ALEKSEY G. STAKHANOV

THE STORY OF MY LIFE

STATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PUBLISHING HOUSE
1937

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This is a publication of STC — SPC — DD(CP)
August 2026

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АЛЕКСЕЙ СТАХАНОВ, РАССКАЗ О МОЕЙ ЖИЗНИ, ОГИЗ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОЕ СОЦИАЛЬНО - ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКОЕ И ИЗДАТЕЛЬСТВО, 1937.

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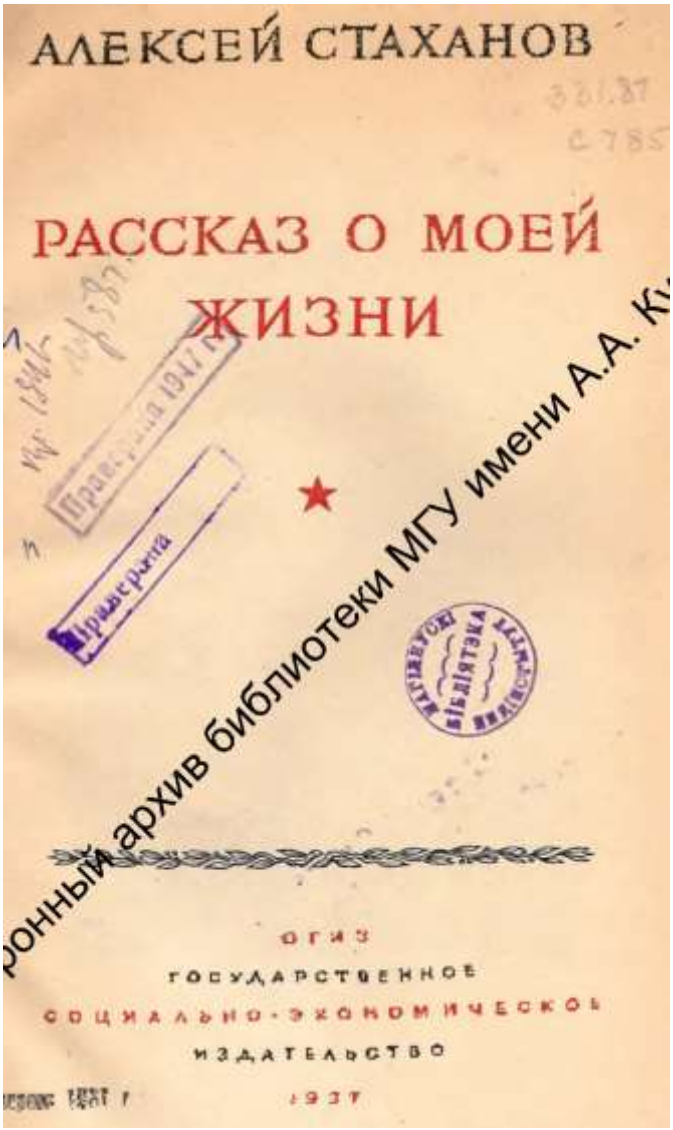

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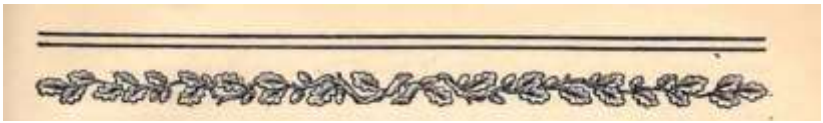

CHAPTER ONE

MY LIFE STORY

After I set the world record for coal production on the night of August 30 to 31, 1935, I have received many letters from different people in various cities. Comrades ask about my life and want to know who I am. Not knowing my exact address, many simply write on the envelopes: *Donbass, to Stakhanov*. And the post office already knows me.

Here are some of these letters:

"Dear Aleksey Grigoryevich!

It is very pleasant to read in the newspapers how you, a working man, have achieved great success and become known to everyone. It is very joyful to know that the name of a simple miner has become famous throughout the world, and that he meets with the great leaders of our people and chats casually with our dear comrade Stalin. When you converse with Comrade Stalin, it feels to me as if I am conversing with him too, and he becomes even closer to me, although I have only seen him in portraits and am thousands of versts away from him.

Aleksey Grigoryevich, I and other workers would like to read your life story. We heard that you come from simple peasants and are a simple worker, but we would like to know in detail how you grew up and how you became a man. Write it, and we will read it. If you send your biography, I will show it to my comrades who are interested in you.

Be well, I wish you new successes!

City of Stalinsk in West Siberia, Kuznetsk Plant named after Stalin, railway workshop."

— *K. Fedorchuk*

Second letter:

"Dear Comrade Stakhanov!

In the October Railway sanatorium entrusted to me in Detskoye Selo, among the children on vacation, is a lucky little girl named Lyalya Vishnevskaya along with her pioneer brother, Lenya.

I accidentally find out that little Lyalya, an excellent student, wants to share something very interesting with me and her equally small comrades. First, Lyalya shares it with me, and then comes the solemn moment when she—happy, full of emotion, proudly holding her head high, with sparkling eyes, and in a firm, ringing voice—tells the story in detail to the children gathered in a bunch, who listened with bated breath and deep attention, about how she met Aleksey Stakhanov on the podium in Moscow on May 1, 1936. She literally conveyed your conversation with her, her promise given to you that she would be an excellent student, a Stakhanovite in her studies. The children greeted Lyalya's report with enthusiasm and applause, just like adults.

Then Lyalya calls upon all the vacationing children of transport workers to write you a letter and solemnly promise to follow your example in their studies, discipline, and behaviour.

The Sanatorium of the October Railway has set a goal, along with improving the health of our small patients, to instill in them Stakhanovite methods of study, maintaining close contact with the schools where our patients study.

In honor of your name, applying your methods, we will raise the standard of children's care to a Stakhanovite height.

We look forward to your reply with great impatience, from which we would like to learn how you became a Stakhanovite.

Thank you to the great Stalin for the opportunities he has given us in the care of children.

With sincere comradely greetings,

Chief of the October Railway Sanatorium, Govorov.

Detskoye Selo, Uritskogo Highway, d. 24."

Letter three:

"Hello, highly respected Aleksey Stakhanov!

I have taken the liberty of writing a letter to you, the initiator of the Stakhanovite movement. The Soviet Union will celebrate the anniversary of the Stakhanovite movement, when on the night of August 30 to 31, 1935, you produced 102 tons with a jackhammer. For me, it is a memorable date, because it was on the eve of the 21st International Youth Day, when I, out of the entire border zone of the Novograd-Volynsky district of the Kiev region, was awarded a prize by the Central Committee of the Komsomol for active participation in the work of the Komsomol. I was depicted standing on guard in the newspaper *Communist* dated September 1, 1935, under the title 'On the Border.' Your record was described there as well. I had the great honor of being featured next to your record, which is a bridge from socialism to communism.

Currently, I am in the army as a cadet at an automobile school, and I am a Stakhanovite in combat and political training. This means that I carry your name from beginning to end. My mother was killed in 1917, and my father was wounded and left an invalid.

We were left as 5 children, all of whom are now Komsomol members, and I am preparing to join the Party. I already have all the recommendations. My request: I would like to see you, talk with you, and hear from you how you achieved your records.

In 1935, I spoke with Maria Demchenko. Now I want to see you.

I am finishing my writing. That's all for now, greetings to your comrades. You stand for the development of our industry, and we stand on guard at the borders. You can rest assured that no one will cross the border.

With Komsomol greetings, *Vaynman.*

Greetings to you from the entire personnel of the unit, we wish you even more energy and strength in your task: to double coal production at the 'Tsentralnaya-Irmino' mine."

Letter four:

"Hello, dear Comrade Stakhanov!

I greet you on the anniversary of the Stakhanovite movement in our happy motherland. I am a student at the FZU (Factory-Workshop Apprenticeship) school at the ship repair yards. I am in my 18th year, and I study no worse than the others. I have grades of 'good,' 'excellent,' and one 'in the middle, I don't understand,' as they say in the movie *The Motherland Calls*. But I give my word, Comrade Stakhanov, that I will study with 'good' and 'excellent' grades, and there will be no average ones. I will study the Stakhanovite way.

Right now, I am studying without interrupting my production work at a glider-flying school—I want to be a pilot like comrade Valery Chkalov, and I really want Joseph Vissarionovich himself to give me a new route in the future.

My name is also Aleksey, but Stepanovich. I have been a member of the VLKSM since 1936. In our workshop, the Stakhanovite movement is also taking place. The best Stakhanovites are: Uncle Sasha Dolinin—boilermaker, Volodya Kupriyanov—turner, member of the VLKSM, Pavel Filippov—locksmith, member of the VLKSM, Molchanov Kolya—carpenter, community activist, and many, many other Stakhanovites and shock workers, too many to write down on paper.

I also used to live in the Donbass, in the Gorlovka district. I saw the mine, I saw the jackhammer, I saw the pickaxe, I saw the coal-cutter, and I saw the electric locomotives—everything that should be at a mine. I would only like you to send a photograph of your mine and a photograph of yourself. Although this might be a little trouble for you, I want to have it as a keepsake, not only for myself but also for my comrades who study with me.

The weather in Murmansk is bad right now—rain and mud, but it used to be good. On September 1st, we celebrated the holidays. We put our glider on a truck and passed by the podium. From the podium, they shouted: 'Long live the future pilots!', and the mass of people of Murmansk shouted 'Hurrah!'.

These, of course, were remarks directed at us, the ship-repairer-glider-pilots.

I am sending my photograph.

Goodbye, I await your reply like a nightingale awaits summer.

— *Kashinsky.*

My address: City of Murmansk, P.O. Box No. 30, ship repair yards, FZU school. To be received by the apprentice electrician Aleksey Stepanovich Kashinsky."

I have presented only four letters, but several hundred have been received. I will answer everyone, since the comrades are interested.

My life is ordinary and simple.

I myself am from near Orel. I was born in 1905 in the village of Lugovaya, Ostrovskoy volost, Livensky uyezda, Orel Governorate. Our village, when I lived in it, was extremely poor. From time immemorial, people left there for city work, but mostly in the mining sector. My father, Grigory Varlamyevich Stakhanov, the son of a poor peasant, had no property of his own. After marrying, he moved to live on the farm of my mother, Anna Yakovlevna. In the family, besides me, there were two sisters: the eldest, Olga, was born in 1904; I was born second; and in 1912, my younger sister, Pelageya, was born.

We lived poorly and were known as poor folk in our village.

I remember my childhood as if it were yesterday. It was joyless, without a single bright day. We went around naked and barefoot. There was never enough bread from our own harvest; we always had to buy extra and often had to borrow from a kulak who lived next door to us.

In 1914, my father was taken to the front. Living without a father became even more difficult, even more burdensome. My mother hired me out, a nine-year-old boy, to a kulak. Having worked for a year, I received nothing. The entire payment was food and the ploughing of four dessiatines of our land. The master didn't even give me trousers, and I walked around eternally in rags.

It was hard working for the kulak. I got up with the dawn, pastured the cattle all day, and worked in the yard in the evening. There was plenty of work. In winter, I tended to the cattle and cleaned the stable. When I went to bed, I could feel neither my arms

nor my legs. And how many times did I have to go to sleep without eating!..

In 1915, I returned home to my mother, but there was nothing to eat at home and nothing to do. The Tsarist authorities had taken our only horse for the army.

At eleven years old, I was given as an assistant to the herder of the village herd, where I worked for three seasons in a row. I received no pay for my labor, working only for the food given to me each day at a different household.

At that same time, I was sent to school for the winter. I had wanted to study for a long time, but neither my father, when he was still home, nor later my mother without him, could send me to school at eight or nine years old, since I had to earn my own food.

At school, I did poorly in Scripture, and the old bearded priest often beat me. The priest used to resort to tricks; he would lure me to his house and there punish me for disobedience: he would make me kneel and in that position forced me to memorise Scripture.

For three winters I went to school, and although it was very difficult for any of us, I still learned to read, write, and learned the four operations of arithmetic. But I never finished school. Poverty forced my mother to take me out of school and send me back to pasture the community calves. That was the end of my education.

We waited a long time for my father to return from the front. Back in 1915, he was taken prisoner in Austria and returned home only in 1919. I and my older sister Olga helped our mother feed the family and raise our younger sister Pelageya. Olga was mostly at home with mother, while I worked for hire as a farmhand.

I remember little of the February bourgeois and October Socialist revolutions. I understood little back then: I was barely twelve years old. I remember only one thing: when the news came that the Tsar had been overthrown, our peasants were very glad, and the first thing they did was go and tear down the estates of the landlords Pozhidaev, Popov, Adamov, Kartsev, Efanov, and others.

Once, a group of young boys went along with the adults, including myself. We broke into the landlord’s house, crawled into the basement, and found many old account books belonging to the landlord Adamov. The other boys and I pounced on them. I never had

enough paper; there was nothing to write on. And so we got paper for our studies.

I remember the great joy that swept the whole village when the decree of the Soviet government on the nationalisation of landlords' land and its transfer to the use of all peasants, as well as the confiscation of all landlords' property, was received. This day was a holiday for our peasants. And we children, I remember, already shared this joy back then. If anyone knew the bitter life of a poor peasant with little land, it was me. I was even more familiar with kulak "kindness" and the kulaks' mistreatment of people, especially the poor.

All the land of the landlord Popov was confiscated and distributed to the peasants; his estate was handed over to the state. The orchard of landlord Pozhidaev was handed over to the teachers' union of the city of Livny. I got a job as a watchman in this orchard and worked there until 1919.

Two events were etched into my memory in 1919. The first was in the summer, during the grain harvest. The kulaks and SRs (Socialist Revolutionaries) wanted to raise an uprising in our village

against the Soviet government. Under threat of execution, beating those who disobeyed, they drove the peasants against the units of the Red Army. The entire adult male population was taken under arms; some managed to escape, but the majority were led toward the city of Livny. The counter-revolution managed to take the city for a time, but soon the Reds arrived, an armoured train rushed in, and crushed the rebels. The organisers of the uprising—the SR Pertsev and the kulak Panferov—fled; many kulaks and SRs were arrested. The Bolsheviks explained to the poor and middle peasants how the kulaks and SRs had deceived them. This was a big lesson for the whole village. Our peasants saw through the enemies of the people and united even closer around the Soviet government and around the Bolshevik Party.

The second event of that year occurred in autumn, in the month of October. The Whites were advancing along the entire front. Kursk was in their hands. Our village was occupied by the Whites. I remember how the Reds fought. Like lions! The Whites held out in our village for about a month, until the Red Army broke through the front and drove the Denikin forces back.

I clearly remember the month of Denikin's rule in our village. Everything ground to a halt. The village was as if in mourning. Only the kulaks had free rein. The Denikin forces, with the help of the kulaks, hunted down the poor and middle peasants, abused them, killed them, and took everything they could.

Shortly before the arrival of the Whites, my father returned from captivity. He told us many bitter things about the torments he had to endure while imprisoned in Austria. And here were new tribulations from the Whites. The Denikin forces shamelessly robbed the peasants, taking literally everything—grain, horses, cows, pigs, sheep, poultry, clothing—wherever they found it and whoever had it. They came to our house too. My father refused to give them anything. Then the whips of the Denikin men fell upon his body. The Whites beat him until he bled and took everything that was in the house.

Central-Irmino

I took this very hard. I hated the Denikin men and the kulaks, who stood up for them and helped them, even more. If I had the strength back then, I would never have let them harm my father, I would not have let them beat him. Maybe it would have cost me my life, but my hatred, anger, and resentment were so strong that I was ready to smash the skulls of that Denikin scum for their mistreatment of the peasants.

With what great joy the whole village and I, a fourteen-year-old boy, greeted the arrival of the Reds. I cannot even find the words today to convey what we felt and experienced back then. People do not even greet their own fathers that way. Having experienced life under the Whites first-hand, everyone understood what Soviet power meant—that the Red Army brought land, freedom, and happiness to the peasants.

A new era arrived. The village breathed a sigh of relief. Soviet power was established, and no one ever disrupted the Soviet order in our village again. The new, Soviet era began.

Of course, not everything went well right away. And at home, I remember, not everything was smooth. True, in the winter of 1919,

my father bought a horse; the Committee of Poor Peasants (kombed) helped. We began to manage the farm ourselves, and life became easier. Soon, my father was elected chairman of the village cooperative, and throughout 1920 and 1921, I lived with my father, helping him at home on the farm. But then the famine of 1921 disrupted my life again. There was nothing to eat and nothing to use for fuel. Together with my father, we went to the forest to chop firewood, and this is how we earned our fuel. Working in the forest in the dampness and cold, my father fell seriously ill and died in the summer of 1922.

A heavy, great sorrow befell me and our entire family. Before we could recover from the painful loss of our father, my mother died in the autumn of that same year. I was left with my two younger sisters. The eldest was 18 years old, I was in my 17th year, and the youngest was 10 years old.

To survive, I went to work for a kulak again in 1923. All my hopes, all my plans that we would have our own farm, that I would ride out on my own grey horse—the kind I often saw with our landlord Pozhidaev—collapsed all at once.

As a farmhand, I did various kinds of work: at the kulak's mill, as an unskilled labourer at the engine, and as a loader. In the summer, I reaped, gathered, and threshed the kulak's grain, and in the winter, besides working in the stable, the master also forced me to brew moonshine for him. The pay was food and three rubles a month. I worked for the kulak for more than three years. From dawn to dusk, I laboured without ceasing for the bloodsucker; I had no personal life and did not even have a single day off. There was no question of studying or books. I was glad, upon finishing work, to throw myself onto a dirty bed in the stable and fall asleep.

The master somehow found out about my dream of having my own horse and said: "You are a good worker, well then, try hard, and I will make you happy: I'll give you the bay at my own price." I had saved about fifteen rubles of money by then and gave it to him as a down payment. For a year or more, he withheld money from my earnings for the bay, but nothing came of it: the kulak cheated me.

In 1926, I returned home to my sisters. I began to help them on the farm. My late father's own brother, Vasily Varlamyevich

Stakhanov, helped us sow the land. Together with him, we sowed and harvested. This is how we had to survive. But this life did not satisfy me in the least. I was looking for something new, better, good. For long nights I did not sleep, thinking about what to do, how to proceed? I was already in my twenty-first year, but I couldn't even go out into the street, as I had nothing to wear. All my long years of labor for the kulak did not even give me the opportunity to buy a good suit and sew a pair of boots. It was shameful to appear in public. It was then that the idea was born in me to go to the mine. It was hard to tear myself away from the land, but it was necessary.

I did not end up in Kadievka, now the city of Sergo, at the "Tsentralnaya-Irmino" mine by chance. By 1927, about 30 of my fellow villagers were already working there: Zibarov, Malykhin, my namesakes Petr and Roman Stakhanov, and others. It was they who advised me to go to their mine. They said: "The mine is not a kulak, it is a state enterprise. Earnings are good and life is different." And so, in 1927, in the month of March, I arrived in the Donbass at the "Tsentralnaya-Irmino" mine.

I arrived in bast shoes, with a small chest on my shoulders. My calculation was simple: work a little, save up about four hundred over the summer, and there's a horse and harness for you, since the Soviet government gave plenty of land.

I got off the train and headed to my fellow villager Roman Stakhanov, who lived with his mother. I spent the night there, and in the morning, I went to the assignment office. I will say frankly: I was terribly afraid of the mine, and kept recalling my grandfather's words: "A mine is a penal colony, you will waste your strength for nothing, you'll perish..."

And here I am, going to the mine... I see smoke pouring from the chimneys and think that these chimneys come from the very depths of the mine and that one has to work in smoke all the time. I had no concept of a mine whatsoever.

At the assignment office, I turned to several section chiefs, whose names I no longer remember, with a request to accept me for any work in the mine. They replied: "No hiring." For a couple of days, I hung around among the miners in the assignment room. My mood was rotten. I wanted to work, but they weren't giving me

work. Finally, I asked the chief of the "Beral-Zapad" section, Tubolev, to take me into the mine. I was in my twenty-second year then. I was a tall fellow. Tubolev liked this. He gave me a hiring slip, and I went to sign up.

They accepted me as a brakeman. The qualification, to be honest, was lousy, but I agreed because I wanted to start working as soon as possible.

I went to the hospital. The doctor examined me and declared me fit for work in the mine. At the personnel desk, they took my documents. Finally, I went to the lamp room, received a number there, which I pinned to my tunic with a safety pin, and the coveted lamp.

They sent me to work as a partner to my fellow villager and namesake, Roman Stakhanov. He was a horse-driver back then.

I go into the surface building. Small mine cars run along the tracks, pushed by nimble women. I stand in line for the cage. Every two or three minutes it comes up from below, rusty and wet. The banksman rings the bell, and it seems to drop down. I experience a feeling of slight fear.

"Maybe the mine is not the path for me?" I thought. But right then, I spat and, imitating the old miners, cursing without reason, went to the overseer to check in. I was dressed unlike all the other miners, but in a special way—just as I had arrived from my native village: in white linen trousers and in bast shoes with long strings. You don't see those nowadays. Everyone started laughing at me. They whistled, jeered, especially the girl haulers. All kinds of jokes and mockery were put into play. They said the master had arrived in a white suit to earn money for a cow. I blushed for my outfit, wanted to explain to them that I had never been to a mine before, that soon I would look like all of them, but I couldn't explain and ran away to the overseer.

I sat in the cage. The signals of the banksman rang out, and the cage descended. A chill was felt in my stomach. I ducked my head, huddled up all over, and waited for something terrible. I hear water pouring down the shaft. The rustle of the cage sliding along the guides frightens me. It seemed that the cable would wear through, and the cage along with me would smash somewhere at the bottom. I

pressed against the wall. It seemed to me that we were falling through. Then I lost my breath, and it felt as if I were flying upward. But then a light flashed, voices were heard, real earthly cursing rang out, and the cage stopped. I stepped out with the others, looked at myself, and did not recognise my outfit. In the cage, I had smeared it against the mine clothes, and it had turned a dirty black colour.

I entered the illuminated pit bottom, then the crosscut. I walked with a group of miners. Soon we found ourselves in a dark corridor—a drift. Only our lamps cast light. Look back—it is as dark as a grave. At times I stumble, falling into the drainage ditch. In places, there are deep puddles. A couple of times, horse-drivers rushed past with a whistle. A horse pulls several mine cars.

I arrived with my partner at the stable. There he took his black horse, "Krasavchik." I saw many horses and immediately calmed down. Horses were close to me, a country boy; it was a business familiar to me. Near the shaft stood a box, from which Roman took couplings, and I took brakes. The mine harness surprised me. There was a mass of iron on the horse; everything rings and hums.

We harnessed the horse, attached six empty mine cars, and drove along the main drift to the "Beral-Zapad" section. Everything would have been fine, but there was trouble with the lamp. Back then, the mine had antediluvian Wolf lamps. Every 5–10 minutes, the lamp went out because I had not yet learned to hold it properly. Every now and then, I had to run to the lamp carrier to change the lamp. I had to walk along the drift in the dark, hit my forehead against a timber, and sparks flew from my eyes.

As a brakeman, I helped the horse-driver put the cars back on the tracks when they derailed. Sometimes the brakes smashed my fingers. Once, a nail was torn from my finger.

