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

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

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

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

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

After the Great Patriotic War some negative phenomena appeared in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The difficult economic situation, the devastation and destruction, the great human losses which occurred in the Soviet Union, required a total mobilization of the cadres and the masses for its consolidation and progress. However, instead of this, a falling-off in the character and morale of many cadres was noticed. On the other hand, through their conceit and boasting about the glory of the battles won, through their decorations
and privileges, with their many vices and distorted views, the power-seeking elements were overwhelming the vigilance of the party and causing it to decay from within. A caste was created in the army which extended its despotic and arrogant domination to the party, too, altering its proletarian character. The party should have been the sword of the revolution, but this caste corroded it.

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

It was not the «wrong» line of Stalin which held up the progress. On the contrary, this line was correct and Marxist-Leninist, but it was frequently applied badly and even distorted and sabotaged by enemy elements. Stalin’s correct line was distorted
also by the disguised enemies in the ranks of the party and in the organs of the state, by the opportunists, liberals, Trotskyites and revisionists, as the Khrushchevs, Mikoyans, Suslovs, Kosygins, etc., eventually turned out to be.

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

Hence, all this accumulated scum carried out sabotage with the subtlest methods, which they disguised by praising Stalin and the socialist regime. These elements disorganized the revolution while organizing the counter-revolution, displayed
«severity» against internal enemies in order to spread fear and terror in the party, the state and the people. It was they who created a situation full of euphoria which they reported to Stalin, but in reality they destroyed the base of the party, the base of the state, caused spiritual degeneration and built up the cult of Stalin to the skies in order to overthrow him more easily in the future.

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

If a detailed analysis is made of the political, ideological and organizational directives of Stalin in the leadership and organization of the party, the war and the work, in general, mistakes of principle will not be found, but if we bear in mind how they were distorted by the enemies and applied in practice, we will see the dangerous consequences of these distortions and it will become obvious why the party began to become bureaucratic, to be immersed in routine work and dangerous formalism which sapped its strength and strangled its revolutionary spirit and enthusiasm. The party became covered by a heavy layer of rust, by political apathy, thinking mistakenly that the head, the leadership, operates and solves everything on its
own. From such a concept, the situation was created that in every instance and about everything they would say, «this is the leadership’s business», «the Central Committee does not make mistakes», «Stalin has said this, and that’s all there is to it», etc. Stalin might not have said many things, but they were covered with his name.

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

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

It is understandable that in such conditions,
non-proletarian, non-working class feelings and views began to take root and to be cultivated in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and in the consciousness of many of the communists. Careerism, servility, charlatanism, unhealthy cronyism, anti-proletarian morality, etc., began to spread. These evils eroded the party from within, smothered the feeling of class struggle and sacrifice and encouraged seeking the «good life», with comforts, with privileges, with personal gains and the least possible work and effort. In this way the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois mentality was created, and this was expressed in such words and thoughts as: «We worked and fought for this socialist state and we triumphed, now let us enjoy the benefits from it», «we can’t be touched, the past excuses us for everything.» The greatest danger was that this outlook was becoming established even in the old cadres of the party with a splendid past and proletarian origin, even in the members of the Presidium of the Central Committee, who ought to have set an example of purity to the others. There were many such people in the leadership, in the apparatus, and they made adroit use of the revolutionary words and phrases and the theoretical formulas of Lenin and Stalin, reaped the laurels of the work of others and encouraged the bad example. Thus, a worker aristocracy made up of bureaucratic cadres was being created in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.
Regrettably, such a process of degeneration developed under the "joyful" and "hopeful" slogans that "everything is going well, normally, within the laws and norms of the party", which in fact were being violated, that "the class struggle is still being waged", that "democratic centralism is safeguarded", "criticism and self-criticism continues as before", that "there is steel unity in the party", "there are no more factional, anti-party elements", "the time of Trotskyite and Bukharin-ite groups is passed", etc., etc. Generally speaking, even the revolutionary elements considered such a distorted concept of the situation to be a normal reality and, this is the essence of the drama and the fatal mistake, therefore, it was considered that there was nothing to be alarmed about, that the enemies, the thieves, the violators of morality were being condemned by the courts, that the unworthy members were being expelled from the party, and new members admitted to it, as usual, that the plans were being realized although there were some that were not being realized, that people were being criticized, condemned, praised, etc. Hence, according to them, life was proceeding normally, and thus it was reported to Stalin: "Everything is going normally." We are convinced that if Stalin, as the great revolutionary he was, had known the reality of the situation in the party, he would have struck a crushing blow at this unhealthy spirit and the entire party and the Soviet
people would have risen to their feet to support him because, quite correctly, they had great trust in Stalin.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The purpose of this Khrushchevite propaganda was to show the Soviet people that now they had found the «genuine Leninist leader who knows everything, who settles everything correctly, who has extraordinary vigour, who is giving the proper reply to everyone», whose irresistible activity «is putting everything right in the Soviet Union, cleaning up the crimes of the past, and assuring progress». 
I was in Moscow on the occasion of a meeting of the parties of all the socialist countries. I think it was January 1956, when a consultative meeting was held about the problems of economic development of the member countries of Comecon. It was the time when Khrushchev and the Khrushchevites were advancing in their hostile activity. We were together with Khrushchev and Voroshilov in a villa outside Moscow, where all the representatives of the sister parties were to have lunch. The others had not yet arrived. I had never heard the Soviet leaders openly speak ill of Stalin, and I, for my part, continued as before to speak with affection and deep respect for the great Stalin. Apparently these words of mine did not sound sweet in Khrushchev’s ears. While waiting for the other comrades to come, Khrushchev and Voroshilov said to me:

«Shall we take some air in the park?»

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

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

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

Voroshilov went on, «He even allowed crimes to be committed, and he must bear responsibility
for this. He made mistakes also in the field of the
development of the economy, therefore it is not
right to describe him as the 'architect of the con-
struction of socialism'. Stalin did not have correct
relations with the other parties...»

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Khrushchev had even «inaugurated» his elevation to the post of the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union with a long report on the problems of agriculture, which he delivered at a plenum of the Central Committee in September 1953. This report, which was described as «very
important», contained those Khrushchevite ideas and reforms which, in fact, damaged Soviet agriculture so severely that their catastrophic consequences are being felt to this day. All the boastful clamour about the «virgin lands» was empty advertising. The Soviet Union has bought and is still buying millions of tons of grain from the United States of America.

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