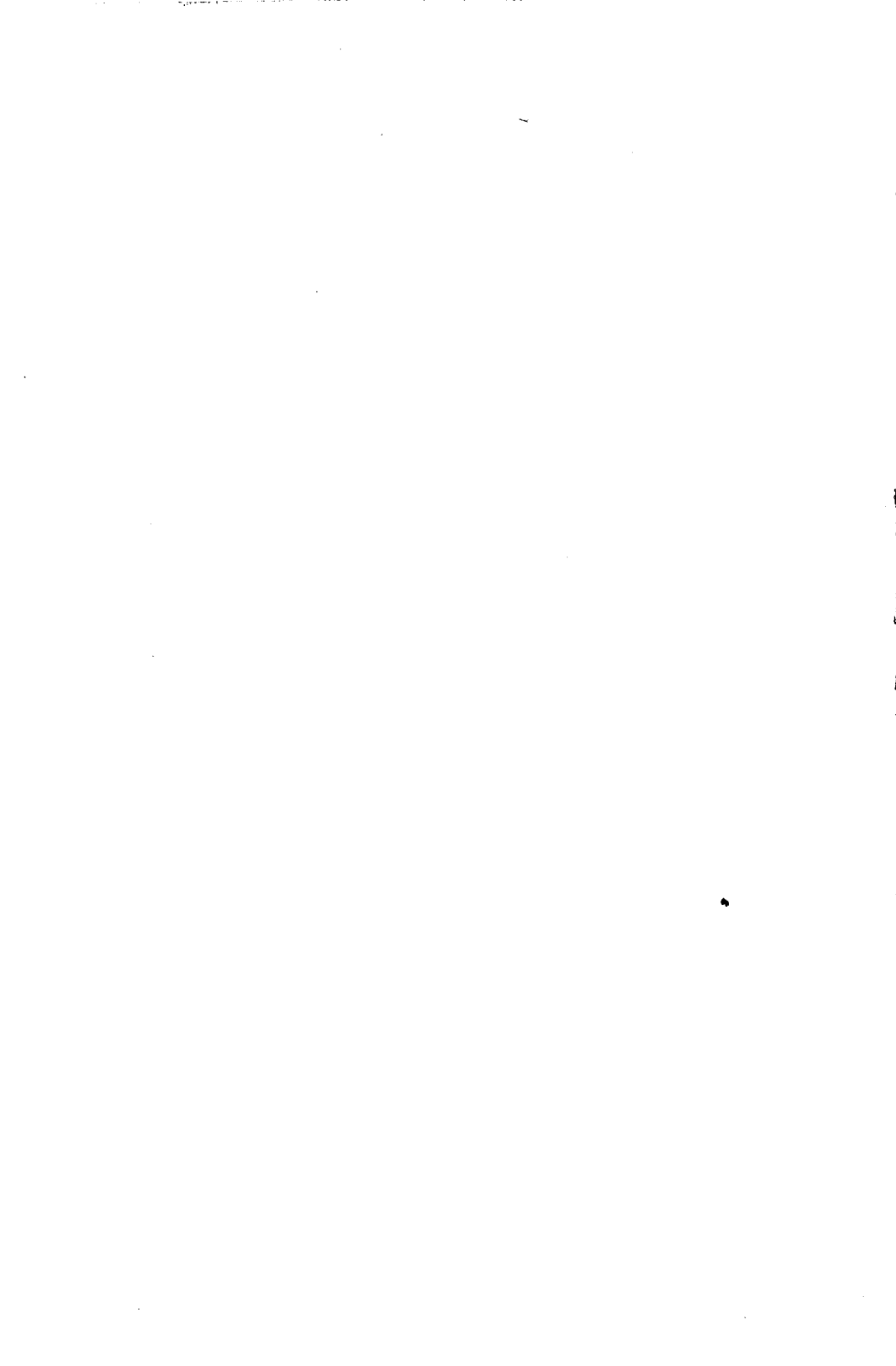


NIKOLAI MIKHAILOV

**ACROSS THE MAP
OF THE U.S.S.R.**



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"EACH DAY OUR PEOPLE RISE HIGHER AND HIGHER. WE ARE NOT THE SAME TODAY AS WE WERE YESTERDAY, AND WE WILL NOT BE THE SAME TOMORROW AS WE ARE TODAY. WE ARE NOT THE SAME RUSSIANS WE WERE BEFORE 1917, AND RUSSIA IS NOT THE SAME, AND OUR NATURE IS NOT THE SAME. WE HAVE CHANGED AND GROWN ALONG WITH THE VAST CHANGES THAT HAVE COMPLETELY CHANGED THE FACE OF OUR COUNTRY."

A. A. Zhdanov

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I

THE HANDWRITING OF HISTORY

A MAP is hanging on the wall. Let us go up to it as we would to an open window: through the grid of latitudes and longitudes we see the entire country. On the coloured surface, in three dimensional space, we see spreading plains, and towering mountain ranges. Thin, winding lines expand into broad rivers, and small circles into cities teeming with life. In the North, the ice pack crunches against the sides of ships. In the South the hot sand trickles down the dunes in fine streaks. We can almost feel the wind from those distant open spaces breaking through the map and beating in our faces. The whole of the boundless Soviet Union lies before our eyes!

But there is also a "fourth dimension" in the picture that is spread before us: this is to be measured not in terms of latitude and longitude, or height above sea level, but in years of human endeavour. The rivers have been curbed, the roads explored and the plains ploughed up. Steel drills have bitten into the earth and have brought up from the depths an inexhaustible stream of wealth. Metal and concrete in the shape of pitheads, factory buildings and the latticework of bridges have broken the eternal silence of the ancient landscape. . . .

The strokes on the map tell us the story of the creative labour, the life and the heroic deeds of the people. Like a sensitive photographic plate, the map records the march of time, the birth and death of cities, the destiny of states. The lines and signs of the map indicate the path history has traversed.

Thirty years ago mankind reached the steepest and highest mountain pass in its history. Lightning lit up the earth—the October Revolution thundered in Russia. A red line appeared on the map of the world, marking the boundary between two eras, the boundary between the past and the future.