When I came to the mine, there was still an old bad habit of mocking newcomers. Here, a mine car went off the rails. To put it in place, one has to lie in it, raise one's legs, and, pressing them against the roof, bend one's back and move the car. This is called making a "lemonade." When my first incident occurred and a set of cars derailed, they told me to go to the shaft and bring... a "lemonade." I didn't know what it was, and, trying to be obedient, immediately set off for the shaft. When I asked the banksman where I could get a

lemonade, he laughed and pointed to a huge log that even four people couldn't lift. I tried to lift this log but couldn't even move it from its place. I was vexed. I returned and declared that I found the lemonade but couldn't bring it myself. I asked for a couple of people to help. Then wild laughter broke out. Many horse-drivers gathered; they held their stomachs from laughing, and I understood nothing. Later they told me what it was about, and it was very hurtful. I considered the mockery of a newcomer unfair. Right then, I gave myself a word never to mock a new person myself. During my time working in the mine, a mass of people passed through my hands, and they always received comradely support from me. I protected them from the mockery of lovers of cruel jokes.

The first shift (a shift in the mine is called a *uprjashka*) was a whole school for me. I understood what a brakeman must do. By the end of the shift, the lamp stopped going out too. And I stopped getting bumps on my forehead. My partner Roman Stakhanov praised me and said: "it will work out." The first shift flew by quickly.

We drove "on-the-mountain," that is, to the surface. By chance, I saw my face in the glass window of the assignment room. I looked like a Negro. Only the whites of my eyes and my teeth gleamed. My white suit, of course, could no longer be recognised; I stopped standing out, and no one paid attention to me anymore. I became like all those who deep underground extract the precious black gold for the country.

Gold is gold, but here was the question—how to wash and change? The apartment of my partner, where I temporarily stayed, was not far from the mine. I didn't know that there was a bathhouse near the mine and that one could wash there. I was ashamed to ask, so as not to show that I was a novice. I went home dirty as I was. There they began to laugh at my expense. I had to take clean clothes with me, return to the mine, and go to the bathhouse to wash.

On the second day, when I descended into the mine, I was already one of their own. Everything was known to me. I already harnessed the horse myself. Things began to go smoothly. I hurried to quickly couple a set of empties and rushed to the section to haul out more coal. There was no official competition back then, but

somehow on our own, we strived to work better, especially since earnings increased from this.

I worked as a brakeman for three months. Life was a bit difficult for me in the first months of work at the mine. I hadn't brought money with me from the village—there wasn't any. I earned little.

The mother of Roman Stakhanov, where I lodged, at first offered to let me board with her and asked thirty-five rubles for it. But back then, I could barely earn fifty rubles a month in total. I did not agree, as I knew that food cost other guys 13–15 rubles. Then she began to scold me and accuse me of ingratitude. Saying they kept you in the apartment for a whole month, and now you don't agree to switch to boarding. I decided to leave them and moved to live with another fellow villager, a family man and worker named Volkov. He charged me 15 rubles a month for board and lodging. Then Roman Stakhanov refused to work with me. But I had already become experienced at the mine and was not frightened. If you don't want to, you don't have to. I went to another horse-driver—Miroshnichenko—as a brakeman.

I worked for about half a month as a brakeman, and then decided: how am I any worse than the others, I can drive horses myself. I declared this to the traffic overseer. At first, he did not agree, thinking I wouldn't cope, but then he let me onto the "Beral-Vostok" section for a test.

Needless to say, on that day I tried to work better than all the horse-drivers. I succeeded. Usually, horse-drivers made 5 trips, but I made 7 trips during that shift. Then the overseer appointed me as a horse-driver for all sections: I had to work for those who did not show up for work (back then, absenteeism was frequent). Later I became a horse-driver in the "Beral-Zapad" section and worked there for almost a year — until August 1928.

I treated the horses very well. After all, I have loved horses for a long time, since childhood. I often talked to them, and it seemed to me that they understood me. It was pleasant to approach my "Buketh" (Bouquet), say a kind word to him, and he would rub his muzzle against my shoulder. I brought him a bottle of sweet tea and bread from the surface. He was a smart horse. I once showed him where I put the tea. The next day, "Buketh" himself approached that spot, grabbed the bottle with his teeth, threw his head back, and

drank the contents, and then had a bun for a snack. “Buketh” evidently loved me too and often got me out of trouble. Sometimes we would derail, and it was hard to lift the car and put it on the track by myself; then I would align all the cars one to one, “Buketh” would pull hard, and at that moment, I would place the car on the rails. “Buketh” was a strong horse.

Horse-drivers at the mine were considered the most feisty people. But they were simply daredevils. Horse-drivers walked with long whips, with large forelocks, and wore their caps askew. When a horse-driver whistled in the main drift, it even became a bit terrifying for some young miners. Among the horse-drivers were hooligan-like fellows. He gets drunk, makes noise, pesters the girls. The girls were afraid to get married. Meanwhile, all this bravado among the horse-drivers was affected. For the most part, they were ordinary, good guys.

Many songs about the life and work of horse-drivers were sung at the mines. I sang them too. Only the songs were not the ones sung now. They were all sung to mournful tunes, and in terms of content, they were old songs about hard labor, about death, about a bitter lot. The most famous pre-revolutionary song of horse-drivers is “Here Rushes a Set of Cars From the Incline,”—I don’t remember all the words exactly, but it is sung like this:

Here rushes a set of cars from the incline
Along the main longitudinal drift,
And to the young horse-driver
The brakeman shouts from the car:
“Oh, slower, slower, for God’s sake,
A large incline lies ahead,
Here the track is out of repair,
The car will derail from the jolt.”
But the horse-driver did not listen to him,
And drove the horse faster and faster.
And suddenly the mine car derailed,
The horse-driver fell under the set of cars.
I rushed past the set of cars:
“Save my friend!”
And suddenly I looked back,
A crowd of people stands around,

And the young horse-driver,
Is carried away with a smashed head.

I parted with “Buketh” in August 1928: I was called to the conscription commission in the city of Livny. I had bad legs and was enrolled in non-combatant training. I returned to the mine in September 1928. I rested for two weeks: my place as a horse-driver was taken. Then I went as a shoveller to the “Nikanor-Zapad” section at horizon 120 (at a depth of 120 meters). I worked there until January 1929. On January 2, 1929, I became a horse-driver again in the same section. I worked better than all the horse-drivers. The section chief, Misanenko, valued me. Here I worked until the end of 1930.

I lived at Volkov’s apartment until 1928, until the call-up into the Red Army. Life wasn’t bad, but it was very boring. Volkov was an elderly man, and I was young. I had no friends or company, because the youth gathered in the bachelors’ dormitories. In one of the dormitories, about twenty of my fellow countrymen, young guys, gathered. After my return from Livny, I decided to move to bachelors’ dormitory No. 8.

How did we live here? The dormitory was a large room with 22 beds. I began to live among my own. We went out and amused ourselves together.

In our free time from work, we gathered in groups of eight to ten people and took an accordion with us. The accordionist in our company was Volodya Myagkiy. I also learned to play the accordion a little. We would go to the orchard or to the river. We would take girls into the company. We walk around the orchard, sing songs, and dance. The songs we liked were mostly Red Army and military ones.

The Irmino mine back then looked completely different from today’s. It was a dirty settlement. Many hooligans loitered about; there were frequent drinking bouts and fights.

The mine organisations took little interest in how the workers spent their rest time. No talks were held with us; we hardly read newspapers. All the fun consisted of what we were capable of ourselves: singing songs and dancing.

We ate in the dormitory. During payday, we contributed money to the elected monitor of the dormitory. And he handed it over to the cook, who bought groceries and prepared food for us. But the food was not what it is now. The borscht was thin, and the meat was prepared somehow or other. To tell the truth, our taste back then was simple too.

I dressed poorly at that time. I had a so-called dress suit made of coarse cloth, which didn't fit me. I bought it along with comrades, and got swindled.

In the dormitory, I met and became friends with the cook. She was a beautiful woman, and she appealed to my heart. In October 1929, we got married. I was given a family apartment, and I began to live in a new way.

I got tired of working as a horse-driver. The Donbass was mechanising. A coal-cutting machine was brought to our mine too. I was drawn to it. Of course, I couldn't get onto the mechanism right away. I decided to go as a miner behind the coal-cutting machine. We worked on seam "Nikanor-75." In cutting, I immediately showed good results. Where the old cutters cut 6 meters, I cut 11–12. I worked as a cutter until 1932.

A daughter was born to me by this time. I had looked forward to our first child very much. The birth of my daughter was a holiday. I called my relatives and acquaintances, and we feasted on the joy as is proper. And I thought: the family is growing, I need to earn more.

When section "Nikanor-75" was worked out, I transferred to the deepening of section "Nikanor-Vostok." Here I also worked as a cutter behind a coal-cutting machine until 1933.

Jackhammers appeared at the mine. They interested me very much. When our section was being converted to jackhammers, I asked for this work too. They gave me a hammer right away. They explained how to handle it, but I didn't study it down to the fine details. From the very first days of working with the jackhammer, difficulties began to pursue me. I couldn't master it right away. But my persistence won out. I remember the norm back then for a jackhammer was 3 meters, or 5 tons. Despite all the difficulties of mastering an unfamiliar mechanism, thanks to my efforts, I cut 5 meters, or 8 tons.

In 1934, in September, at my request, I was sent to study at courses for hewers on jackhammers. I studied at these courses for four months without interrupting production. The study gave me a great deal. I began to understand the jackhammer down to the finest details. I could already eliminate any hitch myself. I finished the courses with "excellent."

There were hewers, like Kravchuk, Silin, and others, who considered themselves all-knowing; they dropped out of the courses. When I returned from my studies at the beginning of 1935, I increased my productivity on the jackhammer to 10 tons per shift instead of the former 6–7 tons. But Kravchuk, Silin, and others remained stuck at 6–7 tons. I remember they regretted back then that they had stopped attending classes.

In 1934, we began to prepare first for the socialist technical exam, and then for the state technical exam. I remember it was a hot time. By then, I already wielded the jackhammer quite well and felt a great drive toward further study and mastery of technology. I regularly attended the courses for preparation for the state technical exam. I studied myself and taught others.

The Party organiser in our section was the hewer Miron Dyukanov, who was a friend to every non-Party worker. Miron Dyukanov noticed me; he saw that I wielded the jackhammer well and offered me a community assignment—to train lagging hewers. Everyone was grateful for the instruction, but I, in turn, was also grateful to them, because I liked community work, and I became closer to the Party organisation.

The Party members of our section began to assign me all sorts of tasks. For example, when it was necessary to conduct a subscription for a loan, I was the first organiser. I also managed subscriptions for magazines and newspapers among the workers. I began to attend meetings and sometimes even spoke.

In the summer of 1935, there was much talk among us about Comrade Stalin's speech at the graduation of Red Army academies. Stalin spoke about attention to people, and we wanted to work even better. The words of Comrade Stalin that it is necessary to master technology and squeeze everything out of it, his words about love for man, opened my eyes to much that I hadn't understood before.

I decided to help the workers master technology. Being an honours student in the state technical exam, I prepared several previously lagging workers to pass the exam with “excellent.” In production, I began to work harder. I was constantly worried that my mine was in a breach, and that no matter how hard the best shock workers tried, the mine’s plan was not being fulfilled. And although I worked well myself and trained others, I felt that this was not enough, that we needed to deliver such productivity as to escape the breach. I began to think about how best to carry out the instructions of Comrade Stalin.

Thus, the thought of a record began to be born in me—a thought that I soon realised.

CHAPTER TWO

THE HISTORY OF THE RECORD

The “Tsentralnaya-Irmino” mine has existed for more than 35 years. Little was known about it in the Donbass. It was an ordinary, average mine.

In the old days, before the revolution, working in it was just as hard as in all Donetsk mines. In general, the work of a miner was the hardest. There was no mechanisation whatsoever. Coal was extracted manually and dragged out of the face on one’s own back. Hard any one stayed at the mine year-round. In the summer, as old miners say, production usually fell; people went to the village. By winter, they returned to the mine to earn some money.

The majority of workers lived in barracks where bunks went up in two tiers. They worked twelve hours a day. Many hewers and timberers returned to the barracks after work without washing and flopped down to sleep. The bunks swarmed with bedbugs and lice.

The old miner Koshar, who began working at the mine almost from its very foundation in 1900, says that in the barracks under the bunks, frogs jumped on the damp earthen floor. For the whole barrack, there were three pairs of clean boots. They wore them in turn when they went out for a walk.

For every trifle, fines were imposed at the mine. Workers were constantly cheated by the overseers. They went into the mine with oil lamps filled with oleonaphta or oil. With their soot, they poisoned the already heavy air in the face.

They drank in artels, says old man Koshar. An artel member would buy several buckets of vodka or beer, and the whole artel would drink. They drank without drying out for several days, not going to work until the money ran out...

Sundays almost always ended in bloody fights. Artel against artel, Kursk guys against Smolensk guys, Voronezh guys against Orel guys.

In 1903, unrest began among the workers of the "Tsentralnaya-Irmino" mine, caused by cheating the workers. The miners rushed into the office, destroyed all the documents, and set fire to the building. Cossacks galloped in. Many miners were beaten, others arrested.

After the Great October Socialist Revolution, our mine sent its best people to the front of the civil war. In 1918, the mine was flooded. Engineer Zavadsky—a master's servant — told the gathered workers:

"Let it flood — I don't care!"

The miners were hungry. There was neither bread nor potatoes. But everyone was concerned with saving the mine. Tolkachev, Koshar, Ivanov, Kabanov, Nikitenko, and others began to pump out the water. There were no horses. Women drove the mine cars along the drift.

The Donbass was under the heel of the Whites. The old workers steadfastly guarded the mine, awaiting liberation from the counter-revolution. The youth were at the front.

When the Whites began to retreat from Kadievka under the pressure of the Red Army, the master's sycophant, mining foreman Lipov, ordered the pump motor to be pulled out of the mine. He wanted to flood the mine. The hewers Anikanov and Golovin declared to him:

"If you pull out the motor, we'll lower you into the mine instead of it!"

The Donbass turned Red. The economy was restored slowly. In 1919, the mine produced 60–100 cars of coal per day. Then production began to grow. Together with the whole Donbass, our mine gathered strength, gathered people, and raised production.

The First Five-Year Plan changed the face of the mine. Jackhammers, compressors, and electric locomotives appeared. New technology appeared. But the mine did not give particularly much coal.

By the time of my record, there were 95 jackhammers, 4 electric locomotives, 4 compressors with a total capacity of 102 cubic meters of air per minute, dozens of electric drills, and other equipment in operation at the mine. The mine developed 7 seams, ranging in thickness from 0.5 to 1.4 meters.

The mine has two shafts—one for cargo, the other for ventilation. Of the throughput capacity of the shaft, it was said that it would not pass more than 1000–1100 tons. The mine yielded an average of 900–950 tons, failing to fulfil its plan. It failed to fulfil its plan for several years in a row. For this, it was given the bad nickname "the garbage dump."

The shift productivity of a jackhammer in August 1935 did not exceed 8 tons. The steps were of dwarf length—6 meters and at most 10 meters. There was no division of labor whatsoever. The hewers timbered the face themselves. Their working day was not fully utilised.

In the drifts, there was impassable mud, and the tracks were out of repair. By the time a horse-driver or electric locomotive driver delivered a set of cargo to the shaft, it would derail several times. Production hitches spoiled the workers' mood.

Forward-looking miners were always worried about one thing —how to raise the mine, how to lead it out of the breach. The call of Comrade Stalin to master technology and his words that technology, headed by people, decides everything, reached the consciousness of every worker. The people studied, raised productivity, and tried to liquidate the breach.

That people who have mastered technology decide everything was spoken by Comrade Stalin in May 1935. May, June, July, August —in these months, we often repeated the words of Comrade Stalin and fought for their implementation.

And so, August arrived. International Youth Day was approaching. The Party organisation of the mine organised a competition for hewers on jackhammers. The aim was to meet International Youth Day gloriously. In addition, the end of the year was approaching. We wanted by all means to fulfil the annual coal production program, and things were very bad with the plan.

The best section that won the competition was promised a challenge Red Banner. This was spoken of at assignments and in sections, in the club and in apartments. These were hot days. Members of the Party went from apartment to apartment, held talks with the workers, gathered their suggestions for improving the organisation of labor and tightening the working day. Along the way, the Party members asked each worker what he needed, what worried him, what troubled him.

On the eve of International Youth Day, August 29, at seven o'clock in the evening, the Party organiser of the mine, Konstantin Petrov, and the chief of my section "Nikanor-Vostok," Nikolai Ignatyevich Mashurov, came to my apartment. I did not expect them and was even embarrassed by the suddenness of their visit. A conversation began. The guests asked what, in my opinion, needed to be done to raise production. Good miners gave 10–14 tons of coal per jackhammer. Petrov and Mashurov asked, what did I think needed to be done so that the hammer would give more?

I replied that we do not have the conditions for good work. My face is cut into eight short steps, and ten hewers work in a shift. If, say, one hewer can work better, he still has nowhere to unfold. The step is short, and the place is full of people. One gets in the way of another. And in general, our work is organised in such a way that you only cut with the jackhammer for 3–$3\frac{1}{2}$ hours, or even less. The rest of the time goes into timbering the face. You cut it yourself, you timber it yourself. While you timber the step, the jackhammer lies idle.

I spoke about interruptions in the air supply: either it isn't there, or it's supplied under low pressure. Timber is not always laid out along the steps. Coal is not hauled away on time. It happens that before you can even get to work, the jackhammer breaks down. You have to go up to the surface, change the hammer, and crawl back into the mine. This sometimes takes half the working day. And there are no spare hammers in the face.

They listened to me with great attention. When I finished speaking, Petrov and Mashurov at first said nothing. Petrov was pondering something. Then he asked me:

"Aleksey Grigoryevich, we have already spoken with you about Comrade Stalin's speech; you know what tasks he has set before the country. We need to think about how to fulfil them."

I started talking again about our hitches, because we were sick to death of them. If they gave a hewer a chance to cut properly, there would be coal. There will be no stopping on our account. But there is nowhere to turn. You sit more than you cut. How many times have I thought that if they gave me alone the chance to cut the whole face, I would probably manage it alone. And ten people are sitting in it.

"And what if, indeed, you go alone to cut the whole face?"

"Will I cut it?—Definitely, I'll cut it, if I work only with the hammer, and others do the timbering. And if I don't cut it, then what?"

"I have already thought this matter through," said Nikolai Mashurov. "We will create all the necessary conditions. There will be air, there will be timber. How much you squeeze out will be seen. I'll vouch for a hundred tons—you'll cut it. There will be a record."

I replied that, of course, it was possible to cut it, but only on one condition: if I, as a hewer, do nothing but cut, and behind me come timberers who do nothing but timber.

My wife listened to our conversation. To be honest, at first she did not entirely approve of this matter.

"What if you disgrace yourself, what will people say?" she asked.

They answered my wife that I would manage the business, there would be no disgrace. And if I managed the business, I would be just as noble a man as Grishin. Grishin was a hewer at a neighbouring mine who was awarded the Order of Lenin for good work and high productivity. Everyone in the city knew and respected Grishin.

"Grishin?!" my wife intervened again, "and why is Alyosha any worse than Grishin? Go figure, Grishin can, and Stakhanov cannot!"

We began to consider when it was best to go for this business. We agreed that it was best on the night shift. To be honest, we were a little afraid lest someone interfere with our new undertaking. There were also kulaks at the mine. Some we caught as saboteurs. We feared lest some scoundrel interfere with us.

The guests shook my hand firmly and said a warm goodbye. I went out into the street to see them off. When they left, I stood a little longer in the fresh air. I looked at the mine, at the headframe, at the mine car with rock that slowly rose to the top of the spoil tip. Breathing was easy. My mood was elevated. I had a presentiment that the new business would succeed. I went into the house, took my daughter in my arms, and quickly twirled around with her in the middle of the room.

"Have you lost your mind in your old age?" my wife grumbled jokingly.

I went to bed with thoughts of the future record.

August 30

I got up at the crack of dawn, quickly washed with cold water, dressed, and went to the mine. Workers walked in groups. I overtook them. Some, greeting me, asked:

"Why are you running?"

I didn't answer anything, hurrying to Mashurov: it was necessary to find out which of the timberers would follow behind me to timber, how the timber would be delivered, and how the coal would be hauled away. I was already firmly confident that I would cut the whole face. But this had to be ensured. Everything depends on good preparation of the business, on the timely extension of the main air line, on the delivery of measured timber, on a good air supply, on fast timbering and uninterrupted hauling of coal. Properly speaking, only one thing was required: order.

I asked Nikolai Ignatyevich about all of this. To all my questions, he replied:

"It will be done!"

Right there, he said that timberers Shchigolev and Kalinin would follow behind me to timber. I knew them as first-class masters of timbering and agreed.

I headed to the workshop to check the serviceability of the jackhammer. In the workshop, one couldn't always rely on good care of the hammers. They weren't washed or lubricated for several days. I disassembled my hammer, washed every part with kerosene, lubricated it with oil, and assembled it again. Then I connected the

hammer to a hose with compressed air and tested it. The hammer worked easily and evenly. I wiped it with tow and handed it over to the shift locksmith. I warned him not to give my hammer to anyone.

On the way back home, I dropped into the office to ask the timekeeper how much I had earned for August. The timekeeper replied that about 600 rubles. This was my usual earnings. I did not rise above it. But this was, perhaps, one of the highest earnings at the mine.

I went home to have breakfast, although it was already time for dinner.

I ate quickly and, not delaying at home for a single extra minute, set off for the mine again. I wanted to catch the day assignment to see the timberers there and talk.

The assignment room was decorated with slogans and posters dedicated to International Youth Day. On the wall hung a board tracking the competition of hewers. Rarely did the figure of 200 percent appear on it. More often 150, 175, 180, 190 predominated. This seemed to many to be the limit, and they grew used to it.

The gathered workers broke into groups. Each section had its own specific place. When the majority of the shift was assembled, the chairman of the section committee and the overseer conducted a brief production meeting.

Usually, at such meetings, the results of the work for yesterday and the assignment for today's shift were discussed: who was to work where and how much to cut. Often there were talks on political topics. In our section, they were conducted by the Party group organiser, Miron Dyukanov. He told the workers about all the decisions of the Party and the government, and read us newspapers about international events. Dyukanov was exceptionally sensitive to the suggestions of the workers and always achieved their implementation. He knew all the workers of the section by last name, first name, and patronymic, where and in what conditions they lived, and always took care of them.

Our Party members carried out a great deal of work at the mine. I remember how once the Party committee of the mine sent letters to all regular workers and asked them to reply as to what each one needed. Many complained about queues in the stores. After this, the

Party organisation achieved the delivery of groceries to the homes of the 210 best shock workers. Land for gardens was allocated to all regular workers. 400 pigs and piglets were distributed. The Party organisation examined the health condition of the children of regular workers. All those in need of treatment were sent to resorts and rest homes. I am not even mentioning the fact that apartments, cellars, and sheds were repaired for all regular workers, and many were given money on instalment to purchase furniture. In the mine Party committee, one could often see non-Party workers who came there to seek advice.

