomolov, Yurenev, et al.); all the leaders of the Communist International (Zinoviev, Bukharin, Radek); the best leaders of the economy (Pyatakov, Smirnov, Serebriakov, Lifshits, et al.); the best commanders and leaders of the army (Tukhachevsky, Gamarnik, Yakir, Uborevich, Kork, Muralov, Mrachkovsky, Alksnis, Admiral Orlov, et al.); the most outstanding worker-revolutionists produced by Bolshevism in thirty-five years (Tomskii, Yevdokimov, Smirnov, Bakaev, Serebriakov, Boguslavsky, Mrachkovsky); the heads and members of the governments of the Russian Soviet Republic (Sulimov, Varvara Iakovleva); all the heads without exception of the thirty Soviet Republics, i.e., the leaders developed by the movement of the liberated nationalities (Budu Mdivani, Okudzhava, Kavtaradze, Chervyakov, Goloded, Skrypnik, Lyubchenko, Nestor Lakoba, Faizul Khodzhaev, Ikramov, and dozens of others); the leaders of the GPU for the past ten years, Yagoda and his collaborators; finally, and this is most important, the members of the all-powerful Politburo, the de facto supreme power of the country, Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Tomskii, Rykov, Bukharin, Rudzutak—all of them participated in a conspiracy against the Soviet power in the years when it was in their hands!

All of them, as agents of foreign powers, strove to rip to shreds the Soviet federation they had built and to enslave to fascism the peoples for whose liberation they had fought for dozens of years!

In this criminal activity premiers, ministers, marshals, and ambassadors invariably submitted to one person. Not to an official leader, no— to an exile! It was enough for Trotsky to move a finger and the veterans of the revolution became agents of Hitler and the Mikado.

Upon the “instructions” of Trotsky through an incidental TASS correspondent, the leaders of industry, transportation, and agriculture destroyed the productive forces of the country and its culture.

Upon an order from the “enemy of the people,” sent from Norway or Mexico, railway workers of the Far East organized the wrecking of military trains, and venerable Kremlin physicians poisoned their patients. This is the astonishing picture of the Soviet state that Vyshinskii is forced to present on the basis of the revelations of the latest trials.

But here a difficulty arises. A totalitarian regime is a dictatorship of the apparatus. If all the key positions of the apparatus were occupied by Trotskyists who submitted to me, why, in that case, is Stalin in the Kremlin and I am in exile? (Arch. case number 13005, Vol. 3, l.d. 308-309)

/ 849 /

IV. The situation concerning the investigation and the trial

The investigation of the case of the so-called “Anti-Soviet bloc of Rights and Trotskyites” and its consideration at trial, conducted between 1937 and early 1938, was characterized by massive repression of Soviet citizens, by the most serious violations of socialist legality, by severe beatings of prisoners and by various and provocative techniques by means of which the investigating authorities extorted confessions from the prisoners and the courts handed down clearly unjustified sentences.

Due to the fact that the vast majority of the NKVD workers who had any relationship with the so-called anti-Soviet bloc of Rights and Trotskyites were subsequently shot it is not possible at the present time to fully explore the conditions under which the investigation in this case was conducted.

Nevertheless, even those far from exhaustive materials which were obtained during the verification give evidence of the gross arbitrariness and provocation that resulted in the extraction of confessions from the prisoners.

A number of former employees of the NKVD, interrogated during course of the verification, testified to the existence in 1937-1938 of a situation whereby the mere fact that a prisoner under investigation was put into the Lefortovo prison obliged the investigator to beat him. EZHOV went at night to the investigators' rooms along with other leading workers [of the NKVD - GF] and personally showed how to "obtain the necessary" confessions."

Questioned in 1956 ARONSON Ia.A., a former employee of the NKVD who took part in the investigation of the case of the anti-Soviet Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites, testified to this:

"... The period of late 1937 and early 1938, when the case in question was under investigation, was a period of mass beatings of prisoners. I remember that during that period EZHOV often came to the prison, usually at night, and made the rounds of the investigators' rooms. His whole conversation usually boiled down to this: "Whom are you interrogating? What's the result? Give it to him properly!" Vlodzimirsky and others accompanied EZHOV and sometimes immediately showed how to give it."