That red line tells us that a new world has been created on a sixth of the earth's surface, the world of Socialism; a state, the first in history, in which power is wielded by the working people, the first country in the world in which there are no parasitic classes, no exploitation, no enslavement of man by man.

For thirty years our great Soviet Union has been steadily growing stronger. A commonwealth of equal republics has been founded and consolidated on a huge area stretching from the Carpathian Mountains to the Bering Strait. Under the leadership of the Communist Party, the Party of Lenin and Stalin, the peoples of our country have built up socialist society in fraternal unity and are now victoriously marching onward towards Communism.

More than once during these three decades rapacious imperialists tried to obliterate that red line from the map of the world, tried to destroy the Soviet system, to enslave and partition our country. On each occasion, however, the people of the Soviet Union, strong in their unity and patriotism, defeated and expelled the invaders. Our people emerged victorious from the struggle against the foreign interventionists and Russian whiteguards in the years of the Civil War. They heroically bore all the hardships and tribulations of the second world war, the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people. In grim battles in defence of their socialist motherland and of the great achievements of the October Revolution they broke the back of the fascist beast. In liberating the peoples of Europe from fascist slavery they enhanced still further the world importance and glory of the world's first socialist state.

From Pechenga to Kaliningrad, from Kaliningrad to Ismail, from Ismail to the Kuril Islands there runs a red line that

marks the sacred frontiers of the Land of Soviets. This is not only the frontier of the greatest country in the world—it is a line which injustice, tyranny and oppression cannot cross. On the other side of the line, in the capitalist countries, reign darkness and slavery, the power of money, violence against the masses. On our side, the Soviet side, we have free citizens of a free land, the joy of creative labour, the gigantic scaffolding of Communism.