A. Stakhanov on the day of the record

...So, I was in the assignment room. I met my comrades, partner-timberers Shchigolev and Kalinin. I approached them, and we began to discuss the work plan in detail. It was decided that by nine o'clock in the evening everyone would gather in the assignment room, and at ten o'clock be in the section. By this time, the second shift was

finishing its work, and the third was to be a repair shift. In it, usually, worked timber haulers who delivered timber into the face for the next twenty-four hours, locksmiths who moved the main air line, and pack-wallers who secured the face. This time, the timber haulers were ordered to descend into the mine earlier to provide the face with timber for the third shift, and the shift of pack-wallers and locksmiths was moved to five o'clock in the morning. Contrary to the usual routine, horse-drivers were called into the third shift to haul away the coal that I would cut.

We parted to have dinner and rest a little before work. I intended to fall asleep after dinner, but I didn't succeed. I didn't wait for the whistle at nine o'clock and set off for the mine. In the bathhouse, I quickly put on my mining clothes, went to the lamp room, received a lamp, a jackhammer, and several spare picks. The oiler, which I always kept with me, I filled with fresh oil. Having lubricated the hammer, I checked it once more under the pressure of compressed air. It ran like a good watch.

Shchigolev, Kalinin, and I went to the shaft, and a quarter of an hour later, we were already heading along the drift to section "Nikanor-Vostok." We walked fast, exchanging words along the way. Shchigolev joked the whole way. Our mood was robust and cheerful. Neither I nor the timberers doubted the success of the business in the least. To get to the face as quickly as possible—this, perhaps, was what we thought about most of all.

By our arrival, there was no one in the face. The second shift had evidently hurried to go up to the surface. No sooner had we crawled past the first step than from behind rang out the voice of Petrov, illuminating the whole face with the bright light of a inspection lamp (a battery lamp used by technical supervisors in the mine). Behind him crawled Mashurov and the editor of the mine newspaper, Mikhailov. Everyone was struck when they crawled through the entire face to the very top and found no timbering wood anywhere.

"Maybe it's in the ventilation drift?" asked Shchigolev and crawled there. But it wasn't there either. It was clear that the delivery of timber into the face had failed. The overseers had let us down. But

no one even thought of returning to the surface. Part of the timber we found in the gob and moved into the steps.

It was impossible to delay for a single minute longer. I went up the face and checked the condition of the step: whether a overhang was hanging, how the streams of the seam were located. I carefully examined the main airline—whether the valve was in place and whether the hose was in good repair. I blew it out with compressed air. After blowing it out, I connected the hose to the valve, bent it in half, and listened—whether there was a hiss, whether air was escaping. Making sure that everything was fine, I made an undercut of 35–40 centimetres, so that after cutting the corner it would be easier to break off the coal. I did the undercutting along a small parting of coal from bottom to top with one hand, while holding onto a prop with the other hand. After this, I cut the upper corner for one support and drove the seam down. The hammer played in my hands, cutting deep into the seam and breaking off boulders of coal.

Following behind me, when I removed the upper bench of coal and began to remove the lower part, both timberers set to work. They placed two props one after another.

In tense but robust and joyful labor, 5 hours and 45 minutes passed unnoticed. When I finished cutting the last step and crawled out onto the main drift, Mashurov firmly shook my hand and exclaimed:

“Congratulations, Aleksey Grigoryevich, on a brilliant success! According to my calculations, it turns out to be more than 100 tons of coal!”

I was ready to dance with joy.

Agitated, we stood a little longer near the chute. Coal continued to pour into the cars. The horse-driver quickly loaded a set, dashed onto it, and drove the horse to the shaft with a whistle.

I felt no fatigue whatsoever and was ready to clear the face once more if there had been enough timber. But there was nothing left to timber with. Following the loaded set, we headed for the shaft.

On this night, the face was not restructured in a new way—the steps were short. The only new thing in my work was the division of labor: I cut for almost a full six hours, and two timberers timbered behind me. This decided the success. I cut 102 tons of coal. The

norm was exceeded 14 times. In ordinary conditions, to cut 102 tons of coal, I would have needed 8–10 days. During the shift, I earned two hundred rubles instead of the usual 23–30 rubles.

We came out of the mine with the dawn. Workers were just beginning to gather for assignment.

The news of my record flew like lightning through the whole settlement. The second shift gathered in the assignment room ahead of time. Enemies and philistines spread a rumour that my record was a complete fabrication, that it couldn't be believed. From 7–14 tons suddenly jumping all at once to 102 tons of coal. "That is more than 6 railway cars. Is it possible to believe that one man in a shift could cut so much coal," said all kinds of town gossips.

But experienced miners immediately understood the "secret" of my success. When I appeared in the assignment room, they warmly greeted me, firmly shook my hand, presented flowers, and rejoiced along with me.

Among the first to congratulate me was the Party organiser of the section, Miron Dyukanov. He was all smiles and kept repeating: "Well done, well done, Aleksey... You have made a good beginning... I am going to back up your record..."

"102 tons of coal!" admired Dyukanov. "But I'll give more! Nikolai Ignatyevich, prepare a face for me," he turned to Mashurov, who stood nearby.

The Komsomol member Pozdnyakov, who worked on a thin seam, ran to his chief to demand that he be let go for a record immediately. The chief replied that the face was not prepared, and asked him to wait until September 2.

There were a great many who wished to deliver a record output. Hewers Tkachenko, Yarulin, Ershkov, Kontsedalov, Bezrodny, and Sinyagovsky demanded to be let go for a record.

When we came out of the mine in the morning, an extraordinary meeting of the Party committee was held. On the agenda stood one question: "On the labor productivity of hewer Stakhanov A. G."

Now in the assignment room, the resolution of the extraordinary meeting of the mine Party committee was loudly read out. I have preserved this resolution, and I will present it:

“Resolved: To consider that Stakhanov A. G., on the night of August 30 to 31, during his working 6 hours, established a world record for the productivity of a jackhammer, giving 102 tons of coal.

The Plenum of the mine Party committee notes the enormous merit of Comrade Stakhanov in his record and considers that he achieved his record only thanks to the fact that he mastered the technique of the business, managed to saddle the technology and extract everything useful from it.

The Plenum notes the merit of section chief Mashurov, Party organiser Dyukanov, who managed to raise such heroes as Stakhanov, managed to combine the fulfillment of the plan for the section with the forging of new heroes, giving them the opportunity to advance at work.

Attaching special political significance to the record of 102 tons per hammer established by Comrade Stakhanov, the plenum of the mine Party committee considers that this is the very true path that leads to the fulfillment of Comrade Stalin’s instructions on cadres and unconditionally guarantees the early fulfillment of the annual plan.

The Plenum of the mine Party committee resolves:

1. To enter the name of Comrade Stakhanov on the honor board of the best people of the mine.
2. To grant him a bonus in the amount of a monthly salary.
3. By September 3, to provide Comrade Stakhanov with an apartment from among the apartments for technical personnel, install a telephone, and assign a riding horse for his personal use.
4. To request the ore manager to permit the mine manager, at the expense of the mine, to equip Comrade Stakhanov’s apartment with everything necessary and upholstered furniture.
5. To request the Pervomaysk mine committee and the Central Committee of miners to allocate a family pass to a resort.
6. In the club, from September 1, to allocate two personal seats for Stakhanov and his wife for all movies, plays, and all kinds of evenings.
7. On September 10, to arrange an evening in Stakhanov’s new apartment, inviting to it the noble people of the mine and masters of the jackhammer Comrades. Grishin, Sviridov, Murashko, Izotov.

8. To declare a competition among hewers for the best master of the jackhammer who has mastered technology.

To propose to all section chiefs, Party organisers, union organisers, and the mine committee:

Miron Dyukanov's crew

a) no later than September 2, in all sections by shifts, to work through the experience and established record of Comrade Stakhanov;

b) on September 3, to convene a special meeting of hewers with the mandatory participation of the section triangles, at which to hear the report of Comrade Stakhanov on how he mastered the high technique of work on the hammer and established a world record of productivity on it;

c) to unfold a competition by sections for the best hewer of the mine.

9. The Plenum of the mine Party committee considers it necessary to point out and warn in advance all those who attempt to

slander Comrade Stakhanov and his record as accidental, fabricated, etc., that they will be evaluated by the Party committee as the most vicious enemies acting against the best people of the mine, of our country, who give everything to fulfil the instructions of the leader of our Party, Comrade Stalin, on the full utilisation of technology.

The Party committee is confident that behind Comrade Stakhanov new heroes will appear, who will be greeted by our organisation with joy and pride, as people who have resolved by deed, by their honest labor, to fulfil the instructions of Comrade Stalin on the full utilisation of technology."

It is hard to convey what was happening in those minutes in the assignment room. It was raging. Some asked to be let go for a record immediately, others shouted for me to tell how 102 tons of coal were cut. I was almost carried onto the podium. The assignment room fell silent. I told everything in order, how we prepared for the record and how labor was organised. At the end, I said:

"There is no secret in the fact that I cut 102 tons of coal. This can be done by every experienced hewer who has mastered the technique of his business, if his labor is divided and he is given the opportunity to cut with a jackhammer the entire shift..."

"Right!.. Right!.." rushed from all sides.

Passions flared even more when, after me, the timberers, the section chief, and the horse-drivers spoke.

The snap meeting would perhaps have continued longer if the whistle had not blown, notifying the shift that it was time to descend into the mine. The agitated shift surged toward the exit.

After the assignment, a representative of the newspaper *Kadievsky Proletarian* was waiting for me. He questioned me in detail about my work on the night of August 31. The next day, a report appeared in the newspaper under the title "Record of Hewer Stakhanov—102 Tons of Coal in a Shift."

September

The entire day of September 1, when the youth celebrated International Youth Day, passed under the impression of the record. At rallies, meetings, and the solemn evening, this was spoken of everywhere. The Komsomol members were "irked," as they put it,

that it wasn't they who had established the record. Most of all, Komsomol member Mitya Kontsedalov—one of the best masters of the jackhammer—wanted to overtake me.

"How is that, the Komsomol was left behind? Let me go for a record!"—now he was indignant, now he persuasively begged the mine administration.

I was told that the Komsomol member Obrezanov ran away from the hospital where they were to perform an appendicitis operation on him. He ran to the mine Party committee and begged them to create conditions for a record for him. Obrezanov was persuaded with difficulty that he couldn't work right now until the operation was performed.

It must be said that the desire of many workers to go for a record caught the majority of our mine commanders by surprise. They were unable to restructure quickly and could not establish order at the mine in the very first days. This explains why, until September 3, the world record for coal cutting on a jackhammer remained mine.

On that day, Komsomol member Pozdnyakov descended into the mine. He cut on the thin seam "Rubezhny-Vostok." Comparatively, his record turned out to be small. But Pozdnyakov, working paired with timberers, gave 63 tons of coal per shift, which amounted to more than 9 norms. No hewer had yet given such high productivity on seam "Rubezhny-Vostok." Pozdnyakov, upon coming out of the mine, was greeted and cheered just as warmly as I was.

On the night of September 3 to 4, the Party organiser of section "Nikanor-Vostok," Miron Dyukanov, went for a record. Seeing him off into the mine, we wished him to cut even more coal.

"I will definitely break your record, Aleksey! Without that, I won't come out of the mine..." he said, saying goodbye to me.

At midnight, we learned that Dyukanov had already cut 32 meters, and by 5 o'clock in the morning, he passed 32 meters twice more. When they calculated, it turned out to be 115 tons.

On the surface, dozens of people awaited him. Those who still doubted that so much could be cut in a shift asked him:

"And how was it, was it hard to work? Didn't you strain yourself, Miron Dmitryevich?"

"What heresy are you talking! I could have cut more, but the section chief didn't allow it: the timber haulers had already started driving timber to the next shift, and so much coal had accumulated that it was impossible to crawl through," replied Dyukanov.

On the same night as Dyukanov, another hewer—Kravtsov on seam "Rubezhny-Vostok," where Pozdnyakov's record had been—cut 52 tons of coal, giving almost eight norms.

On September 4, the Moscow newspapers were received in the city. I was brought *Pravda*, where it was printed:

"RECORD OF HEWER STAKHANOV

Stalino. September 1. (Corr. of *Pravda*.) The Kadievka hewer of the 'Tsentralnaya-Irmino' mine, Comrade Stakhanov, in commemoration of the 21st anniversary of International Youth Day, set a new All-Union record for labor productivity on a jackhammer. During a six-hour shift, Stakhanov gave 102 tons of coal, which constitutes 10% of the mine's daily production, and earned 200 rubles. Comrade Stakhanov overtook the masters of the jackhammer Grishin, Sviridov, and Murashko, who have been unsurpassed until now."

It was pleasant for me to read this in the newspaper *Pravda*; it was very pleasant that my work was appreciated in Moscow, and they recognised that I had even overtaken Grishin. I remembered how my wife said:

"Grishin can, and Stakhanov cannot?!"

The report in *Pravda* was spoken of by many workers. Since great importance was attached to my record, others also decided to work hard. It was right here that I felt how the competition was beginning.

The section chiefs had no peace. Many people went to them with demands that conditions be created for high productivity.

In addition to the desire to participate in the competition and not lose face, it was of great importance that the workers learned about our high earnings. I earned 200 rubles in a shift, Pozdnyakov — 179 rubles, Dyukanov—239 rubles. Under the old methods, such earnings could be received in two weeks, and for some, they would

have had to work a whole month. Throughout the mine hung portraits of myself, Dyukanov, and Pozdnyakov, with figures of output and earnings.

On September 5, Mitya Kontsedalov went for a record on the second shift. By ten o'clock in the evening, the assignment room was packed to capacity. Everyone wanted to know the results. From the mine, they called to say that Kontsedalov had cut 125 tons of coal, overtaking both me and Dyukanov. The orchestra began to play a flourish. The Komsomol members ran to the shaft and from there carried Mitya Kontsedalov out in their arms.

On the same day, the hewer of section "Beral-Zapad" Yarulin cut 35 tons, and hewer Danilov cut 32 tons.

The newspapers were full of our records. I was brought an article from *Pravda* for September 6, where we were called Soviet bogatyrs. There were many notes in the newspapers *Socialist Donbass* and *For Industrialization*. From them, we learned how things were going at other mines.

At the mine named after the Paris Commune, hewer Ganzin cut 32 tons of coal on a thin seam with a pickaxe. Hewer Stupkov of the same mine fulfilled the norm by 900% and earned 145 rubles.

The news reached us of a new record at the mine named after Karl Marx, where hewer Savchenko with two timberers cut 151 tons of coal. By this, he broke Kontsedalov's record. It turned out that our mine had already been left behind... Then we decided that we needed to break Savchenko's record and return the first place in the competition to our mine. I began to prepare for a new record.

But it was already difficult to surprise anyone with single records. Despite all our records, the mine still did not fulfill the plan. After a few days, it became clear to us that we needed to build all the work at the mine in a new way. The hewers and timberers began to produce a lot, but we were held back by the horse-drivers.

On September 7, the mine Party committee met. The main item on the agenda was the question of new methods of work in section "Nikanor-Vostok." They wanted to convert the entire section to new methods. The report was made by Mashurov. He outlined a plan for how he intended to restructure all the work according to my experience. Mashurov suggested reducing the number of steps in the

face, lengthening them, introducing paired work of a hewer with a timberer, reducing the number of hewers, and in order that the timber haulers and horse-drivers be interested in faster work, converting them to individual progressive piecework. Whichever of them worked better would receive more.

The mine Party committee agreed with Mashurov's suggestions. In addition, the Party committee decided to unfold Party-mass work more broadly. They decided to hold a meeting of the mine's section chiefs.

At the suggestion of the Party organisation, I, Dyukanov, Kontsedalov, and Pozdnyakov turned to the regional Party committee and the Central Committee of the miners' union with a request to organise a competition for the best hewer of a jackhammer in the entire Donbass and to convene an All-Donets rally of coal masters.

Many miners wanted to participate in the competition. Almost every day we heard of more and more records. At mine No. 22 named after Kirov, the Komsomol member Maska appeared, who was called a Stakhanovite among drillers. In a shift, he drilled 200 linear meters against a norm of 40 meters.

The high productivity of hewers on jackhammers strongly affected the drivers of coal-cutting machines. Driver Ageev came to the manager of mine No. 4 Sokologorovka and declared:

"How is it that a jackhammer, it turns out, gives more than a coal-cutter at our mine? This cannot be!"

Ageev demanded from the mine manager that he establish order in the face. Ageev cut 355 tons of coal in a shift.

The hewers of the "Albert" mine—Palatko, Kavtun, and others—approved of my method of work and began to cut up to 70 tons of coal per shift.

"Well then," I thought, "now it's time for me to show a new model again!"

I decided to break my own record. On September 9, I descended with the second shift to section "Nikanor-Vostok." The face was well prepared. Timber was in sufficient quantity. Air came under high pressure. In the first hour of work, I cut 54 tons of coal. In the shift—175 tons. I overtook Savchenko and returned the world record of the jackhammer to our mine. In the shift, I earned about 300 rubles.

On that same day, my section “Nikanor-Vostok” fulfilled the annual plan for coal production ahead of schedule.

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Komsomol member, award-winning comrade Koncedalov

I went to the assignment room, where the workers met me well. From the assignment room, I went home, but no longer along the usual path. While I was working, they completed the finishing of my new apartment. Paths sprinkled with sand led to my new yard.

At home, my whole family awaited me. My wife opened the door and led me into the new apartment. It was more spacious than the one where I lived before. In the dining room stood a large sideboard, a sofa, a table, a chest of drawers, and chairs. From the dining room, a door opened into a study. Here was a desk, with a telephone and a gramophone on it. Nearby, on a new bookcase, books and newspapers were laid out. In the bedroom, tulle curtains hung on the windows, and flowers stood on the windowsill.

A fine apartment!

The next day after midday, guests began to arrive at my place. An orchestra played near my apartment; the whole settlement came to greet the noble hewers of the Donbass. The first to arrive was the renowned master of the jackhammer, Sviridov, followed by the famous hewers of the mine named after Karl Marx, Terekhin and Savchenko, my comrades from the mine, and leaders of city organisations.

I briefly stated that the purpose of our meeting was an exchange of work experience in fulfilling Comrade Stalin's instructions on mastering technology. I told the gathered people what had previously prevented us from achieving high productivity and in what manner we restructured our labor anew.

Miron Dyukanov spoke simply and clearly about our successes.

"When we studied Comrade Stalin's speech at the graduation of Red Army academies, his wise words sank deep into the soul of every honest worker. His words forced each of us to think intensely about how to raise the productivity of our mechanisms. Right after Comrade Stalin's speech, we began to gradually raise productivity on the jackhammer. From 10–15 and up to 35 tons recently. But here Stakhanov acts as the initiator of a new method that astounded us with its simplicity and unusual productivity. That is what it means truly to master technology. When I learned about his 102 tons, I immediately thought that I could cut more. I knew my strength well. I couldn't wait for the day when I could cut the Stakhanovite way. And so on the night of September 3 to 4, I gave 115 tons."

The young curly-haired Komsomol member Terekhin, a hewer of the mine named after Karl Marx in the Ordzhonikidze district, said that with the new method, one could flood the country with coal, earn a lot of money, and live prosperously. He told how, thanks to the conversion to the new method of work of only two sections, his mine increased production by almost 200 tons of coal per day.

Sviridov was the oldest among us in experience and years. He cut 75 tons of coal back at a time when others gave only 10–15 tons. "What will this old miner of the Donbass say?" we, the relatively young miners, asked ourselves.

“Let me say,” he addressed everyone. “The record of Aleksey Stakhanov opened the eyes of us old-timers to a lot as well. It seems improbable only to novices and ignoramuses. For those who have mastered technology, it can be a constant indicator of work.”

He approaches me and firmly shakes my hand.

“We will still fight, Aleksey. Old man Sviridov will try not to let you down!”

No one doubted that old man Sviridov “would not let us down.”

The hewer Savchenko told how, after the news of my record, a firm confidence appeared in him to cut more than 100 tons of coal.

“And I cut it! I cut 151 tons, and now I pledge to give no less than 200 tons.”

The hewer of our mine, Tkachenko, who cut 70 tons of coal manually with a pickaxe, assured everyone that he would cut more than 100 tons.

“And in this, I too can assure all those present!” added Tkachenko’s wife, Marfa Egorovna.

Days went by...

On September 11, I heard on the radio that the famous hewer Nikita Izotov in Gorlovka had cut 240 tons with a jackhammer, breaking all previously established world records. He was nicknamed the coal bogatyr in the Donbass. While studying in Moscow at the Industrial Academy, he had come on vacation to his native mine “Kochegarka.” He immediately agreed with my method of work. On September 11, he cut 240 tons of coal with a jackhammer, and after some time, he cut 640 tons of coal. Applying his rich experience, his knowledge, and simultaneously my method of division of labor, he broke both my record and the records of my comrades.

Nikita Izotov has a very interesting life, and I want to tell here about a man about whom songs are sung throughout the Donbass.

Nikita Izotov came from the same regions as I. He too is from near Orel. He was born in 1903 in the family of a poor peasant, and later a highway worker, from the village of Malaya Dragunka, Orel Governorate. In a book released by Izotov, he says: “Abandoned and wretched was the village, and wretched was life.”

At seven years old, his father took him to a parochial school. Izotov’s father drank heavily, and he was driven from work. The

family starved. At ten years old, along with his little sister, Nikita went to work for people. His sister nursed kulak children, and Nikita looked after horses. Before the war, Izotov's father left for the south — to Gelendzhik — to earn money. Soon his son came to him, who got a job as a janitor in the "Novaya Rossiya" rooms for 3 rubles a month. Later he serves as a boy for a bartender on the steamship *Knyaz Obolensky*. Later he works as a baker.

Izotov's father, in search of bread, moves from the Caucasus to the Donbass, to Gorlovka, where his brother worked. He lived in a dugout. In a small room were the uncle with his family, his mother-in-law with her family, and four Izotovs. They slept in turn on earthen bunks. One got up, another lay down. In the middle of the room, a brick stove smoked. This was that very famous Sobacheevka, which under Soviet power was torn down by the Gorlovka miners.

Twelve-year-old Nikita Izotov entered a briquette factory in Gorlovka. In 1916, Izotov participated in the famous Gorlovka-Shcherbinovka strike, which lasted more than a month.

In 1917, the Gorlovka workers armed themselves. Nikita Alekseevich Izotov traded a rusty berdan rifle for two loaves of bread. Izotov was in a Red Guard detachment, fighting White bands and German invaders.

After the civil war, Izotov worked as a stoker, and then became a hewer. In 1924, he was called up into the Red Army. The man was completely illiterate, but he came out of the army as a battery sergeant-major. Then he returned to the mine again, into the face, joined the Communist Party, and became a good Bolshevik, showing models of work in production. Izotov gave 5–6 norms of coal per shift, when many workers did not fulfill even one norm.

In May 1932, the first article by Nikita Izotov about his work experience appeared in *Pravda*. I still remember how our miners showed this article to one another; many constantly carried it with them in their pockets. Back then, there were many workers who did not fulfill the norm, and everyone wondered: how is that, one man, one hewer, and gives 5–6 norms!