ROSENBLIUM A.A., who worked in 1937-1938 as chief of the medical unit of the Lefortovo prison was questioned in 1956 and stated:

"While working in the medical unit of the Lefortovo prison I saw many prisoners in serious condition after the beatings inflicted on them during the investigation. In particular, I provided medical care to MAR'IASIN, who was severely beaten during the investigation.

Former NKVD worker BLAT was in serious condition in the infirmary. He had tried to commit suicide and had also been severely beaten...

... KRESTINSKII was brought from an interrogation to us in the medical unit in an unconscious state. He had been severely beaten, his whole back was one continuous wound, there was not a single unbruised place on it. As I recall, he lay in the medical unit for three days in very serious condition.

/ 850 /

I often dropped in to see IAGODA. Usually, he complained about his heart ... once I saw on his face a large bruise under his eye."

Other former NKVD workers also confessed about beatings of prisoners. Thus, witness LERNER N.M. who took part in the interrogations of IAGODA, stated on June 2, 1956:

".. IAGODA often complained that he was beaten during the interrogations. I did not believe him and told him so.

Once, this was in the Lefortovo prison, I questioned IAGODA. EZHOV, FRINOVSKII and KURSKII dropped in at my office and at EZHOV'S suggestion I left the office. When sometime later I was allowed to go back, I saw a black eye on IAGODA'S face. IAGODA, showing me the black eye, asked me: "Now do you believe that they are beating me?" In addition I have personally seen BULANOV with signs of beatings on his face." The above-mentioned ARONSON also confirmed that he was aware of the beating during the investigation of prisoners RYKOV, SHARANGOVICH and IAGODA, and testified:

"I myself personally heard a complaint about beating from RYKOV. There was to be a face-to-face confrontation between RYKOV and NIKOLAEVSKII. They brought RYKOV in first. He looked pitiful, depressed. Either I or LULOV, I do not remember exactly, asked him: "What's the matter, why do you look like that?" To this RYKOV replied, I remember it very well: "I feel demoralized," and to the next question - Why? - he replied: "They beat me.""

According to cell agent "Blagin" BESSONOV told his cellmates:

"He, BESSONOV, signed the accusations against him because otherwise he was threatened with fascist reprisal. In the Lefortovo he saw former members of the Central Committee who were beaten during the investigation, and named PTUKHA, a former member of the Central Committee of the CPSU(b), LAVRENT'EV, Central Committee member and others. KRESTINSKII was subjected to a severe beating; he wore a plaster cast during the trial." (Arch. case number 101492, vol. 1, l.d. 27) The above testimony about beatings of prisoners in the case of the anti-Soviet Right-Trotskyite center, of course, does not reveal the whole picture, for this period was characterized by the greatest orgy of violence in investigation and it was precisely at this time that beatings took on such a character that killings during interrogation occurred more than once. About this matter witness ROSENBLIUM A.A. testified:

"I worked as a doctor of the Lefortovo from December 1936 to January 31, 1938. During this period of time 49 people were recorded as having died in Lefortovo prison from beatings and exhaustion." (File on the indictment of Anvel't)

As has now been established, on October 14, 1937 chief of the Science section of the Central Committee of the CPSU(b) BAUMAN K.L. was killed during the investigation; on December 1,

/ 851 /

1937, chief of the political directorate of the People's Commissariat of Soviet Farms the old Bolshevik SOMS K.; on December 11, 1937 Comintern worker Anvel't; on May 5, 1938 the deputy head of the UNKVD of the Leningrad oblast' SOSTE M.Ia.; on November 9, 1938 Marshal of the Soviet Union BLÜCHER and others

It should be noted that prisoners were prodded into self-incrimination and slander against others not only by direct physical violence but also by mental violence. Threats of repression against relatives, threats of beatings, cries of prisoners being beaten — the investigators used all these in order to obtain "confessions." Former investigator ARONSON testified about this:

"I personally did not use physical force against RAKOVSKY, obviously, because he did not confess to me about espionage (RAKOVSKY "confessed" himself guilty of espionage to other investigators). I admit that I might have applied other means of pressure — measures of a mental nature: threats against him personally, threats to arrest members of his family. I seem to remember, in particular, that RAKOVSKY was informed about the arrest of his wife and that her fate depended upon his confessions. Such was the system of interrogation of prisoners, introduced as mandatory methods by the leadership of the NKVD of that time. "

As is evident from the report of agent "Dima" RAKOVSKY himself, in his cell at the Orlov prison, spoke about the situation of the investigation of his case as follows: "... when almost from the first day they make it clear that you have to lie about yourself and others, smear your own name and honor, then you are overcome with rage and indignation. You begin to fight, to resist, but then when they tell you, as ARONSON told me: "Old man, do not hold out, confess," when they tell you that they will annihilate your family, that they will shoot you, you give up. When I was told that my wife had been put into the Lefortovo, I screamed and grabbed my head — that meant she would die. Fear for your family, the consciousness that you are sending them to their deaths, fear and the desire to live, complete hopelessness, and then the party "automatic", the habit of obeying the party — these things make you lie and do the devil knows what. All this is a lie, there is not a drop of truth in any of these cases." (Arch. case number 300956, v. 9, l.d. 321)

Further, he also said:

"I was taken from the Butyrki [prison] to the Lefortovo, and from the Lefortovo to the Lubyanka. Every night I expected to be shot. In Lefortovo, in this horrible prison where you could hear the screams of people under torture, the moaning of women, shots during times of execution and the constant noise of aircraft engines, they suddenly cut my fingernails— I realized that they wanted to torture me. Soon I was summoned at night. I appeared before NIKOLAEV, AGAS, and another type that does the torturing. When I walked in, I was told that I was a spy. "Me, a spy?" "Yes, you. And you yourself

will tell us about your activities." I realized that this was the end, that the only way to salvation was through admitting the most serious charges. This is the dialectic ... Everything went into it—the Japanese and the British. I myself sometimes became confused, I said so much." (ibid, l.d. 322)

While serving his prison sentence BESSONOV categorically denied his guilt and said this about the reasons that prompted him to make false confessions:

/ 852 /

"At first a lieutenant interrogated me, and then a major of state security warned that if I did not give the necessary confessions they would make mincemeat out of me. And indeed a few days later I was called late in the evening to some room hitherto unknown to me. Five fellows were already there and on the table lay the necessary accessories—rubber club, gloves, stick and other things.

The major, wiping his hands, asked me about confessions and I, seeing all this, became a little cowardly, because I already knew about beatings to death ... I decided to lie. Well, and that's the way I became a counter-revolutionary. And the trial was a complete farce." (Ibid, vol. II, l.d. 61)

The convicted doctor PLETNEV reported vividly from prison on the system of beatings, threats, blackmail and provocations. In a statement of June 8, 1940 he wrote: "For three years I suffered from investigation to investigation, from court to court, from one prison into another, and yet I am completely innocent...

... the case of the killing of GOR'KII and KUIBYSHEV. I spoke to you about it, but the investigative unit will not allow any talk about this, insisting several times that I withdraw my statements, which I did not do.