The October Socialist Revolution released the creative energy of the people, and this energy has revealed itself in all its strength. Following the route outlined by Lenin and Stalin, the Soviet people have, in a short space of time, transformed our country. They have thrown off the shackles of ancient backwardness and have broken the heavy fetters of economic slavery with which foreign capital bound old Russia. They have built up a powerful socialist industry and a collective-farm system in which agriculture is more highly mechanized than in any other country in the world. We have transformed our country into a mighty power that is advancing at the head of progressive mankind.

Socialism has opened up tremendous opportunities for the development of the productive forces of our society. The country teems with new riches created by the labour of Soviet people.

The country has changed. Its economic geography has changed too. A wise plan has redistributed both the wealth and the efforts of its people, has given the country's regions and territories a new aspect and has set up new economic relations between them.

The political and economic development of the capitalist world proceeds unevenly. Some regions and some countries of this world develop and grow rich by ruining others. The economic might of the imperialist countries rests upon the exploitation of the workers at home and on the enslavement and plunder of the colonial peoples.

In our Soviet land there is not and cannot be any enslavement of some people by others, nor can there be any back-

ward colonial regions. All the regions of our country grow and develop, every nation has the opportunity rapidly to develop its economy and culture—this is one of the basic principles of the Lenin and Stalin national policy.

The old industrial centres of the U.S.S.R. have grown and have changed beyond recognition. At the same time new industrial regions have sprung up, many of them in places that only recently were a wilderness. New cities have been built in the Soviet Union, new railways and motor roads have been laid across the country. New bridges, new dams and new navigable canals have been built. Rivers have been deepened. Agriculture has spread to regions where it had not existed before, and the distribution of the country's crops is different from what it was before. New crops are now being grown. Artificial streams now irrigate formerly arid wastes. Poor soils have been enriched. Swamps have been drained over a vast area. In some places forests have been cleared, in others they have been newly planted.

New territory of an area as large as that of the biggest countries in Europe have been explored and newly mapped. Our knowledge of our country's mineral kingdom has grown to such an extent that this kingdom too may be regarded as a newly-discovered land.

Old Russia knew only the anarchic form of development. Factories, mills and mines were built by private enterprise. Profit drained swamps. Hunger felled forests. This was not a planned and wide-scale operation. Human effort was dissipated by competition. In the race for profits forest lands and mines were exhausted. Avarice was accompanied by waste—both of natural resources and of human labour.

Today, capitalism, with its anarchy of production and crises, with its unemployment and predatory wars, is confronted by a new and far more perfect social system. By converting all the wealth of the country into the property of society as a whole, the Socialist Revolution greatly enhanced the strength of the people in their struggle to conquer nature.

The old economic geography of the country took shape in a haphazard way. Today, our country is organizing its economy consciously and purposefully. Throughout these vast expanses of territory work is carried on in conformity with a single plan, and no crises, nor the selfish interests of capitalists, hinder this work.

The country has changed. And much of what has appeared in it since the Soviet system was established is to be seen on the map.

The map of old tsarist Russia told the story of the poverty of the huge backward country, the story of the chained forces of the people, of golden opportunities unused. The map of the Soviet Union tells the story of vast economic and cultural progress, of the country's renovation, of the growth of her might, and of the new socialist way of life.

Verily, Russia is no longer what she was! Not what she was before October 1917. Our country has grown and has become renovated; her face has changed.

Together with the country the people have changed. In transforming the world around them they are transforming themselves.

The Soviet system and the Communist Party have imparted splendid new qualities to the people—a fervent love for their socialist country, profound loyalty to the cause of Communism, courage and perseverance in struggle, and ability to overcome all obstacles. These splendid traits of the Soviet people have made themselves manifest both in the sphere of labour and on the battlefield. And in the sphere of labour and on the battlefield, their titanic strength has grown.

Everything that has strengthened and elevated our country, everything that has made it powerful and prosperous, is the result of the tireless labour of our people, the embodiment of the ideas and the energy of the Communist Party.