So that young hewers know how to cut coal, I will present to them Nikita Izotov's story about his methods:

“At mines with steeply dipping seams, our work as hewers is measured by the number of supports made. The norm per shift is one support. The best hewers make 1–2 supports. Day in and day out, I make 3-4-5 supports; on average, it turns out to be 4 supports. To make a support means to cut 3 cubic meters of coal and secure the roof. The area of one support gives 7 mine cars of coal, i.e., 5 tons. I cut an average of 12 cubic meters a day, extracting 20 tons of coal.

They say: ‘Izotov is strong, Izotov is sturdy, that’s why he works so well.’ Nonsense! It’s not a matter of strength. You can’t achieve it by strength alone. At our mine, there are people stronger than me. Take the hewer Okunev—strong, healthy, makes one support. On the mine yard hung a caricature of him, a ‘heavy athlete’ who does not fulfill the plan. We also had Dvidenko—he wouldn’t yield to a wrestler, but this didn’t particularly show in output.

No, you can’t take coal by strength alone!

How do I work?

I try to adapt to the coal. When I come to the face, I first inspect my workspace, think about how best to take the coal. Sometimes coal goes in streams, and sometimes it lies in partings. If the coal goes in streams, then I make a notch, i.e., I punch a slot from top and bottom. The seam of coal bulges out, as if swelling, and then it is easier to break it off.

If the coal goes in partings, then I choose the softest parting: with us, it is called the ash parting; it looks like soot and is easily crushed. Many, especially new workers, think that the whole business is to strike harder. But we, the old hewers, know that the main thing is where, into what place to strike, so that the coal then falls in entire layers.

Many consider that in a step, it is best to begin cutting coal from the bottom, where the coal overhangs, ‘from the leg,’ as they say. Then they begin to cut the pillar of coal from the top, the so-called ‘corner.’ This is wrong. Of course, the ‘leg’ yields sooner; it’s easier to take the coal there. But, beginning with the ‘leg,’ the hewer gets tired before even reaching the hardest section, the ‘corner.’ But I do the opposite. Coming to work, I begin with fresh strength to overcome the hardest section, cut the coal from the ‘corner,’ and then take the ‘leg’ without difficulty.

On the driving of raises, I also work differently from others. A raise is a vertical hole 2–3 sazhen length, connecting the upper drift with the steps in which we work. Ventilation passes through the raise, timber is lowered, and people descend along a partition nearby. With us, on the driving of raises, they work like this: two people in two shifts punch a raise of two sazhens, and a third makes the partition. This takes eighteen hours and the labor of three people. But I make the raise and the partition alone within six hours. In what manner?

I drive by a double pass, i.e., I simultaneously punch the raise and make the partition, widening it. Then the front of work is wider, and the coal yields easier, and it's more spacious to work.

That's how I work. There is no 'secret' here. Every hewer can achieve my successes. It is only worth learning to approach the coal and not cut from the shoulder, as many do.

I remember when I first came to the face, no one trained me; the old hewers, seeing my efforts, mocked: saying many such 'diligent' ones have been here, but nothing came of it. No, it did come of it! In the first days, I sat in the face for eight to ten hours and learned. Now it is easier for a new worker: he is trained, and if he wishes, he can quickly learn. But we, the old hewers, are not always listened to. You see a fellow striking incorrectly, you explain to him, but he does his own thing, relies on his strength, and pays no attention to knowledge.

We have a six-hour working day, but many hewers actually work only three to four hours in the step. But I sit in the face an average of five hours. On coming and going from the step, I spend no more than an hour. When I come and see that a stoppage threatens me due to a lack of timber, I would rather spend half an hour to bring timber to myself in the step than later sit for an hour or two without timber and curse the timber haulers for all they are worth. I try to fill up, tighten my working day, not waste time that is precious both for me and for the state. If at our mine and at all mines every hewer fully utilises his working time, he will do much more than he does now, and our country will receive additional thousands of tons of coal."

That is the whole story. Izotov delivered high productivity because he mastered the technique of his business to perfection.

What then must be learned from Izotov? What must every young hewer remember?

1. Study the coal seam on which you work. Do not cut from the shoulder, do not strike just anywhere. Coal is not homogeneous; it goes in various partings. Find the "cleavage," choose the softest parting, and strike along it.

2. When you drive a raise, drive it by a double pass; simultaneously punch both the raise and the partition.

3. Work conscientiously, sit the shift in the face, descend into the step on time, and do not drop work ahead of time.

Izotov always worked well. And when he applied my method, he gave even more coal and established a world record.

I will return to the affairs at our mine.

The record of Izotov and other hewers heated us up strongly. In our section "Nikanor-Vostok," a restructuring was underway. They reduced the number of steps, increased their length, divided the labor of hewers and timberers, and converted timber haulers and horse-drivers to individual progressive piecework. Instead of the former 8 steps of 10 meters each, they left only 4 steps, up to 24 meters in length. In the first shift, 3 hewers and 3 timberers began to work, and in the second shift — 2 hewers and 2 timberers. The hewers began to cut for a full 6 hours, and the timberers timbered right behind. Thanks to the fact that only 2–3 jackhammers remained in a shift instead of the former 9–10, the air pressure increased significantly.

The increase in the length of the step and the division of labor immediately told on the growth of productivity. Hewers began to systematically give 60–70 tons per hammer in a shift instead of the former 10–14 tons.

After the conversion of timber haulers to individual progressive piecework, 7 people remained in their brigade. They began to deliver 400 props. Before this, there were 10 timber haulers, who did not always manage to deliver even 350 props. Previously, each timber hauler received a wage from the output of the brigade. There was no tracking of who delivered how many props and lagging (timber with which the face is secured). The earnings of the brigade were divided equally, regardless of who produced how much. A loafer was not easy to notice. With the introduction of individual piecework, the

loafers themselves fled from the brigade, and the shock workers raised their productivity even higher, as they knew now that the more they produced, the more they would earn.

A. Stakhanov with a group of his comrades after the latest record at the Seryu watch

The same happened with the horse-drivers and pack-wallers. Prior to this, 4 horse-drivers in a shift hauled out 120 cars, and now 2 horse-drivers began to haul out 145 cars. One electric locomotive was also freed up in a shift. One driver, Panchenko, began to cope with hauling all the coal, making 12–13 trips per shift instead of the former 6–7 trips.

When Panchenko was asked in what manner he doubled his productivity, he replied:

"It is all explained very simply. Previously, when the section was served by two electric locomotives, both of them were not fully loaded. Often at the bypasses, we stood idle with the machines for 2–

3 hours per shift. Now the machine is loaded, and I work according to a schedule that does not allow idleness."

The number of pack-wallers was reduced in the face from 6 to 4 people, and they began to lay 15–17 packs instead of the former 9–10 packs.

With a plan of 225 tons per day, the section began to yield 300–327 tons, and on individual days — even more. The staff of people was reduced from 117 to 98 people.

This was, perhaps, the first Stakhanovite section in the Donbass.

TELEGRAM FROM COMRADE SERGO

On September 13, a telegram from Comrade Ordzhonikidze was received in the Donbass. Here is what Comrade Sergo wrote:

"Comrade Stakhanov and the Comrades. who followed his example — Dyukanov, Terekhin, Pozdnyakov, Savchenko, Kontsedalov, Izotov, Babkov, Avramenko, Ovsyannikov, Oladko, Tolstokorov, Nikitenko, Dolgopolov, Grishin, Grafchenko, Kalganov, Tkachenko, Isadchenko, Koldoba, Skrepka, Mashurov, and Aksenov — have given a coal production record unprecedented in the history of the Donbass. This remarkable movement of heroes of the coal Donbass, Bolshevik Party and non-Party members alike, is new brilliant proof of what enormous opportunities we possess and how far behind life are those wretched leaders who only look for objective reasons to justify their bad work and bad leadership.

Now the whole question is to organise the work of coal production on the experience of these comrades and to raise to a new height labor productivity in the entire Donbass and in all coal basins. The work of these comrades overturns all old concepts of a hewer's output norms. There is no doubt that their example will be followed by drivers of coal-cutting machines and electric locomotives, as well as shovellers and horse-drivers, and the engineering-technical personnel will head and organise this business.

We must right now take up the organisation of haulage and preparatory work, so that this does not disrupt the work of the hewers. I will not hide that I greatly fear that this movement will meet with philistine scepticism on the part of some backward

leaders, which in deed will mean sabotage. Such wretched leaders must be removed immediately. The Donbass cannot fail to fulfill the plan for this year, and for now, there is a threat of non-fulfillment. The path pointed out by Comrades Stakhanov, Dyukanov, Terekhin, and others is the path of victory for the coal Donbass.

I ask you to convey my fraternal greetings to the remarkable people of the coal Donbass, who have realised in practice the instructions of the leader of our Party, the great Stalin, that people of a socialist country who have mastered technology can work miracles.

— S. ORDZHONIKIDZE."

I re-read this letter from Comrade Ordzhonikidze several times. We accepted his greeting with great joy and listened to his advice. The People's Commissar's warning about saboteurs was made on time.

Facts of sabotage were uncovered at our mine as well. Since section "Nikanor-Vostok," in which I worked, was completely restructured in a new way and the hewers day in and day out gave 60–70 tons of coal, the mine Party committee on September 7 suggested to the mine manager, Zaplavsky, to introduce the new method of labor organisation in all sections. A whole decade passed, and the new method was not transferred to the sections. Worse than this, they began to disrupt the work even of our section "Nikanor-Vostok." Due to interruptions in the air supply, due to untimely delivery of timber, stoppages began for us. On September 15, I cut only 32 tons of coal.

The section chiefs, Zamuruev and Shevyakin, who should have been the first to restructure their sections, dragged the business out. Zamuruev refused to introduce the new methods.

On September 17, an open Party-Komsomol meeting convened, where they discussed the situation with the introduction of new methods at the mine. The meeting requested the mine manager to remove from work and bring to trial the saboteur Zamuruev. The meeting warned the entire supervisor staff of the mine that resistance to the Stakhanovite method was impermissible.

The saboteur Zamuruev was removed from work. The mine manager, Zaplavsky, who had never been to our section and had not

been present at a single record, was warned that if by September 23 all sections were not restructured in the new way, a strict Party penalty would be imposed on him.

On September 18, an order from Comrade Ordzhonikidze was received in Kadievka. In this order, it was said:

"Significantly better utilisation of mechanisms and a fuller tightening of the working day on the basis of a proper division of labor has enabled Comrades Stakhanov, Dyukanov, and others to show high models of work, to exceed established output norms several times over, and in accordance with this, to increase their wages.

The rapid introduction of the Stakhanovite method at all mines of steep and flat dipping and the proper organisation of all production processes at the mine and preparatory work opens before the Donbass, as well as before the remaining coal basins, the path to a further sharp rise in production, a reduction in the cost of coal, and simultaneously to a growth in the wages of workers in the coal industry.

Based on this and for the purpose of the absolute fulfillment of the 1935 plan and ensuring the further expansion of coal production in 1936, I order:

1. To establish for the IV quarter a plan for coal production for the Donbass in the amount of 20 million tons. 'Glavugol' is to expand this plan by trusts and leading mines. The newspaper *For Industrialisation* is to publish data on the daily fulfillment of the plan by trusts and leading mines.

2. 'Glavugol' and the coal trusts of the Donbass are, during September and October, to extend the Stakhanovite method to all mines, ensure the necessary organisational and production-technical conditions of work, conducting a merciless struggle against all open and hidden saboteurs of the Stakhanovite method of work."

Contrary to the saboteurs, who put spokes in the wheels of the Stakhanovite movement, the excellent shock workers, heartened by the telegram and order of our beloved People's Commissar Sergo Ordzhonikidze, continued to break obsolete norms, achieving unprecedented labor productivity.

On the night before September 19, I descended into my section and established a new record of productivity on the jackhammer, cutting 227 tons of coal in a shift.

The driller Sukhostavets for several days had already been drilling blast holes alone through the entire mine, replacing three drillers.

The shovellers Samoylov and Tatkovsky systematically loaded up to 70 cars against a norm of 16.

The coal-cutter driver of mine No. 100 Golovka, Ryzhenkov, cut 150 meters—251 tons of coal—in 4 hours.

At the "Ilyich" mine, hewer Lozovoy cut 73 linear meters or 60 tons of coal in four and a half hours.

Great records were not only in the Donbass, but throughout the Soviet Union.

On September 19, in the city of Gorky, a blacksmith at the automobile plant named after Molotov, Aleksandr Busygin, set a record for the forging of crankshafts and overtook American blacksmiths in productivity. An American produces 100 crankshafts per hour. Busygin and his brigade made 127 shafts per hour. Busygin told me why he managed to break American norms. The main thing in Busygin's work is the proper placement of people. In his brigade, he has 13 people. He looks closely at each member of his brigade, determines who is stronger, who has good skill. One he places as an assistant, another as a heater. Busygin works calmly, without a rush. He watches his hammer sharply.

A record for driving locomotives on the Donets Railway was set by driver Petr Krivonos. On the Slavyansk–Lozovaya section, he reached a speed of 31.6 kilometres per hour. Many did not believe him that it was possible to drive freight trains so fast. But soon hundreds of drivers began to drive trains at Krivonos's speed.

In Leningrad, at the shoe factory "Skorokhod," great records were set by the laster Nikolai Smetanin. He sets the toe of a shoe. A workpiece and a last come to him, and he places the toe on the last so that it is perfectly straight. On this depends the beauty of the shoe. On September 21, Smetanin lasted 1400 pairs of shoes during a shift against a norm of 680 pairs. For him, the whole business, as he later told me, consists in the economy of time. He precisely calculated

every movement of his hands and makes no extra movements. Not a single moment in his work is wasted. Smetanin says: to make more lastings, one must have a knack, and, main of all, properly build one's movements. According to the norm, he must complete the lasting of a pair of shoes in 35 seconds, and in order to break the norm, it is necessary for him to save seconds and tenths of a second on each operation.

In September, in the town of Vichuga, Ivanovo Oblast, two young weavers, Dusya and Marusya Vinogradova, set records on weaving looms. They switched to serving 100 looms each. At first, I couldn't believe myself how it was possible to work alone on a hundred looms. And then they explained, and I understood that the weavers had done a great deed. Their looms are automatic ones. The main thing to watch for on these looms is that the thread does not break, otherwise there will be no fabric, and defects will occur. Automatic looms are designed so that if a thread breaks, the loom stops on its own. The weaver observes which loom has stopped and restarts it. While all weavers worked on 30–40 looms, Dusya and Marusya began to work on 100 looms.

In the city of Arkhangelsk, at a sawmill, frame sawyer Musinsky set a record. Against a norm of 95 cubic meters, he reached 221 cubic meters in a shift. He achieved this by increasing the speed of feeding logs during sawing. He had an interesting story. The administration firmly held onto the old norm. In the shop were special controllers who watched to make sure that none of the workers worked above the norms. Such eccentrics! At first, Musinsky increased the speed of feeding logs during sawing in secret from the administration. When he later notified the administration of this, they checked the equipment and the quality of production: everything turned out fine.

At the Kondrovo paper factory, wireman Pronin established a record. He is an old man, has three sons, and all are wiremen. One son worked at the Balakhna paper factory and competed with his father all the time. Old man Pronin managed to exceed the machine's capacity by more than half.

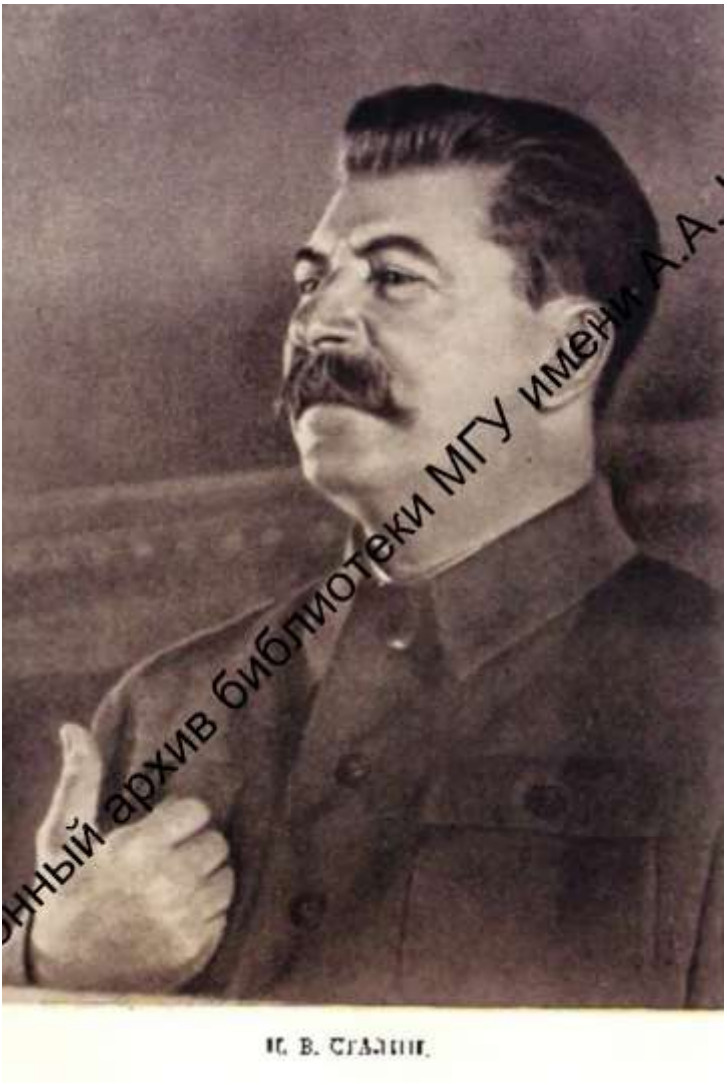
At this same time, a great record was set by two friends, drillers Nina Slavnikova and Maria Makarova.

At the Moscow machine-tool plant named after Ordzhonikidze, milling machine operator Ivan Gudov, thanks to an increase in the speed of the machine and work with good fixtures, managed to give 10 norms.

In a word, in many cities, at various plants, Stakhanovites appeared. It was even surprising to me: we hadn't agreed with one another, we hadn't met one another, different people, from different places, and almost simultaneously established great records.

The efforts of the Stakhanovites were not in vain. September gave a large increase in coal production. For the "Kadievugol" trust, the average daily production grew by 1000 tons. Our mine came out of the breach and fulfilled the September coal production plan by 103%. On average per day, the mine yielded 1030 tons. The shift productivity of a jackhammer constituted 13.8 tons, and in our section, it reached 30–35 tons, whereas in August on a jackhammer on average for the mine, they gave 8.3 tons per shift.

The earnings of Stakhanovites rose. For 18 turnouts (normally 24–25 turnouts are needed) in September, I earned 1000 rubles, Kontsedalov — 1618 rubles. At mine No. 1-bis Krivorozhye, hewer Komar earned 1800 rubles, hewer Zolotnyak earned 1700 rubles, the foreman of a Komsomol brigade, Salko, earned 1650 rubles, and hewer Suprunenko 1400 rubles.



J. V. STALIN

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CHAPTER THREE

MOSCOW. KREMLIN. STALIN

Everything that has happened in my life since the record happens to many people in our country who strive to bring more benefit to the motherland. But to a foreign working person, it may seem, and indeed does seem, like a fairy tale. When I recall everything, gather all thoughts together, then each time I want to say one and the same thing:

"Thank you to Comrade Stalin!"

Comrade Stalin raised me so high from the ranks of an ordinary worker that I could never have even thought of it. By now, I have already grown used to the words "Stakhanovite movement," often encounter my name in the newspapers, and hear it at meetings. At first, to tell the truth, all of this was incomprehensible to me. And even now, I consider that it is fair to call our movement Stalinist, because the working class, moving into the Stalinist campaign for the mastery of technology, gave birth to my record and the records of my comrades. It was precisely Comrade Stalin who made our movement broad. He gathered us in the Kremlin, he taught us and advised with us, he created honor for us, he does everything for us. I have seen and heard Comrade Stalin many times, and all of this, of course, I will never forget.

I will tell everything in order.

Before the 18th anniversary of the Great October Revolution, there were already quite a few Stakhanovites in the country, since every shock worker wanted to mark the great holiday well. In the Donbass, they began to compose a delegation of Stakhanovites that would go to the holidays in Moscow. Together with the delegation of Donets miners and metallurgists, I went to the capital.

On November 6, we arrived in Moscow. We arrived early in the morning. I was in Moscow for the first time, and on the way from the station, I tried to make out the streets from the car window. We arrived at the hotel "Oktyabrskaya." Although we were tired from the journey, there was no desire to sleep. I wanted very much to go see the city right away, to see those places in the capital about which I

had previously heard a lot — to visit Red Square, look at the Lenin Mausoleum, the Kremlin, the large buildings of Moscow, photographs of which I had encountered in the newspapers.

At the hotel, I met almost all the famous Stakhanovites. I became acquainted with Aleksandr Busygin, Dusya Vinogradova, and Marusya Vinogradova. I met Krivonos. They turned out to be simple guys, just as simple as our Donets Stakhanovites.

Busygin—a blacksmith from the Gorky automobile plant named after Molotov—is a young fellow, twenty-eight years old. Like me, he comes from poor peasants. Until 1931, he engaged in farming, then went to the construction of the Gorky automobile plant. He did carpentry. When the plant was put into operation, he transferred to the forge and worked as a lubricator on a hammer. The fellow learned a bit, and they transferred him to a steam hammer, where he established his famous record.

Dusya Vinogradova is a very young girl, she is twenty-one years old, a Komsomol member. Her father was a worker and her mother a spinner-worker. In 1931, Dusya finished a factory-workshop apprenticeship school and since then has been working as a weaver at the factory named after Nogin.

Marusya Vinogradova—her shift partner—is older, she is twenty-five years old. Many thought about Dusya and Marusya that they were sisters, since they have the same last name. In reality, as Dusya says, they are sisters in labor, because they are friends and work together, but are not related. Marusya Vinogradova has been working as a weaver since 1925.

Petr Krivonos is a compatriot, a Donbasser, also a young man. He is 25 years old. The son of a worker. A Party member. Krivonos had the Order of Lenin on his chest, since even before the Stakhanovite movement, he had worked terrifically on a locomotive and earned the high award of our government.

While we were talking in the hotel with the famous Stakhanovites, guests continued to arrive and arrive there. Delegates from different ends of the country gathered in Moscow. From Leningrad alone, 500 people arrived, and among them the famous Stakhanovite, a shoemaker of the “Skorokhod” factory—Nikolai Smetanin. I also became acquainted with him. This man is only 32

years old, but he has already been working at the shoe factory for 17 years. He was in the Red Army. A man who visit Red Square, see the Lenin Mausoleum, the Kremlin, and the large buildings of Moscow, photographs of which I had encountered in the newspapers.

In the hotel, I met almost all the famous Stakhanovites. I got acquainted with Aleksandr Busygin, Dusya Vinogradova, and Marusya Vinogradova. I met Krivonos. These turned out to be simple folks, just as simple as our Donetsk Stakhanovites.

Busygin—a blacksmith from the Gorky Automobile Plant named after Molotov—is a young fellow, twenty-eight years old. Like me, he comes from poor peasants. Until 1931, he engaged in farming, then went to the construction of the Gorky Automobile Plant. He worked as a carpenter. When the plant was launched, he transferred to the forge, working as a lubricator on a hammer. The fellow learned the trade well, and they transferred him to a steam hammer, where he set his famous record.