... the case arose on the testimony of IAGODA who, according to his own personal statement, called me in the middle of August 1934 and with threats demanded from me my complicity with doctor LEVIN in the killing of GOR'KII. Upon my denial of this investigator

GERSON hit me in the face. I pointed out that this fact could not have taken place, since from July 20 1934 to the beginning of October I had been on a business trip abroad. The next day my words were confirmed by a certificate from the Passport Office ... and the fact of my alibi in August 1934. Then the investigator told me: "If the top leadership assumes that you are guilty, then even if you were 100% right, you will still be 100% guilty." There followed threats against me and my wife and, finally, an alternative was suggested by the chief of the Special Political Division LITVIN, chief of the investigative unit KAGAN, and investigator GERSON: either, if I continued my stubbornness, life in prison and death in it, or if I "agreed" to give a "clarification" about the time of my meeting with IAGODA in June 1934 - and I only saw IAGODA for the first time in my life in 1935 - and then 2-3 months after the trial, complete freedom and scientific work — in a word, "a repetition of RAMZIN'S fate." This was indirectly confirmed by EZHOV. You know the result. I so trusted the government that the thought of such lies and blackmail on the part of anyone, especially a member of the Politburo, never could have entered my head... Help me, because I perish though innocent. I ask only that you take a personal interest, and not transfer the matter to the detention unit. There bias rules. If the NKVD has seized you, that means you are guilty. Put yourself for a moment in my position and you will see the full depth of my misery. Believe me. There is still much more I could say in my own defense ..." (private prison file l.d. 206-207)

The "processing" of prisoners in the case of the Right-Trotskyite center did not stop day or night. This was handled during the interrogations by the investigators and in the cells by specially placed people. Concerning one of these people RAKOVSKY, after his conviction, told fellow his fellow inmates:

"In Lefortovo they put Lieberman into my cell... They let me write my confessions in my cell. When I presented them, if they did not like them, they

/ 853 /

would tear them up and throw them in my face. When I consulted with Lieberman my confessions always satisfied the investigators. He served as the transfer authority, he dictated to me what they wanted and through him I asked their advice...

In the end, I did not care, because I lied. And he could not hurt me, on the contrary, he facilitated my work." (Arch. case number 300956, v. 9, l.d. 324)

In this respect the fate of the former head of the 5th department of the UNKVD of the Saratov oblast' ZARITSKII N.D. is of some interest.

ZARITSKII was arrested for crude falsification of investigative materials, fabricating fictitious confessions that allegedly confirmed the existence of the organization of Rights which in reality did not exist (that is, at that time!). In essence there was no interrogation on the charges against ZARITSKII, there was only the taking of a statement and he was sentenced to two years in prison, and then he was confined among other detainees. One after another he sat in the same cell with the former regional secretaries of party obkoms KABAKOV, RYNDIN, and KHATAYEVICH, and then for 4-5 months together with BUKHARIN.

After BUKHARIN was executed ZARITSKII's case was reviewed without further investigation. His sentence was set aside and ZARITSKII was restored in the party and to operational work in the NKVD. Such encouragement of prisoners for "services" in exposing the Rights were not uncommon.

Likewise discontinued was the case against ASTROV, who admitted to being an active participant in the counter-revolutionary terrorist organization of Rights, who was one of the first to expose BUKHARIN, including in face-to-face confrontations in the Politburo of the CPSU(b).

Likewise the lives of RADEK and SOKOL'NIKOV were spared although they were formally no less guilty than their fellow defendants, who were witnesses for the prosecution against BUKHARIN and RYKOV even before they had been arrested.

From materials in the archives of the KGB we know that SOKOL'NIKOV was brought to Moscow from prison in the fall of 1937 to be used as a witness at the upcoming trial of BUKHARIN, RYKOV and others, but because of his refusal to testify at trial he was sent back.

When SOKOL'NIKOV and RADEK began in prison to expose the falsity of the previous trials they were killed.

For the same purpose was set aside the verdict against MANTSEV, who, having been condemned to death, began to give confessions about the involvement of BUKHARIN in 1918 in a conspiracy of Left SRs and about his intention to arrest LENIN, STALIN and SVERDLOV. After the trial in the case of the bloc of Rights and Trotskyites, without any additional investigative actions, MANTSEV was again convicted and then executed. Now he is fully rehabilitated.

It is clear from the testimony of former employee of the NKVD TSERPENTO .P.I how prisoners gave confessions on order of the investigators.