In March 1918, shortly after the inception of the Soviet State, the great Lenin announced the inflexible determination of the Bolsheviks "to see to it that Russia ceases to be wretch-

ed and impotent and becomes mighty and abundant in the full meaning of the word...."

"In our natural wealth, in our stores of man power, and in the splendid impetus which the great revolution has imparted to the creative powers of the people," wrote Lenin, "we have the material for the creation of a truly mighty and abundant Russia."*

The eagle eye of the leader, the creator of our state, saw far ahead. And those prophetic words of his have come true.

Brick by brick are we building our house, our state. The face of the country has been changed according to Stalin's plan. The plans outlined by the genius of Lenin and Stalin are being embodied in the wonderful creative achievements of the hands, minds and hearts of our people. The Soviet people are led by the Communist Party, which directs the efforts of millions into one single channel. Stalin shows us the way forward, to new victories. He is building the happiness of the people. It is he who inspires the Soviet people to perform great deeds of labour and heroism. The might and glory of our country, which is holding aloft the great banner of Communism, were created by Lenin and Stalin.

* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-vol. ed., Vol. II, Moscow 1947, p. 309.



II

UNDER THE SOVIET FLAG

WHEN the sun sets in the Kuril Islands it is just rising in Kaliningrad. When night falls in Kaliningrad, dawn is breaking in the Kuril Islands. These two points lie on different sides of the globe. But both are on Soviet territory. The scarlet flag of the Soviets waves proudly over Kaliningrad and over the distant Kuril Islands.

Our country is immense; no other country equals it in size. The Soviet Union covers one-sixth of the habitable surface of the earth.

The great Soviet revolution marched triumphantly across a vast expanse—to the Pacific coast, to the Pamir Mountains, to the rivers Dniester and Niemen. Scores of nationalities rallied under the banner of the revolution. They gained their freedom and a homeland, and they established their own national states, which united in an invincible union of republics.

Beyond the frontiers of our great country, however, there remained millions of dispossessed people, our kinsmen in blood and language.

The lands of Ukrainian Galicia remained under the yoke of Austria-Hungary. The peasants of Transcarpathian Ukraine remained groaning under the oppression of the Hungarian landowners. And when the ramshackle Austro-Hungarian Empire collapsed under the strain of the first world war, the Entente imperialists used these countries as counters in the game of reshuffling the map of Europe. Such was the situation in the West. In the Far East, ancient Russian lands,

discovered and settled by bold Russian explorers, fell under the rule of the Japanese. The Japanese samurai built their war bases in Southern Sakhalin and on the Kuril Islands.

During the stormy years of the Civil War the German and Anglo-French imperialists, with the bayonets of their armies, set up reactionary bourgeois governments in the Baltic countries. The western regions of the Ukraine and Byelorussia were appropriated by the Polish squires, and Bessarabia by the Rumanian boyars.

For many a long year our brothers suffered in separation from their mother country. Only now have the disunited peoples been brought together again. Lake Chudskoye (Peipus) is no longer a prohibited frontier separating Russians and Estonians—it now unites them. The Byelorussian peasants of Polesie no longer bow to the Polish squires, the squires have gone; and the lands they once seized are now ploughed by tractors sent from Stalingrad and Kharkov. The Ukrainian woodsmen of the Transcarpathian Ukraine, the Ukrainian miners of the Donets Basin, the Ukrainian collective farmers of the Poltava Region, the Ukrainian fishermen of Ismail, the Ukrainian academicians of Kiev are all now citizens of one state.

The wisdom of Stalin and the might of the Soviet State restored to us our ancient lands; historical justice has triumphed. We have returned to the banks of the Danube and to the free expanses of the Pacific Ocean.

IN THE NORTHWEST

In the extreme Northwest of our country, beyond Murmansk, the territory of Pechenga is now included within the Soviet frontiers. Russian people have lived on the ice-free banks of the Varanger Fjord from time immemorial. This territory was within the borders of the land of Russia as far back as the reign of Prince Yaroslav the Wise.* That

* Grand Prince of Kiev, 1019-1054.—*Tr.*