Dusya Vinogradova is a very young girl, twenty-one years old, a Komsomol member. Her father was a worker and her mother a spinner-worker. In 1931, Dusya graduated from a factory apprenticeship school and has been working as a weaver at the Nogin factory ever since.

Marusya Vinogradova—her shift partner—is older, she is twenty-five years old. Many people thought Dusya and Marusya were sisters because they share the same last name. In reality, as Dusya says, they are sisters in labor, because they are friends and work together, but they are not related. Marusya Vinogradova has been working as a weaver since 1925.

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While we were talking with the famous Stakhanovites in the hotel, guests kept arriving and arriving there. Delegates from different corners of the country were converging on Moscow. From Leningrad alone, 500 people arrived, and among them was the famous Stakhanovite, a shoemaker from the “Skorokhod” factory—

Nikolai Smetanin. I also got acquainted with him. This man is only 32 years old, but he has already been working at the shoe factory for 17 years. He was in the Red Army. A well-developed man, evidently. He speaks very well.

We grabbed a bite to eat, and then, together with Miron Dyukanov, Petrov, and Dusya and Marusya Vinogradova, we walked along Okhotny Ryad. We admired the "Moskva" Hotel and the House of the Council of People's Commissars (Sovnarkom). What remarkable buildings!

We walked for a long time, talking about Moscow and our affairs. Dusya told us that she and Marusya had switched to operating 144 looms instead of the previous 100, and that the work was going beautifully. Everyone's mood was very good, festive, and elevated. Looking at the holiday decorations of the city and the enormous portraits of Comrade Stalin on the walls of the buildings, we saw and felt the hand of Comrade Stalin in clean, festive, beautiful Moscow, just as we did in our work. At that moment, we wanted to send him our greetings. One of us said:—Let's write a greeting to Comrade Stalin, guys.

Everyone agreed immediately, but I asked how we would deliver our greeting to him. We decided to write it and send it to *Pravda*.

Right there on the street, in Okhotny Ryad, I leaned my notepad against the wall of a building and, under the dictation of all the comrades, wrote: "On the day of the 18th anniversary of the Great Revolution, our greetings to all the working people of the Soviet Union! Through *Pravda*, we, invited by the working people of Moscow, send our fiery greetings to our beloved, dear Stalin!" Everyone signed it.

And our conversation turned to Comrade Stalin, whom we really wanted to see. We waited with impatience for the next day, when we would be on Red Square and would surely meet Comrade Stalin there.

During the day on November 6, we met with Muscovites. We were invited by the leader of the Moscow Bolsheviks, Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev, our compatriot and former Donetsk miner. We talked with him for a long time, telling him about our affairs, while he reminisced about the old Donbass.

In the evening, we were at the Bolshoi Theatre for the solemn meeting of Moscow organisations dedicated to the anniversary of the Great Socialist Revolution. There, for the first time in my life, I saw dear Comrade Stalin and his associates—I saw him a day earlier than I had expected. I liked everything in the Bolshoi Theatre; its beauty was captivating. But I did not look at the theatre particularly closely, as I could not take my eyes off Comrade Stalin. I really wanted to be close to him, to shake his hand and talk with him. I could not have known that very soon my dream would come true. I gazed intently at Comrade Stalin, following his every movement. I thought—here is the man whom each of us considers it a great fortune to see, the man who worked alongside Lenin his entire life, the man who is dear to all of us, like life itself. Stalin was dressed in a simple grey tunic jacket. He was talking with his comrades in the presidium and smiling cheerfully. And looking at him made me joyful.

On November 7, I was on Red Square. We arrived here very early, afraid of being late. The square was still shrouded in a kind of fog. We took our places on the grandstand and began to wait. Around 10 o'clock in the morning, applause erupted at one end of the grandstand. We turned our heads. Stalin was walking, surrounded by his closest comrades. They ascended the Lenin Mausoleum. Everyone on the square tried to get the best possible look at Comrade Stalin. I experienced excitement and joy.

Kliment Yefremovich Voroshilov rode out from the Kremlin gates on horseback. The People's Commissar rode past the ranks of Red Army soldiers, congratulating them on the anniversary of the Great October Revolution. In response to the congratulations, the Red Army soldiers loudly shouted "hurrah." And then, when Comrade Voroshilov had ridden past all the military units, the "hurrah!" merged into one general roar and echoed across the square for a long time.

The parade begins. First come the Moscow military schools and academies—choice, well-proportioned, handsome people. They are followed by different branches of the military—infantry, cavalry, artillery.

When you look at them, you feel how strong our army is. For the first time on the square, I saw what kind of artillery we have, what

kind of guns, what kind of motorised units, what kind of dashing cavalry. And then came the tanks. You watch entire fortresses of armour crawl across the square. You look at the formidable tanks, and your heart fills with pride for our country. Your spirit rises, you feel what kind of power we possess. You think: well, let the fascist scum try to attack the Soviet Union. We'll show them what's what! The aviation arrives. Bombers rush by with noise and roar. Small, light fighter jets fly past like birds with a whistle and a hum. You don't know where to look: tanks below, airplanes above. One moment you tilt your head up, the next you lower it. I stand and marvel.

The music of many orchestras struck up, and tens of thousands of people poured onto Red Square all at once. All the districts of Moscow marched through the square simultaneously. In front were the flag-bearers. So many banners. District after district, factory after factory. Everyone is joyful, everyone is cheerful. The workers carry portraits of the leader of the people. Above the square, you see tens and hundreds of portraits of a smiling Comrade Stalin. They carry portraits of the head of our government Vyacheslav Mikhailovich Molotov, the combat marshal Kliment Yefremovich Voroshilov, Lazar Moiseyevich Kaganovich, Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin, and Sergo Ordzhonikidze.

The demonstrators carry slogans and beautiful posters, models of airplanes, locomotives, cars, and balloons. The demonstration continues for an hour, a second, a third, a fourth, a fifth, and the end of the human torrent is nowhere in sight. You stand on the square all day, and you don't want to leave—everything is so interesting and beautiful.

In the evening of November 7, we met with Moscow Stakhanovites in the Hall of Columns of the House of the Unions. We were received very well, and we were pleased.

On November 8, together with Busygin and Dusya Vinogradova, I listened to the opera *Eugene Onegin* at the Bolshoi Theatre. The artists warmly greeted us and presented us with flowers.

After the holidays, we decided to stay in Moscow for a few more days. We went to tour Moscow factories.

During the day, we drove to the factories and spoke at workers' meetings, and in the evening, we went to the theatre.

When we toured the city, we were accompanied by architects. They showed us the embankments, Kirovskaya Street, and the new avenue on 1st Meshchanskaya. With great interest, we observed the construction of the Volga-Moscow canal.

On November 11, all the guests of the capital took an excursion to the Kremlin. There were many of us, and we split into three groups. In one group was our Donetsk delegation; in another, the Leningrad comrades along with Dusya and Marusya Vinogradova; in the third group, the shock workers of Ukraine and Moscow Oblast.

We liked the Kremlin very much. We toured the Armory Chamber, the cathedral, the Tsar Cannon, the Tsar Bell, and the Kremlin squares.

When we returned to the hotel, I learned that during the excursion, the Ukrainian and Moscow Stakhanovites had run into Comrades Stalin and Ordzhonikidze. I was terribly sorry that I was not among those excursionists. And what happened, as they later told it, was the following.

After touring the Armory Chamber, the Ukrainian and Moscow Stakhanovites headed toward the Tsar Cannon. Right by the cannon, they unexpectedly ran into Ordzhonikidze and approached him. Someone said: "We are Stakhanovite delegates to the capital." Ordzhonikidze greeted them warmly, shook everyone's hand, and introduced himself to each: "Sergo Ordzhonikidze."

Standing out among the Stakhanovites was an old, honoured weaver from the Glukhov factory, Kayanina. She is 71 years old, and of those, she has been working as a weaver for 61 years. Ordzhonikidze asked the grandmother: "Where do you work?" — I work at the Glukhov factory, I am over 70 years old, but I keep working, weaving silk for parachutes.

Ordzhonikidze nodded approvingly and, smiling, said:— Vinogradova is young, but she beats everyone!

Kayanina looked slyly and said:—We have weavers who will beat them too...—I don't doubt it, I don't doubt it,—said Ordzhonikidze.

Kayanina turned to him:—Where could I see Stalin? Since I haven't seen Stalin, what will I say at home when I return? I would like to look at him.—You will see him yet, you will see him,—Ordzhonikidze reassured the grandmother, said goodbye, and left.

The excursionists lingered a little by the Tsar Cannon, listened to explanations, and headed further toward the Tsar Bell. Suddenly they saw Ordzhonikidze returning. A minute later, a car appeared, stopped near Ordzhonikidze, and Comrade Stalin stepped out of it. Catching sight of Comrade Stalin, the Stakhanovites began to applaud with all their might. Comrade Stalin and Ordzhonikidze walked toward them.

The grandmother approached Comrade Stalin, shook his hand firmly, and said:—Good heavens, at last I have seen our wise, great...

From joy, she could not speak. Comrade Stalin smiled and, shaking the old woman's hand, said: "The most ordinary man..."

Kayanina, with tears in her eyes, said:—Now I can die.

Comrade Stalin replied to her:—Why should you die?! You will keep working...

Everyone surrounded Comrade Stalin in a tight circle and applauded him warmly. Comrade Stalin bowed to the comrades, said goodbye, and left.

When I listened to the story of the comrades who had conversed with Stalin, I envied them, but I did not lose hope that someday I too would manage to speak with Comrade Stalin.

The next day we prepared to leave Moscow. We already had our tickets in hand. Unexpectedly, we received a call at the hotel telling us to return the tickets and not leave Moscow, as the People's Commissar, Comrade Ordzhonikidze, was inviting us to his place.

We stayed at Sergo's for several hours. He conversed with us very warmly, asked about everything, and we told him everything. Sergo called the Stakhanovites Soviet bogatyrs (epic heroes). When the conversation ended, Comrade Ordzhonikidze said that we would still meet with Comrade Stalin, who was very interested in the Stakhanovite movement. He wanted to see us and listen to us.

When Sergo spoke about Comrade Stalin, my heart beat faster. I dreamed of speaking with Comrade Stalin, but I did not think it could happen so soon. And here, it turns out, Comrade Stalin himself

wants to see us and talk. All of us grew loud, fussed about, and expressed our pleasure aloud.

November 14. We are driving to the Central Committee of the party. It is quiet in the car—everyone is thinking about something. And they are probably thinking about one thing: what is Stalin like, what will he ask, what will he say.

We arrived. We went into the hall. We sat down quickly; everyone tried to take a seat closer to the presidium table, knowing who would be behind it. And then Comrades Stalin, Molotov, Kaganovich, Ordzhonikidze, Voroshilov, Kalinin, Andreev, Mikoyan, Chubar, Zhdanov, and Khrushchev walk in. They walk in, bowing and greeting everyone. Something incredible happened in the hall. We all jumped up from our seats and began to applaud with all our might. I look at Comrade Stalin, and he stands there cheerful, smiling at us, applauding and raising his right hand to greet us. We cannot calm down for a long time. I shout—"Long live our Comrade Stalin!". Dusya Vinogradova shouts—"Bolshevik Stakhanovite greetings to Comrade Stalin!". For a long time, we greeted Comrade Stalin, and Comrades Molotov, Kaganovich, Ordzhonikidze, Voroshilov, and Kalinin, shouting "hurrah" to the leaders of the party and government.

Sergo Ordzhonikidze opened the meeting—this was the beginning of the First All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites. Sergo spoke very well about us and praised us: — What Stakhanov, Dyukanov, Busygin, Vinogradova, and Krivonos on the railway gave us, and the fact that hundreds and thousands of people followed their example, is an extraordinary fact, a fact of immense importance. It must be said directly: what had been sanctified up to now by all kinds of "scientific norms," "learned" people, and old practitioners—our Stakhanovite comrades turned it all upside down, threw it to the devil as outdated and holding back our forward movement.

What did these comrades do? They did what the greatest of the great men, the organiser of our party and our teacher Lenin, demanded of us; they did what the great disciple and successor of Lenin, the leader of our party Comrade Stalin, demanded.

AT THE PRESIDIUM OF THE MEETING — COMRADES STALIN, MOLOTOV, KAGANOVICH, KALININ, ANDREEV, KHRUSHCHEV. COMRADE STALIN GREETS THE STAKHANOVITES

When Comrade Sergo mentioned the name of Comrade Stalin, we began to applaud tumultuously again. Comrade Stalin looked at us as if we were his own kin, and we, listening to Sergo, looked at Comrade Stalin, at his pleasant face, into his lively, slightly narrowed eyes. I noticed grey hair on Comrade Stalin and thought: after all, he is already 56 years old, he has endured so much in his life—prisons, exiles, and hardships. But, I thought, Comrade Stalin must be happy to see the results of the Bolsheviks' struggle, the results of his labour. For both I and the comrades sitting next to me are pupils of Comrade Stalin. "It is you and the party you lead that made men out of us," I wanted to say to him.

Comrade Sergo continued his speech. Regarding my record, he said: "This is done by a non-party Bolshevik who does not yet have a party card; formally he is not in the party, but he is a loyal son of his country, a son of his proletarian state, and nothing separates him from the party, except for the fact that he does not yet have a party card in his pocket."

I knew I would have to speak, had jotted down a few things in my notepad, and was nervous. When Comrade Sergo finished his speech, he immediately gave me the floor. People began to applaud

me. Nervous, I looked over my notes in the meantime, glanced around at those present, and calmed down. Comrade Stalin turned in my direction. Seeing his fatherly gaze, I felt at ease, just like back at my mine among my own people, and I told it how it was, how I achieved the record, and expressed my gratitude to Comrade Stalin, to whom we owe our new happy life.

I spoke about the successes the Stakhanovite movement was making here. Previously, the productivity of a jackhammer did not exceed 13–14 tons per shift. Now it is 60–65 tons. On the section as a whole, our extraction rose to 300–335 tons, whereas previously the "Nikanor-Vostok" section yielded 250 tons at most. To this, it must be added that the staff of people on the section decreased by 19 men: previously there were 117, now there are 98 workers. Proper organisation of labor allowed us to yield more coal. We do not lay off workers; we transfer them to preparatory work at our own mine.

I also spoke about earnings and shared my opinion that high labor productivity raised wages.

I am speaking, and Comrade Stalin is listening to me attentively. I tried to speak as briefly as possible: I felt somewhat awkward taking up a lot of time. I think Comrade Stalin has a mass of affairs and needs to hear the main points quickly.

I was proud of myself. Yesterday's ignorant farmhand and shepherd was voicing his opinions to the leaders of the people. And right then I thought: after all, they too came from the people themselves. — Yes, only in our country are such meetings possible, such heartfelt conversations between leaders and ordinary workers who tell them about their exploits on the labor front!

After me, Petr Krivonos spoke. He spoke about fulfilling [the plan for] utilising locomotives. It is interesting how Krivonos became a Stakhanovite. One day he picked up a newspaper and saw a note: Lazar Moiseyevich visited the engineers of the Sortirovochnaya depot of the Kazan railway and asked them how to find means to increase the turnover and average daily run of a locomotive. All these means were clear to Krivonos, and he found them immediately. But he had, as he said, one fear: when engineers exceeded the technical speed target, they were threatened, reports were filed against them, and it was called "reckless driving."

Krivonos went to the depot chief and said: “There is an appeal from our People’s Commissar on how best to find means to accelerate locomotive turnover. Won’t we be punished for driving fast?” The depot chief replied to him: “Since Lazar Moiseyevich puts the question this way, nothing will happen.” Then Petr Krivonos began to abandon driving at a snail’s pace and started driving on inclines with the main valve fully open rather than slightly open. Although Krivonos drove freight trains, because of his speed he began to catch up with and even overtake passenger trains.

Krivonos shared the secret of his methods: — The secret of fast driving is very simple. You need to know your section no worse than a track walker. You have to keep your eyes peeled—where the curve is, where the incline is, where the slope is. The most important thing is not to lounge around on the locomotive with the small valve open; open the big one, and not just on inclines, but on flat sections too. Don’t drag on the inclines, develop high speed on the flat sections, and go down the slopes without recklessness—that is the main rule of fast, accident-free driving.

I understood then that his business was indeed simple; the man had a great desire to work well for our country and possessed the skill. The man is devoted to the party and Soviet power. The man mastered the technology of his craft and showed everyone how to work.

After Krivonos, Busygin from the Gorky Automobile Plant spoke. Busygin opened his little notebook and listed his records, as well as his earnings. If previously he earned 300–500 rubles, in September, when he applied his Stakhanovite method, he earned 1,043 rubles. Comrade Stalin, who listened very attentively to everyone, including Busygin, asked him:—Does the quality of the shafts suffer from fast work?—On the contrary,—Busygin replied,—fewer defects are produced, and the quality is better. Previously I made 450 pieces, with 20 defective. Now I yield 1,100 pieces, with 2 defective.

This is very important, because if we, Stakhanovites, increase our productivity and produce defects at the same time, there will be no point to such work. A real Stakhanovite must work so as to yield a lot of production and of good quality.

Then Dusya Vinogradova spoke. Leaning on the table, she began her story about high productivity and high earnings. If previously she earned 200–270 rubles a month, when working on 144 looms her earnings reached 600 rubles. She looked at Comrade Stalin and said: —Look at how I raised my wages!

And Comrade Stalin answers her:—Very good.

Then Miron Dyukanov spoke. A very interesting conversation ensued between him and Comrades Stalin and Ordzhonikidze. Comrade Ordzhonikidze asked Dyukanov: — How many hewers did you have before the Stakhanovite movement and how many hewers now?

Dyukanov replied that before the Stakhanovite movement there were 23 hewers, and now there are 12. Previously we did the hewing and timbering ourselves, but now we have divided the labor. Comrade Stalin took note of this and said: — This is the essence of success.

And Comrade Ordzhonikidze confirmed:—That is the main thing.

In his speech, Miron Dyukanov reminded that when we were at the People's Commissar's office, he had already told him about the shortcomings we have at the mines. But Comrade Stalin grew interested in these shortcomings and asked Dyukanov to speak about them again. Dyukanov replied that things were not going well with our haulage, that our car fleet was not in order, and that we had few electric locomotives.—And if they added electric locomotives for us, we would be fully capable of yielding double the extraction at the mine.

Comrade Ordzhonikidze became very interested in this, for he believed that if we doubled extraction, then our mine would truly be Stakhanovite.

The drill operator Nina Slavnikova spoke interestingly. Nina told how she competes with her friend Marusya Makarova, also a drill operator. When Nina stated that she earned 886 rubles, Comrade Mikoyan asked: — And how much did your friend earn?

Nina replied that Marusya earned 1,336 rubles. — Where does she put the money? — Comrade Mikoyan grew interested.

Nina replied that she too was interested in where to put the money, and Marusya told her: — I will buy myself milk-coloured shoes for 180 rubles, a crepe de chine dress for 200 rubles, and a coat for 700 rubles.

Look at what kind of Stakhanovite girls we have now!

Comrade Stalin asked Nina Slavnikova—are there enough machine tools at the factory? Nina replied that there are enough. — And are there enough workers? — Comrade Stalin inquires. — There are enough workers too, since some of us have begun to fulfill six norms,—Nina replied.

I saw that Comrade Stalin liked the answer.

A student of the Moscow Industrial Academy, Nikita Alekseyevich Izotov, spoke very well.

When Izotov came up to the podium, he said he was no orator and sort of apologised. And then he started speaking so powerfully that Comrade Stalin made a remark: — Quite an orator!

And Sergo Ordzhonikidze confirmed: — Yes, not a bad one.

We all laughed cheerfully, and Nikita started speaking even better after that. Shortly before the conference, Nikita Izotov had visited the Moscow Coal Basin, and in his speech, he drew the attention of Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev to the fact that the Moscow Basin was limping: there were no fighters of the coal industry there. — True, they are not visible there,—Comrade Stalin agreed.

Incidentally, after the conference, Nikita Izotov, on instructions from Comrade Ordzhonikidze, left with a whole brigade for the most lagging mine of the Moscow Basin and stirred the people up so much that the mine began to fulfill the plan.

After Nikita Izotov, the floor was given to a famous weaver from the “Bolshevik” Rodniki Combine of Ivanovo Oblast, Tasya Odintsova, who competes with the Vinogradovas. Comrade Ordzhonikidze announced it just like that:—Comrade Odintsova, the rival of the Vinogradovas, has the floor.—Let’s see who wins,—said Comrade Stalin.

And indeed, after the Stakhanovite conference, the Vinogradovas and Odintsova competed all the time and informed Comrade Stalin each time who was winning. One moment Odintsova

would overtake Vinogradova, the next Vinogradova would overtake Odintsova.

Odintsova said in her speech, addressing Comrade Stalin:—I assure you, comrades, that in competing with Dusya Vinogradova, I hope to overfulfil the plan and leave her behind me.

And Vinogradova asks her right there: — How many will you switch to?

Odintsova says:—To 156 looms.

And Vinogradova shouts from her seat: — And we to 208!

Comrade Stalin stood near the wall and, lighting his pipe, watched this scene.

Indeed, the Vinogradovas later switched not even to 208, but to 216 looms. And Tasya Odintsova followed their lead—she switched to 216 looms.

Here speaks our fellow Donbass resident, a foreman of the blast furnace shop of the Makeevka Plant named after Kirov—Pushkin. He achieved a utilisation coefficient of the furnace's useful volume of 0.92. Comrade Ordzhonikidze reminded how Academician Pavlov used to say that the coefficient on blast furnaces could be from 2 to 1.5. But Pushkin outpaced everyone—he outpaced the Germans, the Americans, and our academicians. Comrade Stalin was very interested in how earnings were growing among Stakhanovites and asked Pushkin:—And how much did you earn before?—Previously,—says Pushkin,—I earned 375 rubles, and now 2,000.

After the blast furnace worker, the steelmaker Degtyarev from the Dzerzhinsky Plant in the city of Dneprodzerzhinsk spoke. Comrade Stalin grew interested in what the Stakhanovite methods consisted of for steelmakers and asked Degtyarev about this. Degtyarev replied that the Stakhanovite methods consist in the fact that they began to melt steel faster. The plant's steelmakers yield a heat of 172 tons of steel in 8 hours 50 minutes.—And how much did they yield before?—Comrade Stalin asked.—Previously,—Degtyarev replied,—they yielded 150–160 tons in 12 hours.

The oldest participant in the meeting was Pronin, a wire-man from a paper mill. He came to Moscow together with his son, a paper mill worker. The father and son are in competition, and both of them spoke.

The youngest delegate of the First All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites was a turner from the city of Kuybyshev—Kolya Kuryanov.

Sergo announced:

"The next speaker is the eldest turner, Kuryanov..."

Everyone looked; indeed, they thought an old man was about to step up to the podium, but instead, a 17-year-old boy stood up—round-faced, with his hair cut in a crop.

Comrade Stalin stood up from his seat, leaned over the table, and looked at Kuryanov. Sergo asked how much he earned.

"Before I became a Busyginist, I made 6 rubles a day, and now I make 25 rubles," Kuryanov replied.