/ 854 /

"In the summer of 1937 LITVIN personally interrogated ANTIPOV... In the transcript of this interrogation it was written that in September 1936 ANTIPOV received from RYKOV a directive to create a reserve center of the Rights. When these confessions were presented to RYKOV, RYKOV categorically denied meeting with ANTIPOV in September of 1936 and insisted that it was in 1932.

Then in my presence LULOV persuaded RYKOV to corroborate ANTIPOV's confession and say that it would be in his, RYKOV's, interest to make such a confession...

During the preparation of the trial of RYKOV, BUKHARIN and others (at the end of 1937) I learned from GLEBOV that now ANTIPOV was writing completely new confessions in which, in particular, he was saying that the reserve center of the Rights was established in 1932.

Then GLEBOV proposed that I re-interrogate RYKOV in accordance with these new confessions.

When I expressed surprise that ANTIPOV managed to fool LITVIN, by giving him inappropriate, false confessions, GLEBOV told me that this was nothing surprising, since ANTIPOV was the kind of prisoner who is ready to give any confessions and in any direction.

By GLEBOV'S arrangement before the trial I had to persuade RYKOV to affirm his first confessions, which spoke of the creation of the reserve center of the Rights in 1932, not 1936." (Arch. case number 982027, vol. 1, l.d. 222- 223)

As TSERPENTO further confessed, RYKOV, signing one of the new versions of "his" confessions, said:

"One advises me not to confess against ANTIPOV, and the other (i.e. me) requires confessions against him. I do not know who to listen to." (Arch. case number 982027, vol. 1, l.d. 30-31)

As you know, at the very first meeting of the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR on March 2, 1938 the prisoner KRESTINSKII pleaded not guilty and retracted the confessions that had been given by him during the investigation. At that time KRESTINSKII said bluntly that the confessions that he had given before were not voluntary, and that he had not retracted them during the investigation only out of concern that his statement would not reach the leadership of the party and government. (Case report, pp. 54, 58)

This failure caused confusion among members of the Military College, and the court adjourned. But the next day KRESTINSKII reaffirmed the confessions he had given during the investigation, and said that the day before he had mechanically pleaded not guilty under the influence of a sense of false shame. (ibid, p. 146)

The verification has determined that during the process of the investigation KRESTINSKII gave confessions because he had been subjected to brutal beatings, and hence his rejection of these confessions at the trial had a real basis.

Concerning the circumstances surrounding KRESTINSKII'S confessions at the trial, former employee of the NKVD ARONSON has testified:

"I, like many other NKVD men, attended the trial. At the first session KRESTINSKII retracted the confessions he had given earlier and pleaded not guilty. This statement caused confusion on the part of VYSHINSKII, who was in charge of the trial.

/ 855 /

During the break we investigators discussed what had happened and talked about how to get out of this situation. NIKOLAEV (he was in charge of RAKOVSKY's case) then said that he would try to resolve the incident. When the accused were taken from the court they took KRESTINSKII together with RAKOVSKY. The next day KRESTINSKII pleaded guilty and confirmed all the confessions that he had given previously. I think, and the investigators said the same thing at the time, that KRESTINSKII had not been beaten, but RAKOVSKY had persuaded him. They said that RAKOVSKY, who in general had great influence on KRESTINSKII, told him something like this: "You ought to admit guilt, all the defendants are pleading guilty, and the court will consider anyone who does not admit guilt as an unrepentant enemy and will unquestionably shoot him, while in return for the admission of guilt they will preserve your life. The family of him who confessed guilt will not suffer, but in case of rejection of guilt the family will also be repressed." This so affected KRESTINSKII that to the end of the trial he did not try any more to reject the confessions he had given during the investigation."

Also characteristic in this regard is the behavior at trial of the public prosecutor VYSHINSKII. When the court summoned KRESTINSKII for questioning VYSHINSKII did not permit his immediate interrogation and first asked a number of questions precisely to RAKOVSKY.

KRESTINSKII was interrogated only after RAKOVSKY had given him an example — he fully admitted his guilt and named KRESTINSKII as his accomplice.