Comrade Stalin burst out laughing, looked cheerfully at Kuryanov, and applauded him for a long time.

In general, the speeches were very interesting, and the remarks were very interesting. Of course, you can't retell everything.

While there weren't many delegates at the first morning session, at the evening and subsequent sessions of the Stakhanovite conference, there were already about three thousand people. These sessions took place in the Grand Hall of the Kremlin Palace—the very same hall where the Party Congress and the Congresses of Soviets were held, the very same hall where the Stalin Constitution was subsequently adopted.

Our conference lasted four days. We would hold sessions from the morning, then take a break for lunch, and then return to the Kremlin again. I got used to the Kremlin and walked there along a familiar path, just like back home in Irmino. We would leave the Kremlin late in the evening. There was little time for sleep. You'd have a quick dinner—and it was back to work. Almost every evening, we would call our city on the phone and tell our friends the news. Then, during the day, several letters would arrive from relatives, acquaintances, and strangers. You barely had time to read them! Until late at night, we would share our impressions—the hotel was full of journalists, photographers, and camera operators. To be honest, we got tired of being photographed. Busygin, whenever he noticed photographers, would shout: "Scatter, the machine gunners are coming!.." He called the photographers machine gunners because

they snapped their “Leicas” so rapidly. They would pester you and start taking pictures for the hundredth time, and everyone would promise to send the prints, but then, of course, they never did.

Almost every night, we drove to the newspaper editorial offices, especially to *Pravda*. There we shared our impressions, talked about our experiences, and wrote articles. You take a newspaper in the morning—and there is your article. For the first few days, I collected the newspapers with the articles and photographs, but then I stopped collecting them—there were just so many. You’d glance through the paper in the morning, grab a bite to eat—and head off to the conference. No one wanted to be late.

For four days we held sessions in the Kremlin. And for four days, the entire government and the Central Committee of the Party sat together with us. Comrades Stalin, Molotov, Ordzhonikidze, and Kaganovich questioned ordinary workers in detail about how labor productivity could be increased. During those four days, we saw and heard so much that at any other time you wouldn’t see or hear in an entire century.

The speakers at the conference included the Chairman of the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR, Vyacheslav Mikhailovich Molotov; the People’s Commissar of the Food Industry, Anastas Ivanovich Mikoyan; the People’s Commissar of Railways, Lazar Moiseevich Kaganovich; the leader of the Leningrad Bolsheviks and Secretary of the Central Committee of the Party, Andrei Aleksandrovich Zhdanov; our People’s Commissar, Sergo Ordzhonikidze; and the People’s Commissar of Defence, Marshal of the Soviet Union Kliment Efremovich Voroshilov.

Comrade Molotov said that the Stakhanovite movement was born among the working masses, in the thick of the workers.

“It is well known, after all,” he said, “that the most popular representatives of the Stakhanovite movement are ordinary working men and women. Only yesterday, many didn’t even know them at their own factory; only yesterday they stood alongside other ordinary working men and women, but now the entire working class of the Soviet Union has learned the names of its new heroes...”

Vyacheslav Mikhailovich cited my biography and the biographies of Busygin, Smetanin, Dusya and Marusia Vinogradova, and Krivonos.

"Before us are still young people," Comrade Molotov said, as if summing up our biographies. "They all come from working-class families or from working peasants. A characteristic feature of them, as well as of other Stakhanovites, is persistence in learning. Only a few of them have already become Communists or Komsomol members, while the majority have only recently joined the ranks of Party sympathisers, or even now still remain non-Party members."

Comrade Molotov said:

"Stakhanovites are Stalin's students."

I liked this title very much because all this time I considered myself precisely Stalin's student; I always listened to his words, to his advice, and tried to follow them.

Comrade Molotov cited figures showing that our records are indeed world records. Our female weavers beat the standards of American factories, Busygin beat Ford, and the miners beat the standards of the Ruhr coal basin in Germany.

Right on the day when Comrade Molotov spoke, a letter to Comrade Stalin from our miners, who were closely following what was happening in the Kremlin, was published in *Pravda*. In the letter, 250 workers of the Tsentralnaya-Irmino mine wrote:

"Dear Comrade Stalin!

With a feeling of indescribable joy and great pride, we learned today about the meeting of our hero-drillers Comrades Stakhanov, Dyukanov, and many other Stakhanovites of our motherland with you, our dear and beloved Iosif Vissarionovich, and other leaders of the Party and the government. This is a great honor for our mine—the birthplace of the Stakhanovite movement. Only in our country are such heartfelt, such business-like meetings and conversations between leaders and workers possible.

To the truthful words of Comrades Stakhanov and Dyukanov, we want, Comrade Stalin, to add on our own behalf what our entire collective of workers, engineers, technicians, and foremen lives by and fights for now. In two months of working according to Stalin's method, our mine has increased its output by 25%. But these are only

the first results. The main fruits of working the Stakhanovite way are still ahead. If a jackhammer in the hands of Stakhanov, Dyukanov, Kontsedalov, and many dozens and hundreds of other Stakhanovites yields an average productivity 3, 4, or 5 times greater than what this hammer yielded before, then what can prevent us, all the workers and the entire mine, from doubling our productivity and becoming a fully Stakhanovite mine?

Our comrade Aleksey Stakhanov said quite correctly at the conference that his output shattered previous notions and calculations regarding standards. Indeed, all the standards that existed before the Stakhanovite movement have now gone topsy-turvy. And not only with the jackhammer—in preparatory work, too, our timbermen and tunnelers Comrades Kurkin, Fishich, Popov, Pechenyuk, Shander, Semashko, and others are fulfilling two, three, or four standards. In haulage, our best horse-drivers Prodan, Zima, and Levenets are already moving 80–85 tubs of coal compared to a standard of 45–50. And our driller Comrade Dyukanov said correctly at the conference that our haulage will move a double output of coal. After all, right now we are moving 1,250–1,300 tons of coal without any strain, whereas two months ago we barely moved 950–1,000. The main thing is that our hoist fully ensures the haulage of double the coal output. The only bottleneck in achieving this task for us is the main drifts. But we would certainly eliminate this bottleneck as well. For this, it is necessary to increase the number of bypasses near the faces and rationalize the movement of the coal flow...

We are also happy to inform you, Comrade Stalin, that the Tsentralnaya-Irmino mine in Kadievka not only yields high productivity but also yields high earnings. These are also the fruits of applying Stakhanov's method. In September, we had only about 10 people who earned 1,000 or more rubles. In October, we have over 50 such people. Among them are Stakhanovite drillers: Brezhishev, who earned 1,422 rubles; Khimichev—1,361 rubles; Pidopryga—1,358 rubles; Drozdov—1,210 rubles; Tkachenko—1,072 rubles; Danilov—1,020 rubles; Bezrodny—1,000 rubles. Timbermen: Shander—1,238 rubles; Popov—1,130 rubles; Semashko—1,092 rubles; Shchigolev—1,050 rubles, and so on.

We are fighting now for the fourth-quarter plan, for the early fulfillment of the annual plan, for the coal five-year plan in 4 years. The word of the Stakhanovites is law.

Long live our dear, beloved leader Comrade Stalin! May the Stakhanovite movement grow and expand throughout our entire country!"

In his speech, Comrade Molotov mentioned this letter from my comrades and said that it shows how the Stakhanovite movement is developing.

Anastas Ivanovich Mikoyan told us that there are plenty of food products in our country, that there will be even more, and that we will all live prosperously. He put it very beautifully:

"To the genius of the leader and organiser of our Party and the masses, our teacher Comrade Stalin, we owe the fact that many of the most difficult questions of the revolution have now ceased to be questions, and many problems have ceased to be problems. Take, for instance, the food question. You, the workers, remember best of all how our Party propagandists used to torment themselves quite often, explaining to the workers why there was a shortage of bread, sugar, and meat; why there was no makhorka tobacco, no cigarettes. Speaking for myself, I must say that it was difficult for me not only to explain, but even more difficult to supply all of this. How much easier it is now to explain why there has come to be plenty of bread, plenty of butter, and plenty of sugar."

To these wonderful words, we responded with prolonged applause.

Anastas Ivanovich remembered us, the Donets miners:

"When they were asked to increase coal output, they used to say: there is no tobacco, give us cigarettes; give us soap—we have nothing to wash with; give us macaroni, give us meat, give us grains. But now the Donets miners speak and they don't talk about grains, or bread, or meat. This is not because they do not know their own needs or do not talk about their needs. No! They spoke about their needs very well. They said: we don't have pianos, gramophones, or good records. Quite different demands have emerged! This speaks of a new stage of development, a stage we used to dream about and whose arrival we have long been preparing for."

Comrade Mikoyan told us about how Comrade Stalin guides the food industry and how he cares about the population of our country eating well.

Comrades Stalin and Voroshilov at the presidium of the meeting

Some factories used to produce poor goods. Frankly, it used to be shameful to look at the sausage and candy produced by some enterprises during the rationing system. Anastas Ivanovich told Comrade Stalin that food enterprises were putting poor goods onto our market, while producing excellent candy, butter, cologne, and excellent sausage for export. And Comrade Stalin advised him:

"Produce them just like you would for export, but don't send them abroad—put them into our stores."

And so they did. Butter, eggs, and other food products we need, which used to be exported abroad for gold to buy machine tools and equipment, no longer have to be exported, since we have created our own industry.

Comrade Mikoyan cited an interesting case involving the production of soap. He called in representatives of the soap industry and ordered them to make samples of the best varieties of soap that were ever made in the country. Comrade Stalin said to Mikoyan:

“Bring the soap samples to the Central Committee; Molotov and Kaganovich will be there, we will examine them, let the Central Committee of the RCP(B) approve them.”

Mikoyan brought the samples. Comrades Stalin, Molotov, and Kaganovich carefully examined all the samples, familiarised themselves with the recipe of each variety, with the weight of each bar of toilet soap, rejected some samples, praised others, and proposed putting them onto the market on a wide scale. This is how Comrade Stalin, who has such great affairs to attend to, who directs all international and domestic policy, finds the time to personally deal with soap!

When A. I. Mikoyan told Comrade Stalin that he wanted to advance the production of sausages, Comrade Stalin supported this endeavor in every way and said:

“Push this business forward with all your might!”

Lazar Moiseevich Kaganovich spoke very interestingly. He talked about how brilliantly the Krivonos movement is developing in transport. Railway transport, which used to be the most lagging sector in the country, is rising up and becoming leading.

Our People’s Commissar, Comrade Ordzhonikidze, spoke passionately and beautifully at the conference; we listened to him attentively, just as he had listened to and encouraged all of us. Sergo called upon us to work even better, so that under the leadership of our Party of Lenin and Stalin we would move toward more and more new victories.

We greeted the appearance of Kliment Efremovich Voroshilov at the podium with enthusiasm. He is our fellow countryman—a Luhansk locksmith. Kliment Efremovich called the Stakhanovites first-class people of our wonderful working class, those most dear to our Red fighters.

On Red Square on November 7, I saw our weaponry, and in the Kremlin, I heard how strongly the defence capability of the country is growing.

Comrade Voroshilov told how Red Army soldiers are breaking the established standards for their weapons. Through the simplest modifications, tank crews ensure that tanks move freely through swamps, swim across rivers, lakes, and even marine gulfs during a

fresh wave. We have gallant tank crews who, like virtuosos, literally play with their machines.

Comrade Voroshilov praised the Stakhanovites of industry who make good means of defence for our country:

"We have," he says, "remarkable, wonderful, powerful weaponry. Within a few days, our tanks cover 700 kilometres, three-quarters of which is through water, and without a single accident or even a breakdown."

And Kliment Efremovich also said: "Now, when our forces have tenfold increased, we do not raise the question at all of whether we will defeat the enemy or not. We will defeat them unconditionally. That is no longer the issue now. Now the question is posed this way: at what price, with what efforts, with what sacrifices will we win? Personally, I think—and Comrade Stalin thinks so, Comrade Ordzhonikidze thinks so, our entire Central Committee and Government think so—that we must defeat the enemy, if he dares to attack us, with little blood, with the expenditure of minimal resources, and with the fewest possible lives of our glorious fighters."

That is how things stand!

From the speeches of the leaders of the Party and the government, I understood how Comrade Stalin directs our entire country, how he cares that we have sausages, that the soap is good, that candy is wrapped beautifully, that trains run on schedule, and that the weapons are good so that we can defeat the enemy if he dares to attack us. I told my fellow miners this many, many times afterward.

Of course, we all dreamed of hearing Comrade Stalin himself. But, to tell the truth, since Comrade Molotov, Comrade Ordzhonikidze, Comrade Voroshilov, Comrade Kaganovich, and other leaders of the Party and government had already spoken, and the conference was already drawing to a close, we were deeply worried—what if Comrade Stalin does not speak? But on the evening of November 17, Ordzhonikidze gave the floor to Skatershchikov, a shop manager at a Moscow power plant, and right then and there said that Comrade Stalin would speak next.

What a scene that was! Our joy knew no bounds. To admit the truth, we listened very little to Skatershchikov, because everyone was burning with impatience to hear Stalin as soon as possible.

And so, Skatershchikov finished his speech, and Sergo announced:

"Comrade Stalin has the floor."

It was as if thunder cracked. More than 3,000 people filling the entire Kremlin hall rose from their seats. For long minutes, we applauded and cheered the leader.

Comrade Stalin stood up and walked to the podium. We stood and shouted:

"Long live Comrade Stalin!"

And Comrade Stalin stood on the podium, calm and smiling, looking at us with the eyes of a father and a teacher. Greetings flew to him from all corners of the hall. Comrade Stalin raised his hand, demanding silence. Several times he tried to calm us down and invited us to sit, but nothing helped. Everyone had so many wonderful feelings toward Comrade Stalin accumulated in their hearts that everyone wanted to express them. Comrade Stalin scanned the entire hall with his eyes, and the hall was breaking into an uproar. Suddenly, a song burst from everyone's chests all at once, and we began to sing the *Internationale*. Then the ovation continued once again. Comrade Stalin turned to the presidium, probably demanding that order be established. Sergo pointed toward the hall for him. Comrade Stalin pulled out his watch and showed it to us, but the text did not recognise time. Comrade Ordzhonikidze rang his bell for a long time before the hall quieted down.

On the other hand, when Comrade Stalin began to speak, there was absolute silence, because everyone tried to catch everything and not miss a single word.

Comrade Stalin spoke simply and understandably, and his words penetrated deeply into our consciousness. Comrade Stalin mentioned my last name more than once, and mentioned Busygin and other Stakhanovites. How nervous I was when he spoke about us! But how could one not be nervous when he said that we had thrown the spark from which the flame flared up. And I thought then: "Stakhanov,

what you have done is only the beginning. You must do even more...".

Comrade Stalin stands on the podium. Floodlights illuminate his face. Loudspeakers carry his words to all corners of the large hall. Camera operators are filming. Everyone's eyes are fixed on the podium.

Listening to the leader's speech, I recalled my own work. Here Stalin says that the Stakhanovite movement was ripe a long time ago, but it was held back by old technical standards. The absolute truth! After all, I too had a daily standard of 7 tons. Could one expect much coal from such a standard? I broke these standards, and a different result followed. But of course, I could not have thought back then that I would achieve such success and that thousands of people would begin to apply my method in a short time.

Comrade Stalin said that the present life of the workers has become better and more cheerful. I judged by myself and my comrades: we live very well. There is no longer any worry about a piece of bread. There is worry about studying and cultural growth; one wants to study and study. Look at Nikita Izotov, a miner—he made it all the way to the Academy.

Comrade Stalin said: "Before you are people like Comrades Stakhanov, Busygin, Smetanin, Krivonos, Pronin, the Vinogradovas, and many others—new people, working men and women who have fully mastered the technology of their trade, saddled it, and driven it forward. We had no such people, or almost none, some three years ago. These are new, exceptional people."

Comrade Stalin is right, of course. There could not have been such people before. We did not have new technology back then, and living was harder. After all, our mine was not mechanized; there were no jackhammers. And you cannot achieve much with a hand pick and bare hands. You cannot squeeze much out of a hand pick and your own hands. Yet the policy of the Party and the Soviet government consists precisely in raising labor productivity not at the expense of exhausting the physical strength of the workers, but by equipping the worker with technology and machinery, so that the worker masters this technology and all the knowledge and can squeeze everything out of the technology.

When the new technology appeared among us, we, the shock workers, set about mastering it, saddled the technology, and indeed drove it forward.

Comrade Stalin said: “Did Stakhanov and Busygin think about this great significance of the Stakhanovite movement when they set about breaking the old technical standards? Of course not. They had their own worries—they strove to lead their enterprises out of the breakthrough and overfulfil the economic plan. But in achieving this goal, they had to smash the old technical standards and develop high labor productivity, surpassing the advanced capitalist countries.”

Of course, that is how it was! Did I really think that such a major thing would grow out of my record? I and all my comrades had only one thought: how to make sure the mine fulfilled the plan, the factory fulfilled the plan, the railway fulfilled the plan. And it turned into a massive achievement.

Comrade Molotov in his speech recounted what torments Musinsky, an Arkhangelsk sawmill worker and the first Stakhanovite in the timber industry, had to endure. Secretly from the managers and inspectors, Musinsky fulfilled the new high technical standards. Comrade Stalin reminded everyone about Musinsky and right then and there said: “The fate of Stakhanov himself was no better, for in his movement forward he had to defend himself not only against certain officials of the administration, but also against certain workers who mocked and hounded him for his ‘innovations.’”

I was simply amazed at how Comrade Stalin knew all the details of our work. I thought—how does Comrade Stalin know that the manager of my mine, Zaplavsky, opposed the Stakhanovite movement? How does he know, I asked myself, that some old-timers at the mine whispered that Stakhanov was establishing a high standard in vain, and that our earnings would be reduced? These people were mistaken, of course. Later, when the Stakhanovite movement rose and earnings went up, these people saw their error. But it is a fact—at first, some backward workers were dissatisfied with my records.

I liked very much how Comrade Stalin described us: “You have seen Stakhanov and Busygin here,” he said. “They spoke at the conference. These are simple and modest people, without any

pretensions whatsoever to harvest the laurels of figures on an All-Union scale. It even seems to me that they are somewhat embarrassed by the scope of the movement that has unfolded here contrary to their expectations."

How could we not be embarrassed when honor began to be bestowed upon us, simple people, everywhere!

Both I and my comrades from the mine who read Comrade Stalin's speech liked very much the passage where he speaks about freedom. "If there is a shortage of bread, a shortage of butter and fats, a shortage of textiles, and housing is bad, you won't get very far on freedom alone. It is very difficult, comrades, to live on freedom alone!" Stalin said, and we immediately responded with shouts of approval and applause. "In order to live well and cheerfully," Comrade Stalin continued, "it is necessary that the blessings of political freedom be supplemented by material blessings."

And our revolution gave us these blessings. Everyone feels it firsthand. That is why life has become cheerful for us. That is why the Stakhanovite movement developed so quickly.

And I also remembered very well the passage from Comrade Stalin's speech where he says: "That you, the members of the present conference, have learned a thing or two here at the conference from the leaders of our government—I will not deny this. But it cannot be denied either that we, the leaders of the government, have also learned a great deal from you, the Stakhanovites, the members of the present conference. So, thank you, comrades, for the lesson, thank you very much!"

"Thank you, too, Comrade Stalin!" we shouted in response. And each thought to himself: Our teacher, who leads the whole country and who is the teacher of the workers of the entire world, declared that he has learned from us, the Stakhanovites, and expressed his gratitude to us. Because of this, we loved Comrade Stalin even more, for he values our labor, our experience, and our knowledge.

Comrade Stalin spoke so clearly that everything was understandable to me. I memorised everything and wrote it down in my notepad, so that upon my arrival I could recount it in detail to all my comrades.

Before finishing his speech, Comrade Stalin, smiling, said: “We here in the presidium consulted and decided that we will have to mark this conference of the leaders of power with the leaders of the Stakhanovite movement in some way. And so we came to the decision that about 100–120 of you will have to be recommended for the highest award. If you approve, comrades, then we will carry this matter through,” Comrade Stalin concluded his speech.

Once again, something extraordinary happened in the Kremlin hall. Greetings to Comrade Stalin poured out endlessly. With great, exceptional fervour, we sang the *Internationale*, and the leaders of the Party and government standing on the podium sang along with us.

Comrade Sergo declared the conference closed. Satbaev, a Kazakh railway worker, ran up to the presidium and began warmly shaking Comrade Stalin’s hands. We said goodbye to the leader of our people for a long time and did not leave the hall for several minutes. It was a pity to leave this place, where we were right next to Comrade Stalin, where we had learned, heard, and seen so much. We did not want to part with Comrade Stalin and our leaders. Suddenly, someone started singing a song from the film *Jolly Fellows*. Comrade Zhdanov picked it up and began to lead the singing, while Kliment Efremovich Voroshilov, standing on the platform, conducted. We sang cheerfully and joyfully, and at the same time, it was a pity that we were parting.

We left the Kremlin feeling animated. We recalled mine affairs and were already making new plans. Right then and there, we decided that upon returning to the mine, we would gather a rally, then a rally of Stakhanovites, and then meetings by occupation: drillers, timbermen, horse-drivers, and timber-haulers. The agenda: about Moscow, about the Kremlin, about Stalin.

We headed straight to the Bolshoi Theatre, where they were showing us the ballet *The Flames of Paris*. The theatre was packed with Stakhanovites. I looked at the stage, but in my mind, the Kremlin conference was playing out; I remembered Stalin, Ordzhonikidze, Molotov, Kaganovich, Voroshilov, and Mikoyan. During the intermission, about fifteen of us Stakhanovites drafted a letter to Comrade Stalin. We gathered in a separate room and

composed it collectively. Then a railway worker stood on a table and read out loud what had been written. We signed it. Upon learning about our letter to Comrade Stalin, other Stakhanovites who were in the theatre also wanted to sign it. Over the course of two intermissions, the room was just like a rally. Each time, a different Stakhanovite would climb onto the table like a podium, read the letter aloud, and then people would sign it.

During the intermission, I saw Comrade Stalin and the leaders of the Party and government in the government box. It turned out they were together with us in the theatre as well. After the third act, the performers came out to greet the leaders of the Party and the Stakhanovites. Comrade Stalin stood in the box and applauded.

When the performance ended, about two hundred automobiles drove the Stakhanovites to their hotels. We did not feel like sleeping. We wanted to fly home to tell our wives, children, and comrades—to tell everyone at the mine what had happened in Moscow. We wanted to get to work quickly and justify the trust that Comrade Stalin had placed in us.

On November 18, our letter to Comrade Stalin, composed in the theatre, was printed in *Pravda*: "Iosif Vissarionovich, our dear, our beloved, our great! We are writing this letter in moments when our hearts are beating fast, in moments when we are all under the impression of the inspiring, unforgettable speech you have just delivered.

We waited for your speech with impatience, and when you stepped up to the podium, a feeling of immense joy gripped us, a storm of delight burst from our chests, we pressed closer to one another and felt within ourselves a new surge of some kind of magical, heroic strength.

We listened to you, catching every word, every gesture, every movement. We wanted to rise from our seats, embrace you, and express our boundless love. Every word was deeply etched into our memory and will remain for a lifetime.

Iosif Vissarionovich! Life has become easier, life has become more cheerful! — these words of yours one wants to repeat many, many times, one wants to sing them. Life has become easier, life has become more cheerful! Because our Party under your leadership is

leading the country to socialism, to communism. Because our Party and you first of all, Iosif Vissarionovich, educate us, nurture us, and raise us. We are your pupils, we are faithful Stalinist students.

Everything inside us is boiling, everything is churning, we are full of feelings that are difficult to express. You said that a flame flared up from the Stakhanovite spark, but you lit the Stakhanovite spark with your slogan about attention to people, with your love for the people. With your speech today, you fan this flame of competition stronger and stronger, which will temper us and our entire motherland even more and make it still more powerful and invincible."

"Our dear, beloved friend and teacher! You have just thanked us for the lesson. You, the great leader of nations, the genius of humanity, thanked us, working men and women, for the science. What a pride it is for us that you so highly praised our simple speeches at the All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites convened on your personal initiative. How can we thank you? Where can we find words of gratitude for the lessons given to us every day by the Party through all its grandiose work, which you give, your bright Bolshevik mind, which you gave us once again today with your remarkable speech. Thank you, a big, Stakhanovite, enormous thank you, as big as our love for you, thank you for the lesson, dear Iosif Vissarionovich!

We are preparing to depart for our native mines, plants, factories, and railways. We carry with us the sparks of the Stalinist flame and will carry them to the masses. With Stalinist persistence, we will strive for socialist labor productivity. We will cultivate the seeds of communism, which you, with your foresight, discerned in the Stakhanovite movement. Yes, these seeds are already ripening, and you are the sun under which they bloom abundantly.

Iosif Vissarionovich, dear one, accept our love and our wish for you to live a long life in good health for our joy. Life has become better and will be even more beautiful, life has become cheerful and will be even more cheerful. Before leaving the Kremlin Palace, we sang to you about joy, about people who walk through life with a song. Arm in arm with you, we march with a merry song, building socialism.

Goodbye, Iosif Vissarionovich, goodbye! Moscow, November 17."

Another day passed, and we departed! I already missed the Donbas, my canvas jacket, and my jackhammer.

It must be said that at the mine, they were also awaiting our arrival with impatience. They had read our speeches in the newspapers there, and read the description of the conference, but everyone wanted to hear from us what had happened and how.

We arrived at the mine at night. We went straight to the assignment room. A slogan hung on the wall: "Long live our Stakhanovites—Stalin's students". A crowd was waiting in the assignment room. I greeted my comrades and told them: "Stalin and the proletariat of Moscow asked me to convey warm Bolshevik greetings to you. We saw Stalin, who said: life has become more cheerful—hence the Stakhanovite movement, and that we, the workers, taught him a thing or two, but I must tell you, comrades, that we received much more. Comrade Stalin gave us a massive Stalinist lesson for the rest of our lives."

Miron Dyukanov added to what I said, saying: "Iosif Vissarionovich questions everything, gets to the bottom of everything, as they say. His words leave a deep mark in the heart and head. Stalin demanded from us that we tell him about all the shortcomings, about the haulage, about the fleet of tubs, that we tell him about the miners' earnings. He was interested in literally everything, he cared about every little detail, even though outwardly he is a calm, firm man. Stalin is always looking forward; he sees that things have started moving with the jackhammer, and he asked Petrov point-blank about the poor utilisation of coal-cutting machines."

Petrov answered: "Things are bad with the coal-cutting machines."

"Why bad?" Stalin asks again. "You are a Party man and should be interested in everything." Comrade Stalin has such a style—to get to the root of the issue and resolve the matter. "I repeat, comrades, he delves into all the little details and nudges us towards great deeds, and he does this in such a way that we ourselves say: Comrade Stalin, we absolutely must take this up properly."

The miners listened to us very attentively; they wanted to know all the details of our meeting with Comrade Stalin, and I told them what I am describing here in the book.

A. G. Stakhanov, L. M. Kaganovich, P. Krivonos

They asked Dyukanov: “How do the leaders work?”

He said: “They sing from the same sheet music as us. But I would say that they are always ahead, they look sharply forward, charting the correct path to com- in Irmino. He heard the blows of Alexei’s jackhammer and summoned us to Moscow. But when he saw that the Stakhanovite cause was boiling not only at the mine but across the entire country, and the flame had flared up from the spark, that the ear of corn is ripening and swelling, he said: here is the seed of communism for you, let us help so that the weeds do not choke it, so that its seed grows and gains strength.”

Miron said it beautifully. Then we started thinking about how to answer Comrade Stalin's speech. Then I suggested: "With a large extraction of coal! He is a business-like man, and he needs no other answer. Only with coal!"

All the miners agreed with me. We decided that the best answer to Comrade Stalin would be doubling the output at the mine.

When the meeting ended, I began asking my comrades how things were at the mine. They told me that in recent days many new Stakhanovites and shock-workers had appeared. Yushchenko from "Velikan-Vostok"—a previously unnoticed man—began yielding three quotas. Vasilkov from "Nikanor-Vostok" received the title of master of the jackhammer. Our ranks have swelled!

A few days later, a telegram was brought to the mine. I, Miron Dyukanov, Petrov, Mitya Kontsedalov, Mashurov, as well as many Stakhanovites of the Donbas and other cities, were awarded the Orders of Lenin and the Red Banner of Labor. I knew that this was done on the proposal of Comrade Stalin, since he had introduced this proposal during his speech in the Kremlin.

I received the order on February 5, 1936, from the hands of Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin.

At the meeting of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee, I again met with Iosif Vissarionovich Stalin, with Comrades Molotov, Ordzhonikidze, and Voroshilov. After receiving the orders, we had our picture taken with Comrade Stalin. Then I approached him, firmly shook his hand, and thanked him, and he asked how I was doing, how I was working and living. I said that everything was going well.

...November 1936. I am traveling to Moscow, to the Kremlin, as a delegate to the VIII All-Union Congress of Soviets. Among the delegates from our mine were also Miron Dyukanov and Nikolai Mashurov.

Moscow had dressed up. Slogans were everywhere. I am greeted on the street like an acquaintance. Apparently, they know me from portraits. They bow, they smile. At the hotel, we get acquainted with other delegates. There are very many order-bearers. Many acquaintances from previous meetings. Busygin, Smetanin, and other Stakhanovites came to the congress. Long before the opening of the

congress, I went to the Grand Kremlin Palace. It was quickly filling with delegates. Here were people from all corners of our country. Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians, Turkmen, Uzbeks, Armenians, Jews, Georgians, Kazakhs, Tatars—could you really list them all! Many delegates are in their national attire. We sing songs. We all await the opening of the congress with impatience. Comrades Stalin, Molotov, Kaganovich, Kalinin, Voroshilov, Ordzhonikidze, Andreev, the leaders of the Party and government, walk to the presidium. It is hard to convey in words what happened in those minutes. Women are waving red kerchiefs. All delegates are greeting the great leader in their native languages.

Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin delivers a speech. Then he gives the floor for the report on the draft of the new Constitution of the USSR to Comrade Stalin. We all rose from our seats. Our feelings belong to Comrade Stalin. I saw how tears of joy appeared in the eyes of many delegates, my neighbors. I had seen and heard Comrade Stalin before, but I was nervous and rejoiced no less than those who saw and heard him for the first time.

Comrade Stalin spoke, just as at the Stakhanovite conference, simply, confidently, and in a language understandable to all. When he spoke, there was complete silence in the hall. Everything he said in his report, we had experienced in our own lives. We enjoy all those rights that the Constitution will give us, and we know that we achieved these accomplishments under the leadership of Comrade Stalin. That is why the congress welcomed him so warmly. I paid attention to the box where the diplomats sat. They saw with what unanimity we, the delegates of the people, treat our leaders, our Party, and the government.

I especially remembered the part of the report when Comrade Stalin spoke about foreign critics. German newspapers, he said, call us not a state, and the Constitution—an empty promise. Comrade Stalin said correctly: laws are not written for fools.

Comrade Stalin spoke calmly. And towards the end, he raised both hands with clenched fists and said passionately: “To a new struggle to win new victories for communism!” We responded to these words with great enthusiasm.

There were remarkable speeches at the congress. Comrade Molotov spoke about the difference between our country and the capitalist countries, how our Constitution differs from their constitutions. Everyone liked his speech. A very interesting speech was delivered by the People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs, Maxim Maximovich Litvinov.

After the debates ended, the congress resolved to create a drafting commission to establish the final text of the Constitution. As members of the drafting commission, the congress also elected me and Miron Dyukanov.

On December 3, the commission gathered in the Kremlin. Miron and I were very pleased that we were about to work together with Comrade Stalin. Comrade Stalin took the chairman's seat. The meeting of the commission went simply. Comrade Stalin read every article. He would read it and ask: what amendments or changes do the members of the drafting commission have? When a member of the commission declared that he had an amendment, Comrade Stalin would tell him: "Come here to the podium and speak to everyone, so that people can see and hear you." There were debates on many points of the Constitution. The issue was decided by voting. Iosif Vissarionovich himself introduced many proposals.

On December 5, all delegates gathered in the Grand Kremlin Palace. Comrade Andreev gave the floor for the report of the drafting commission to Comrade Stalin. I will not repeat his speech, as everyone has, of course, read it. Comrade Stalin reported in detail to the congress what amendments we had introduced to the Constitution at the meeting of the drafting commission.

When Comrade Stalin finished speaking, Comrade Andreev announced that we were moving to the reading of the Constitution, article by article. We prepared our voting mandates. Comrade Andreev began to read paragraph by paragraph. After every article, there was a vote. Hands rise up, and in everyone's hands is a red mandate. The Constitution has 146 articles. 146 times our hands rose up.

At exactly six o'clock in the evening on December 5, 1936, we voted and approved the Stalin Constitution. And when the Constitution was approved, we sang the *Internationale* in unison.

This day, when the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics adopted its new Stalin Constitution, the peoples of our country will never forget. A few minutes before the closing of the congress, a proposal was introduced to declare December 5 a national holiday. Every year on this day we will remember the remarkable Congress of Soviets, and the report of Comrade Stalin—the creator of our Constitution.

When, after the congress, I returned home with the delegation, I considered that my duty as a delegate, as an elected representative of the people, was to speak and report back to everyone who elected me. On the very first day of my return to the mine, the Stakhanovite Kravtsov and a group of workers from our mine came to visit me. I told them about the congress, and they told me about what had happened in those days at the mine. When I went to the mine the next day, all along the way I told the workers what had happened in Moscow. I spoke for almost the whole day. I talked with each shift separately, and when I returned home in the evening, the brigade of driller Tkachenko was already waiting for me there.

As a delegate to the congress, I took patronage over the new longwall face of the "Rubezhnaya-Zapad" section. I made a promise to achieve an output of 120–130 tons. This promise, of course, I fulfilled.

My next meeting with Comrade Stalin took place in Moscow on February 21, 1937, on Red Square, where I stood next to him on the tribune of Lenin's Mausoleum. It was on the day when the country was burying Comrade Sergo... I will tell more about this later.

CHAPTER FOUR

AN INSTRUCTOR'S DIARY

Since I did not take a vacation in 1935, I used my leave for that year in February–March 1936. I rested in Sochi at the "Donbas" sanatorium. This is a wonderful health resort for coal miners.

Upon returning from Sochi to the Donbas, I unfortunately found my mine in an unenviable position. Although output at the mine had risen by almost 50% compared to what it was before the Stakhanovite movement, I considered this growth insufficient. Everyone was helping our mine. Comrade Sergo helped, and the newspaper *Pravda* helped. The mine received the necessary equipment, large compressors, pipes of various sizes, hoses, structural timber, and other materials.

And yet, we were moving very slowly with production. Most importantly, in March 1936, the mine began to work worse than in December 1935. This worried me.

After the All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites, and after my meetings with the leaders of the Party and government, I began to look at my mine with new eyes. Previously, if there were problems, they were worrisome, but at other times one would think—that's the management's business. If previously one demanded better leadership in a section and nothing came of it, sometimes one would think: if they don't want to work like human beings, to hell with them. But now, I felt a personal responsibility for the entire mine. I developed a massive desire to do everything possible to correct the shortcomings. I gained persistence, and I no longer folded my arms until I got what I was after. And there was a tremendous amount of work to do.

After my first record, the number of Stakhanovites and shock workers at the mine increased rapidly. Output rose continuously. Labor productivity grew. I will cite a few figures showing the rise in our mine's work at the end of 1935:

Month	Average Daily Output (in tons)	Average Daily Productivity per Coal Worker (in tons)
August	982	2.09
September	1,030	2.35
October	1,163	2.75
November	1,261	2.93
December	1,436	3.09

Thus, compared to August, the average daily output at our mine grew by 47% in December, while the productivity of a coal worker increased by 50%. The number of workers during this time did not increase. We did not introduce new capacities either; this was healthy growth. The mine had not seen such rates of increase in labor productivity in all 35 years of its existence.

On December 24, 1935, a "Stakhanovite 24-Hour Shift" was held at our mine, and on that day, the mine for the first time yielded double the output compared to what it gave before the Stakhanovite movement—1,802 tons. The victory of December 24 showed what great possibilities we have. But unfortunately, after that day, a certain retreat began at the mine. In January, February, and March 1936, the mine worked poorly. Not only did it fail to show growth in output, but it began to work worse than in December. It even stopped fulfilling the state plan.

In January 1936, the average daily output at the mine was 1,386 tons of coal. In February—1,385 tons; in March—1,380 tons. The decrease, of course, was small, but the point here is not the five or six tons, but why the mine, instead of moving forward, was crawling backward.

When only a small group of workers worked the Stakhanovite way among us, it did not take much effort for the technical

management to service them. But when the entire mine transitioned to Stakhanovite work, our commanders failed to cope with the organisation of production, with helping the Stakhanovites, and with instructing the workers. Furthermore, saboteurs raised their heads at the mine. The traffic supervisor (who was in charge of underground transport), Donnov, stubbornly resisted the implementation of Stakhanovite methods in haulage.

Let me give an example. A brigade of the best haulage masters arrived at our mine—horse-drivers from the neighbouring "Ilyich" mine, Comrades Balandin and Esin. They came for a month to pass on their experience of paired driving to our horse-drivers (where two horses pull a batch at once). But the saboteur Donnov kept them from working for a long time. I immediately wrote to *Pravda* about the saboteur Dontsov. After my article appeared, Dontsov was removed from his job and brought to trial. Only after this was paired driving successfully applied in two sections: "Nikanor-Zapad" and "Almaz-Vostok".

For a long time, there were talks at the mine about a shortage of air for the jackhammers. Finally, additional compressors were received, but there was still a shortage of compressed air at the coal faces. The air was there, but due to major leakage, it was lacking at the faces. The pipes were poorly connected, and air was seeping out of them. On March 17, I checked into the reasons for the poor work in the "Nikanor-Vostok", "Velikan-Zapad", and "Nikanor-Zapad" sections. We became convinced that a great deal of air was escaping from the pipes. You walk along the drifts, and everything around is hissing and whistling. That was the very air blowing around that should have been getting into our jackhammers. I demanded that order be brought to the air management system.

In early April, the third anniversary of the famous decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and the Central Committee of the Party regarding the work of the coal industry of the Donbas was marked. The Party and government issued this decree in 1933, when the Donbas lagged heavily behind and trailed at the tail end of the entire industry. Back then, the Central Committee of the Party invited a group of grassroots workers from the Donbas to Moscow. Comrade Stalin personally, along with the leaders of the

Party and government, consulted with them on how to raise the output of our basin. Following that, the Party and government issued the famous decree on combating clerical-bureaucratic methods of work in the Donbas, on combating wage levelling, and on strengthening the sections with engineering and technical workers. At that same time, Comrade Kaganovich came to the Donbas with a brigade from the Central Committee of the Party. He visited the mines, spoke at a rally of shock workers, and urged us to improve our work.

The decree of the Party and government helped the Donbas eliminate many problems. In connection with the third anniversary of this decree, a new surge of competition began in the Donbas and at our mine. We checked how the decree of the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars was being fulfilled, which points had not been carried out, and thought about how to improve our work. Many shock workers declared their desire to become Stakhanovites, and many workers who had not been fulfilling their standards became shock workers.

During all these days, I thought a lot about my own life, about my work, and about everything that had happened to me in recent months. I was working quite well, but I wanted to work even better and be even more devoted to the cause of the Party of Lenin and Stalin. During these days, I decided to join the ranks of the VKP(b) in order to bind my entire life to the Party. On April 8, 1936, I wrote the following application:

"I request that the mine Party committee and our entire Party organisation accept me into the Party.

All the workers at our mine know that as soon as I made my first record, I joined the sympathisers and dedicated my record to the Party of Lenin and Stalin, which raised me.

Half a year has passed since then. I have grown a little and want to carry out all my future work under the leadership of the Communist Party. Together with the Party, I will fight for Stakhanovite methods of work, I will crush the saboteurs, and when necessary, I will take a rifle in hand and, in the Voroshilov manner, crush all enemies of the revolution.

As a student of Stalin, I promise to be a disciplined Communist."

Having submitted my application to the Party, I immediately declared to both the managers of the mine and the leaders of the Party organisation that I wanted to pass on my experience to others in an organised manner. I understood that by myself, no matter how well I worked, I could not lift the mine. Stakhanovites alone, no matter how well they worked, could not lift the entire Donbas. Stakhanovites must be managed—that is clear. But perhaps even more management and help are required by the non-Stakhanovite workers who would like to work as shock workers but cannot. These people must be helped by our directors, engineers, and Party organisations. But we, the Stakhanovites, can also help our lagging comrades in very many ways. We must pass our experience on to others.

Therefore, I decided to do everything depending on me to pull up the lagging miners and pass my experience on to them.

On April 10, I was appointed as an instructor for the "Kadievugol" trust for implementing the Stakhanovite method of paired work of drillers and timbermen in elongated steps at the "Tsentralnaya-Irmino" mine. The mine manager sent me to the "Nikanor-Zapad" section.

"Nikanor-Zapad" was the most lagging section at the mine. With a target of 235 tons of coal per day, it gave an average of only 145 tons. The section consists of a single face, 90 meters high, which is cut into five steps. The thickness of the coal seam is 1.25 meters. The seam is clean. The coal is above average hardness. As a rule, the drillers here did not fulfill their quotas, despite the fact that a division of labor between drillers and timbermen existed in the section. A significant portion of the workers was unfamiliar with correct work techniques. Moreover, this section had only recently been mechanised. Most of the drillers were either completely unfamiliar with the jackhammer or had only recently begun working with machinery. My task, therefore, came down to training these workers in new techniques and teaching them how to handle a jackhammer properly. I decided to help the "Nikanor-Zapad" section pull itself

out of the breakthrough, since this section was one of the largest at the mine and dragged the overall output down.

I will describe the first days of my work as an instructor.

April 15. I woke up earlier than usual, had a quick breakfast, and headed to the mine. The whistle blew for six o'clock. When I entered the assignment room, my comrades surrounded me. "Are you an instructor now, Alexei? Come to my step," the driller Polyakov invited me. "I recently switched to the jackhammer, and I'm not cutting the quota," Brilev warned. "If you teach me a bit, I'll soon adopt your method," Kurinny promised.

The drillers of the "Nikanor-Zapad" section were waiting for me to go down into the face with them. I changed clothes, took a lamp, and went to the shaft.

We climbed into the face. The foreman wasn't there, and the drillers hadn't received their assignments; they didn't know who was supposed to cut where. They started looking for the foreman but couldn't find him. Precious time was being wasted. I had to distribute the men among the steps myself.

The work began. I helped Brilev make a canopy, and helped Polyakov correct his upper corner.

I climbed from step to step. I watched closely how each of the five drillers was cutting. It was striking that almost all of them set about the work incorrectly. Instead of undercutting first, they cut the corners and drove the step down as a whole. A lot of extra labor was wasted on this.

I stayed for a long time next to the driller Parakhin. He was puffing away and pressing down on the hammer with all his weight, driving the bit right under the spring itself. Parakhin probably thought that he would cut more coal that way. He saw me and said: "Something's not working out." "Well, let's try it together," I suggested.

Parakhin readily agreed and gave me the hammer. I corrected the mangled step. Then I showed him how to hold the hammer, where to direct the blows, so that not a single one of them went to waste.

Parakhin followed me closely. I saw that he was trying to memorise every movement. By the end of the shift, holding the

hammer correctly, he cleared the entire 20-meter step and fulfilled two quotas.

I explained to each worker how I work myself—that is, how I prepare the tool, how I deliver the blows to the coal seam, in which part of the seam I begin the cut, and why.

The coal was small and didn't pour out in an abundant stream, as it used to do for me, but in a meagre trickle. When the work is good, the coal doesn't come out like that. This meant something was wrong. I looked closer. The drillers were cutting the corners instead of starting with undercutting. The timbermen were placing the prop flush against the face of the coal seam, which was incorrect. I suggested that the drillers start with undercutting, and that the timbermen leave a gap of 10 centimetres between the seam and the prop. What is achieved by this? By cutting a narrow slot at the bottom of the seam, the driller deprives the coal of its support on the floor. The roof, not secured flush against the face, presses down on the coal from above and squeezes it out. A light blow with a jackhammer is enough for the coal to pour out in whole blocks. Understandably, it is then easier for the driller to work, and his productivity increases many times over. The most surprising thing was that the drillers, including those with extensive work experience, did not know such a simple thing. This shows how poorly production instruction is organised. Section commanders, for the most part, do not pay attention to the workers, even though, it would seem, this is their direct duty.

Following my instructions, the drillers and timbermen began to work more productively, and the coal started moving more cheerfully. But the air pipeline let us down. In the third hour after the start of the shift, it unexpectedly broke. It was repaired only toward the end of the shift, and the drillers worked for only two hours in total. With a target of 84 tubs for the entire shift, they produced 65 during those two hours. The driller Parakhin cut two quotas. True, I managed to spend more time sitting with Parakhin than with the other drillers.

A. Stakhanov explains his work system to his comrades

The section as a whole produced 156 tons of coal on that day. When the shift ended, the miners went up to the surface, but I remained in the pit. I decided to check the condition of the air supply system. At every connection, I discovered a large air leak. I took a close look at the haulage operation. The tracks are terribly neglected again. Mine cars get derailed every time. The horse-drivers try to haul out all the cut coal, but they aren't managing to do it. These are still the traces of the sabotage committed by Dontsov.

After coming up from the mine, I gathered all the miners of the "Nikanor-West" section for an instruction session. I reminded each of them how they used to work on the benches and explained how to handle the pneumatic pick to ease labor and boost productivity. There were very many questions. I think such meetings should be held more often. In fact, such meetings should be held with the workers of each section individually. Every coal seam has its own properties, after all. Coal cannot be extracted using the exact same method everywhere.

I was at the evening assignment briefing. I talked to the section manager, Khristich. I suggested replacing the iron air main pipes in

the longwall with rubber hoses. This will reduce the time spent moving the hose.

I was about to go home when I was invited to the canteen. They were consulting on how best to equip it. On the way home, together with my comrades, I stopped by the club, which had begun capital repairs. I made a few suggestions.