Those prisoners who were being made ready for the trial and for face-to-face confrontations to be carried out with participation by leaders of the Party and government were especially carefully prepared by the investigating authorities. Here everything was done strictly according to a developed plan and the prisoners repeatedly rehearsed "their" confessions.

As you know, some of the persons involved in the case of the Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites before their criminal prosecution were given face-to-face confrontations where prisoners previously arrested accused them of committing serious crimes against the state.

From the confessions, given after his arrest, of the former Deputy Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR FRINOVSKII it may be seen that specially instructed prisoners were brought forth at these face-to-face confrontations.

FRINOVSKII confessed about this:

"At first the investigator, then the chief of the department, prepared the prisoners in a special way. The preparation consisted in the reading of the confessions that the prisoner had given against the person with whom the face-to-face confrontation was about to be conducted. They explained how the face-to-face confrontation would be conducted, what unexpected questions might be presented to the prisoner and how he should answer.

In essence what happened was an agreement and a rehearsal for the upcoming face-to-face confrontation. After that EZHOV would call the prisoner to himself, or pretending that he had by chance dropped in to the investigator's room where the prisoner was sitting he would speak to him about the upcoming confrontation and would ask whether he felt himself strong, would he confirm his confessions, and by the way, would mention that members of the government would be present at the face-to-face confrontation.

Usually EZHOV was nervous before such face-to-face confrontations even after he had had a talk with the prisoner. There were cases when the prisoner

/ 856 /

would state, during the conversation with EZHOV, that his confessions were not true, that he had been falsely accused." (Arch. case number 975181, Vol. 2, l.d. 37-38)

Before the trial, the preparation of the prisoners proceeded along two lines. On the one hand, by means of various promises (as a rule - the preservation of life), they urged them to stand firm on specific confessions. On the other hand they formulated the prisoners' answers in advance and the prisoners again rehearsed them.

The same FRINOVSKII confessed about this:

"He spoke for a long time with IAGODA, and that talk concerned, in the main, of assuring IAGODA that he would not be shot.

EZHOV had conversations several times with BUKHARIN and RYKOV and also in order to calm them assured them that under no circumstances would they be shot.

EZHOV had one conversation with BULANOV, and began this conversation in the presence of the investigator and myself, and finished the conversation one on one, having asked us to leave.

At that moment BULANOV had begun talking about the poisoning of EZHOV. What the conversation was about EZHOV did not say. When he asked us to enter again he said: "Behave yourself well at the trial - I will ask that you not be shot." (Arch. case number 975181, Vol. 2, l.d. 39)

RAKOVSKY talked about the same thing while in the Orel prison:

"During the trial the investigators never left me, encouraged me, talked about the impression that this revolting farce was making on me." (Arch. case number 300956, v. 7, l.d. 325)

Questioned as a witness former NKVD man LERNER, who was involved in the investigation of this case, said the following in an interrogation in July 1956:

"I did not lead the investigation of the IAGODA case to its conclusion, the last 6-8 months I was doing other things and had no relationship with the investigation of the case.

However, when the trial began, obviously, considering that I had a good relationship with IAGODA, on the instructions of the leadership of the People's Commissariat I was present at all court proceedings and during the intervals played chess with IAGODA.

During the trial, or rather during breaks in the trial, IAGODA often asked me whether they would shoot him or not.

I am also aware that before the trial IAGODA was granted a visit with his wife Averbakh. And even earlier, as directed by the leadership of the People's Commissariat, I repeatedly told IAGODA that his wife was at liberty, when in reality she had been arrested.

Therefore, before the meeting, IAGODA'S wife was given a change of clothing and was made to look so that the impression was created that she had come to the visit not from prison but as though she were at liberty. For this camouflage a hairdresser was specially invited, who dressed her up, put matching outfits on her and returned to her wristwatch which had earlier been taken from her.

From the words of the former head of the Leningrad Region UNKVD LITVIN I know that IAGODA was shot last, and before that he and

/ 857 /

BUKHARIN were seated on chairs and forced to watch as the sentence was carried out on the other convicted prisoners."

After his conviction RAKOVSKY told his cellmates: "I coordinated the main points of my speech at the trial, my last words with the investigators... During this last period they were all at my service, right up to the olives." (Arch. case number 300956, v. 7, l.d. 325)

This story of RAKOVSKY's is fully confirmed in archival documents of the NKVD. Moreover, they show that this situation occurred not only in relation to RAKOVSKY but also in relation to other defendants in the present case.

So, in archival files on RAKOVSKY and GRIN'KO we have found typewritten outlines of their future confessions at trial. By comparing these outlines with the confessions that RAKOVSKY and GRIN'KO gave at trial it was revealed that they are identical both structurally and in their meaning, and that some phrases in them are repeated almost word for word in the trial transcript.

Moreover, in these archival materials we have also discovered drafts of the "last words" of the accused RAKOVSKY, RYKOV and GRIN'KO, and in the materials on RAKOVSKY even two versions of "his" last words at the trial have turned up.

As has been established by the verification, the falsification of documents of the investigation file was not limited to the investigation but continued at trial.

In the archives of the Committee of State Security [KGB] of the Council of Ministers of the USSR there has been found a deciphered transcript of the trial in the case of the anti-Soviet bloc of Rights and Trotskyites with various handwritten corrections and insertions.

The study of this transcript and comparison of it with the official text of the trial transcript shows that the testimony recorded in court was subsequently changed, in some cases, and that moreover these changes in some cases were in the nature of amplification and distortion of the testimony of the defendants.

Thus, the testimony of the defendant BESSONOV about his meeting with TROTSKY in 1934 when corrected was augmented by the following phrase: "TROTSKY said that he knew me very well by the letters of PIATAKOV and by what N.N. KRESTINSKII has said," by which not only was the substance of the testimony of BESSONOV changed, but it directly indicates on the part of TROTSKY contact with PIATAKOV and KRESTINSKII about which in this instance BESSONOV did not even testify.

During the interrogation of IAGODA at the trial the question of his guilt in the murder of KUIBYSHEV was not at all explained, as can be seen from the transcript...

However, the transcript was filled out as follows: "VYSHINSKII. Do you plead guilty in the organization of the murder of KUIBYSHEV?

IAGODA. I do."

/ 858 /

In his last words the accused RYKOV said:

"...I had a conversation in 1935 with KOTOV, who headed terrorist organizations in Moscow."

As a result of adjustments that phrase in RYKOV'S last words was recorded as follows: "In 1935 I gave the job of to KOTOV, who led the terrorist organizations in Moscow."

These same editors removed from the transcript RYKOV'S statement that SHARANGOVICH became known to him as a member of counterrevolutionary organization only at the trial.

Changes of a similar character were also made in the testimony of others, and then this distorted transcript, endorsed by Deputy Prosecutor of the USSR Roginskii, was published as the official text of the transcript of the trial of the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court.

Due to the established facts of the gross violation of law in the investigation of the case of the Right-Trotskyist center both during the preliminary investigation and in court, it is worth noting that all the defendants who remained alive afterwards retracted their confessions and spoke about the trial as having been falsified by the investigation and the trial. All of them (RAKOVSKY, BESSONOV and PLETNEV) were shot on September 11, 1941 by verdict of the Military Collegium, which flagrantly violated the law and rendered this verdict not only without calling the accused into court but even without having any file on the charges against them.

Thus, as a result of the analysis of all the materials of the case and the additional verification it can be affirmed that the majority of the persons convicted in the present case did at one time take an active part in oppositional struggle but that, however, the accusation against them that in the following years they created a bloc of Rights and Trotskyites and conducted organized anti-Soviet activities, is falsified and in this regard they are subject to rehabilitation.

Some circumstances charged against individual defendants, for example, the involvement of ZUBAREV, ZELENSKII and IVANOV in the Tsarist secret police, and the nationalist activities of IKRAMOV and KHODZHAEV, etc., are subject to additional verification.