Today, a "Stakhanovite 24-hour drive" was declared across the entire mine. From home, I called the office to find out how it went. I thought things had gone quite well, as yesterday every worker received a special assignment for the drive. They answered that the drive failed; the mine didn't even meet its plan. Many mine cars turned out to be broken, and there wasn't enough empty rolling stock in the sections. In the shaft, a guide rail was bent, so the lowering of workers into the mine was severely delayed. Everything fell apart...

April 16. I arrived at the mine at 7 AM. I learned which miners were going down to "Nikanor" today and where each would be cutting. I dropped by section manager Khristich and agreed with him on transferring timber-frame builders and timber-haulers to individual piecework rates. It's a outright disgrace! Foremen divide earnings equally among team members, regardless of who worked how. An end must be put to this.

Together with Khristich, I outlined a plan to repair the air supply system and haulage tracks. We assigned highly skilled workers. What kind of work can there be when the drifts are drowning in mud and so cluttered with debris that you can't walk through them? Clearly, until all this rubbish is hauled out and the workings are cleared, there's no point in even thinking about increasing output.

I had to put up a fight with the mine's chief engineer, Volkov. With difficulty, I proved that a specific pneumatic pick must be assigned to each miner. Volkov said we were short on picks, but when I looked into the workshop, I found a whole pile of broken picks. Under the current lack of personal accountability, our picks will never be in working order, as they pass from hand to hand daily. Every mechanism must have one owner. Otherwise, nothing will get done.

Yesterday, more than a dozen miners from different sections complained to me that they hadn't cut anything and were left without earnings. In the middle of the shift, they had to abandon work and go up to the surface to exchange broken picks. By the time they returned to the face, the shift was over. The mine lost over 100 tons of coal because of this, and the men lost their earnings.

When I crawled into my longwall, the shift was already working. Parakhin was cutting in the upper bench. Spotting me, he nodded and asked me to watch how he would knock down the bench today. I sat down off to the side so as not to bother him.

Having freed the coal from the tightly set props, Parakhin knocked down the bench in small passes from top to bottom.

"Truth be told, am I cutting better today?" Parakhin shouted.

I confirmed that he was cutting significantly better than yesterday. But I warned him that one shouldn't rest on achieved success and must keep moving forward.

Leaving Parakhin, I went down to the third bench, where miner Lipko was working. For the first time in his life, Lipko wasn't timbering. He was only cutting. Following him moved timberer Shelest. After my instruction session yesterday, both volunteered to work as a paired team. Today they were supposed to knock down a 30-meter bench using two sets of timbering.

Without losing a second, Lipko worked away. Large chunks of coal fell down with a crash. Meter by meter, Lipko drove the bench forward. As fast as Shelest timbered, the distance between him and the miner kept growing. Shelest was nervous, and that slowed down his work. I then stepped in to help him, and soon we caught up with the timbering.

Today miner Kurinny was falling behind. His lower bench was so mangled that the coal wouldn't yield to any effort. He had "frozen" the seam cleavage. After fixing the bench, I instructed Kurinny until the very end of the shift. No matter how much you explain it to him, he still tries to do things his own way: he tries to grab too big a chunk of the seam and drives the pick tooth in so deep that he can barely pull it out afterward.

After the shift ended, I held a production meeting with the miners and their partners. We analysed everyone's work once again.

I demonstrated again how to squeeze maximum productivity out of a pneumatic pick.

I drew attention to our instruction manuals. They are outdated. They don't say how to organise the workplace and labour, or how to maintain mechanisms. There isn't a word about Stakhanovite methods because the instructions were written before the Stakhanovite movement. A new instruction manual needs to be written.

On the way home, I was met by housewives who tend kitchen gardens. They had just held a meeting and decided to organise a mass turnout of housewives to dig up gardens. They plan to dig up all the plots, harrow them, and plant sunflowers, onions, carrots, beets, radishes, parsley, and dill by the end of the month.

After lunch, I went to our technical training network. Things aren't going well there. Workers from the "Kamensky" section—Stepanenko, Manzhuley, and Strepakov—worker Petrov from "Nikanor-West", and worker Lyashchenko from "Velikan-East" said they are often held up on overtime and are forced to skip classes. Naturally, if the sections had proper schedules and labor organisation, this wouldn't happen. I'll take care of this matter.

The day ended with a joyful event for me. In the evening, a general party meeting took place, which considered my application to join the ranks of the party. The party meeting adopted the following resolution: "To petition the City Party Committee of the CP(b)U and the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) to accept Stalinist pupil Alexey Stakhanov into the ranks of the Leninist-Stalinist Communist Party."

I have waited a long time for this happy moment. I hope the Central Committee will confirm my admission into the party, to which I will give my entire life and all my strength down to the last drop of blood.

April 17. After the first assignment briefing, I called a technical meeting where we discussed organising a Stakhanovite month at the mine. We outlined a plan. We agreed that every worker would immediately receive a five-day schedule indicating his shift, volume of work, output quota, and piece-rate pay.

I spoke separately with section managers. The conversation was about workers attending technical minimum courses. They declared that they would create all conditions for their normal study and would not keep them overtime. It will be necessary to check how they fulfill this.

Today, two timberers went together with miner Lipko. They managed to keep up with his timbering perfectly. Lipko cut more than four times his quota. Coming up to the surface, he assured us that in the coming days he would raise productivity even higher.

During the second shift, I went down into the mine. I checked the air mains again. They are in a terrible state. The pipes are poorly connected and leaking air. The air leak is so huge that it would probably be enough to power a dozen pneumatic picks.

The mechanical shop is slow to reorganise its work. So many times workers have said that all connecting sleeves of the air main need to be recapped, yet the administration won't get around to this job.

In the sections, I found errors again. Teams are put together without thought, and their composition changes almost every day. If a miner is skilled, the timberers are usually inexperienced—or vice versa. The commanders of our mine simply refuse to understand the simple truth: you can sit at a long bench and work in pairs, but if the miners or timberers aren't familiar with proper cutting and timbering techniques, the result of paired work will be reduced to zero.

A permanent team composition must play the primary role in paired work. People get used to each other and work well together. Until deficiencies are completely eliminated, the new methods won't give the desired effect. I established these mistakes in the "Almaz-West" and "Nikanor-East" sections.

Things are significantly better in the "Almaz-East" section. I staffed teams for paired work there, then we assigned permanent benches to the teams, and work went smoothly right from the first day. The longwall was split into three benches instead of five. Thus, there were two fewer picks per shift, which increased the compressed air pressure.

Longer drills were introduced in the blasting teams. This accelerated the driving of drifts. The tracks were repaired well.

Horse-drivers began switching to paired driving. Most are already driving two horses.

With a Stakhanovite target of 105 tons (based on doubled mine output), the section has already yielded 125 tons—119% of the plan. Miners Avkhodeev, Khimichev, Ulyanov, and Zhilin, shovellers Dedeneva and Yakovenko, timberers Kretinin and Beda, and horse-drivers Minakov and Savelyev, who previously failed to meet their quotas, have now become candidates for the title of master miners. Yet in this section, some workers used to say that the new quotas were high and impossible to fulfill.

Today I met miner Khimichev at the assignment briefing. He had been the loudest in asserting that the quota was too high, citing "the hardness of the coal."

"Well, Khimichev, has the coal gotten softer?" I asked him.

He understood what I was driving at and replied bashfully: "Let's not dwell on the past. It wasn't about the hardness of the coal, but the fact that I didn't know how to cut it."

We received new hoses and distributed them among the sections.

I checked the workshop again. The fitters have energetically taken to repairing broken pneumatic picks.

In the evening, I talked to the council of wives of engineering and technical staff. I expressed my opinion that the briefing room needs to be given a civilised look. The walls are so covered in dust that it's simply embarrassing.

April 19. Progress is being made. Yesterday, the "Nikanor-West" section produced 235 tons for the first time this month—100% of the daily quota. In the first four days of my work at "Nikanor-West", output there increased by 31%. Not bad for a start, but the section can yield more.

I went down into the mine with the second shift. I crawled through all the benches. I carefully inspected every miner's pick. Good thing I brought a small bottle of oil with me. Almost everyone's pick was running dry.

Pick points were loose, causing heavy recoil on the arms. For Avilov and Shkurko, the picks were making 300–400 blows per

minute. Once I oiled them, they began delivering 1,200 blows per minute. I strictly warned all miners to make sure to bring oil next time and lubricate their picks properly at least twice a shift. I doubt miners will go down into the pit without oil again. After all, they saw for themselves that cutting with an un-oiled pick is much harder.

I watched foreman Luchin work. An agile man, but he manages people senselessly. He runs around a lot, makes a fuss, shouts, gets nervous, but nothing comes of it. I asked him how long he had been working at the mine. Luchin answered twenty years. I felt awkward reproaching him for not knowing simple mining rules, but I told him anyway. He took offense. Then I led Luchin to the first working face and asked how he would knock down that bench if he were in the miner's shoes. Luchin began explaining: first he would undercut the upper corner, then drive the bench downward, securing the roof along the way. Then I took the pick and advised Luchin to watch me. Going down, I cleared the entire bench of the props tightly driven against the face. Then I undercut the top corner and, with small strikes, began collapsing the bench from top to bottom without much effort. Under roof pressure and freed from props, the coal crackled and yielded easily to the pick. Luchin admitted I was right.

After that he stopped being offended, and we talked about how people should be placed. Later, Luchin confessed openly: "You know, I thought my job as a foreman was just to measure the work, file reports, and bark at people to move faster. I always tried to gather as many miners as possible, thinking it would yield more coal. Now I understand that if people are placed correctly and trained, you can get more coal even with fewer miners."

Order is growing in the longwall every day. Timber is stacked neatly. The benches have become roomier. My proposal to replace iron air main pipes with rubber hoses has been carried out. They are much more convenient. Timber-frame builders and timber-haulers have finally been transferred to individual piecework rates. On the very first day, they began working and earning better. Timber-frame builders Antsupov, Chernykh, and Manko earned 20 rubles each. Their spirits rose.

Today I checked the air main line again. The air leak has decreased. The picks work better.

"We will give even more coal," Nikanor workers told me today. I am sure they will.

A. Stakhanov with his miner apprentices.

April 20. The first five days of my work as an instructor. I calculated the miners' productivity. Yesterday Polyakov cut 20 meters, whereas before he never cut more than 10–12 meters. For him, this is a record—but not the last one. Parakhin started cutting 20 meters each shift; prior to April 15, he cut only 10 meters. Brilev, who used to give 5–6 meters, now cuts 16–17 meters. Kaverin, whose usual output equalled 5–7 meters, now cuts 14 meters per shift, increasing his productivity two and a half times. Avilov used to cut no more than 7–8 metres per shift, but now gives three times as much—20–25 meters. I think that if the number of Stakhanovite method instructors is increased throughout the Donbas, labor productivity will rise.

I went to see Kravtsov. He was also appointed as a trust instructor to implement Stakhanovite methods in development

workings. Together we outlined a plan. I asked him to help me boost the Almaz ventilation drift and advance the main haulage drift there.

April 22. The scoundrels won't relent. Enemies are trying to disrupt our work. Yesterday, foreman Panchenko deliberately left the shift of the "Almaz-West" section without air. The longwall had caved in, completely cutting off the flow of air washing it from below. This could have caused an accident. The section's target was disrupted.

Yesterday, an accident also occurred on the hoist. Chief mechanic Volkov allowed this accident to happen. He was expelled from the party.

Today foreman Ilchenko spoke out against the Stakhanovites. He deliberately failed to show up for work and disrupted the Stakhanovite shift. We checked up on Ilchenko—he turned out to be the son of a Tsarist policeman.

Higher vigilance—that is what is required of each of us. I am confident that anyone who stands in our way and hinders our work will be removed, and we will prevail.

April 23. A great event at the mine today. Since the Stakhanovite movement was born at our pit, the jury of the All-Union Coal Miners' Competition awarded us the banner of *Pravda*. This banner was previously held at Golubovka Mine No. 22 named after Kirov. We went to Golubovka and brought the banner to our mine. Everyone is in high spirits.

There was a large rally in the briefing room. The workers promised the *Pravda* banner not to give up ground and to work the Stakhanovite way.

I spent the shift at the "Nikanor-West" section.

After work, I attended a meeting of wives of engineers, technicians, and Stakhanovites of the mine. We have twenty active women. They work well. They organised a kitchen garden brigade. Miron Dyukanov and I advised the wives of the engineering and technical personnel to give a cultured appearance to the club, kindergarten, store, and take charge of the dormitories. I also stated that we must help the school conduct a health campaign. This is a

very important matter. The wives of the technical staff are teaching eleven workers' wives to read and write. But we have many illiterate people, and work needs to be done with them, I said.

A rally was held at the club. Custody of the *Pravda* banner was entrusted to the party organisation and Stakhanovites of the "Nikanor-East" section, where the Stakhanovite movement originated.

After the movie, I went to the night briefing. Before the shift descended, I spoke with the miners of the "Almaz-East" section and advised them how best to arrange the men across the benches.

April 25. We are not producing double output, and talk has started again that the mine hoist won't be able to lift double output to the surface. Damn it, on December 24 we *did* produce double output, and the shaft lifted it! But some started saying that on December 24, during the Stakhanovite 24-hour drive, the cage carried only coal, while waste rock from development workings was left in the mine that day. If both coal and rock are hauled out—which is unavoidable—the hoist allegedly won't manage. Then they say the shaft requires repairs. The cage used to run at 12 meters per second, which is the normal speed for the hoisting machine. Now operators are forbidden to run it faster than 9.5 meters per second.

We decided to conduct a time-and-motion study. Here is what it showed: the duration of a loaded cage movement per hoist cycle is 55 seconds. Loading and unloading, manoeuvring, and signalling take 25 seconds. One cycle thus lasts 80 seconds. Consequently, 45 hoists can be performed per hour. Therefore, hourly hoist capacity is 130 tons.

Now we must deduct time spent inspecting the shaft, cages, and cable (roughly three hours a day), hauling out about 500 cars of rock (over two hours), lowering/raising workers, and lowering timber, while also accounting for irregular coal delivery to the shaft. Roughly 15 hours remain for net coal lifting. Based on hourly capacity, our shaft can pass over 2,000 tons of coal per day. That's 10% more than double output!

Besides, there are reserves. First, coal can be lifted through an auxiliary hoist; second, if the shaft is repaired, hoisting speed can be

increased from 9 to 12 meters per second. I see that the problem isn't the hoist, but our commanders, who refuse to organise their work well and are hiding behind excuses.

The Government appointed me a member of the Council under the People's Commissar of Heavy Industry. I will inform Comrade Ordzhonikidze that our leaders organise things poorly.

April 27. People want to work well. Competition is expanding wider every day. Yet glitches get on everyone's nerves.

Yesterday, as soon as the first shift briefing ended, fitters Karmanov and Kizh approached me; both had just come up from the pit. They began complaining:

"Is this any way to do things?" shouted Karmanov. "For a whole week we've been telling our section manager: there's no need to send a third fitter into the longwall, we can manage moving the airline ourselves—and he doesn't care... He's afraid we might let him down."

"It's insulting when everyone around is a Stakhanovite, while you sit on some 1.5 times the quota. We asked, persuaded, proved in practice that Karmanov and I can easily service even two longwalls. Why this distrust toward us? Help us settle this," Kizh asked.

Together with them, I went to the manager of the "Almaz-East" section. We agreed that starting tomorrow, Karmanov and Kizh alone will service the section's air supply.

I had barely returned when timber master Ershkov from "Beral-West" came up. For three days now, he's been sent to a short bench that only lasts him half a shift.

"The section manager thinks two times the quota is enough for me. But I say straight out: I can cut four times the quota. I demand to be given a long bench and assigned a permanent partner for paired work. But they won't recognise me..." Ershkov declared.

I settled this matter too. Ershkov was assigned to merge the top two benches into one and cut there permanently. We picked timbering master Gunchenko as his partner, who gladly agreed to work with Ershkov. Both left for home satisfied.

With a similar request, pneumatic pick master Mikhail Fedchenko came to me yesterday. Recently he got his son transferred from timber-hauler to miner, and now he is training him.

"I have a capable son," Fedchenko said. "He'll make a fine miner. He won't yield to me in work. I introduced him to the pick. He knows it well. He's been cutting alongside me for two days. Today he did more than the quota. Only the bench is a bit small—nowhere to turn around. Give us a bench of about 35 meters so we can get three times the quota each!"

I spoke with the section manager. He took measures to immediately fulfill the Stakhanovite's demand.

The conversations took place yesterday, but today I decided to check how the men worked.

The fitters proudly recounted servicing the longwall as a pair. "First we moved the main line," said Karmanov. "We asked the foreman the time, and it turned out two and a half hours remained until the shift ended. We weren't going to go above ground—so we climbed down to the drift and began recapping all connecting sleeves of the air line. When you're in the mine, make sure to drop by our section. You won't find an air leak anywhere."

Ershkov cut 54 square meters today—400% of his quota. Gunchenko timbered behind him. When I first began instructing him, he barely fulfilled a single quota. Soon he'll probably catch up to me.

During the second shift, I went down into the mine. I checked how haulage workings were being repaired. Haulage is letting us down badly. The miners' output has increased. Every longwall is full of coal, but haulage can't cope with hauling it out.

Things are completely wrong with development work. Main drifts lead longwalls by 5–6 meters at most. At the rate the faces are advancing now, we could soon hit a dead end. The longwall will have nowhere to move.

I visited Mikhail Fedchenko. He lives in a small room. At the briefing, I agreed with the mine manager that he, as a Stakhanovite, would be moved to a new apartment. I even specified which one. I inspected it together with Fedchenko: three rooms, a kitchen, a shed, and a pantry. Fedchenko was very satisfied and invited me to the housewarming.

Today I held an instructional meeting with miners of the "Nikanor-East" section. I detailed my method of working with the pneumatic pick. Right there we studied every detail of the pick and their interaction during cutting.

At the mine, I heard bad talk about electric locomotives. We definitely have "limitation-setters" (*predel'shchiki*). They believe an electric locomotive cannot haul more than 150 loaded cars per shift. My opinion is that an electric locomotive can haul at least 300 cars. I'll speak further with locomotive driver Panchenko.

April 29. In the morning, together with locomotive driver Panchenko, I went down into the pit. Our goal was to determine how many cars an electric locomotive could haul in a shift.

Before starting work, Panchenko thoroughly inspected the electric locomotive, starting with the controller and ending with the axle boxes and brakes. He tested the motor, lubricated mechanisms, and blew out the lanterns. Then he hitched 18 empty cars, turned on the motor, and smoothly drove them toward the siding. Horse-drivers from "Almaz" and "Nikanor-East" were already waiting for us there. I acted as Panchenko's assistant.

The locomotive moved now slowing down, now speeding up. Panchenko knew the path profile from the shaft to the siding perfectly. Ten meters before reaching a sharp turn (and there were four such turns to the siding), he slowed the machine down, pulled the cars tightly together, and guided the train onto a flat stretch at slow speed. After that, the machine sped up again.

While hauling the fourth batch, we heard the wheels bump lightly against the joint of raised rails. We stopped the locomotive and inspected the track. We found that the bolts holding the fishplates had loosened and several spikes had popped out. This had to be fixed immediately, otherwise, during the next run, a set of cars would derail and ruin our schedule.

We had spikes, a wrench, and a hammer in the machine. Without waiting for the trackman, we put the track in order in a few minutes and drove the batch onward. Throughout the rest of the shift, work proceeded smoothly.

We established that one round trip takes only 22 minutes. Thus, working uninterruptedly, an electric locomotive can haul 300–320 cars of coal per shift. But we only hauled 216 cars because there weren't enough empty cars.

Before going to the surface, I decided to visit the "Kamensky" section, which is failing its plan. Walking along a muddy, tight main drift, I stumbled upon a derailed train of cars. Section manager Bakunov and a horse-driver had been trying for over an hour to put the derailed cars back on track. Once the train was re-railed, I headed to the longwall with Bakunov. Under the longwall chute, two car-loaders were idling out of boredom. The entire blasting team was also sitting around waiting for empties. Complaints poured in from all sides. Bakunov promised everyone to eliminate the shortcomings, but it was clear he was just trying to brush off complaints that were evidently not new.

I observed an unsightly picture in the longwall. Three highly skilled miners, crammed into one bench, were fussing and getting in each other's way. Nearby, in another longer bench, only one miner was cutting, whereas two could have worked as a paired team with a timberer. In the upper benches, no one was working at all.

I climbed out of the mine with Bakunov. We sat down in his office, reviewed the entire staff list, and drew up a schedule specifying where everyone should work. Then we made a plan to repair workings, lengthen benches, and drive the main drift. Bakunov promised to execute the plan precisely.

At the evening briefing, Panchenko and I gathered all the horse-drivers. We told them about our results and suggested starting a competition. Komsomol horse-driver Krivolapov joined the competition immediately and promised to take first place. His call was taken up by Aliutin's team. I agreed with the club director to hang a special scoreboard in the briefing room, where we will mark the performance of the best horse-drivers.

Stakhanovite method instructors Esin and Balandin are implementing double- and triple-horse team driving. They brought order to the stables. Specific horses are assigned to each groom, who is responsible for their condition. Before this, complete chaos reigned.

Instructor Kravtsov did great work implementing new methods among blasting teams. I helped him with this. We started with the blasting team of "Nikanor-East". For two days we instructed the men on how to drill with long bits and correctly place and detonate blast holes. We helped distribute men across shifts. To ease loading rock into cars, we requisitioned iron sheets for the team. The result was good. Before firing the holes, sheets are laid flush to the face, and upon detonation, all rock falls on them. It is much easier for loaders to take rock off metal sheets than off the floor and load it into cars.

When Novikov's blasting team from "Velikan-West" learned of the results at "Nikanor-East", it persistently demanded help to switch to long-bit drilling as well. Today is the team's second day working the new way, and it has already driven 3.5 meters of main drift. Blasting teams decided to compete. Joining the competition were Petrov's team ("Almaz-West"), Karpyshko's team ("Nikanor-West"), and Rudov's team ("Beral-West"). Kravtsov instructs them skilfully.

It took great effort to convince the manager of the "Beral-West" section of the benefit of long-bit drilling. He claimed long bits couldn't be used in his section because there was nowhere to put the rock and the roof was weak. This was a direct unwillingness to look into the matter. On the other hand, we met the warmest support from the section workers. As soon as the horse-drivers and loaders were told about the advantages of the new method and their transfer to individual piecework, they pledged to haul out all rock from the drift—and they are fulfilling this pledge with honor. Four-meter blast holes are completely cleared within 24 hours.

May 20. I was curious to know what the workers thought of my instruction. I am satisfied with the work, but are my pupils satisfied with me—that is the question.

The newspaper *Kadievsky Proletarii* published a small booklet titled *Stakhanovite Instructors and Their Pupils on Their Work Experience*. In this booklet, I read a story by foreman Luchin—the very same one who was once offended by me. Luchin writes that he holds no grudge against me, but on the contrary, was pleased that I gave him guidance.

Workers Shelest and Lipko recount that with the instructor's help, they began working as a pair; both know how to cut coal and timber. Lipko starts cutting coal first while Shelest timbered. Lipko cuts continuously during the first half of the shift; in the second half, he timbers while Shelest cuts.

Since ancient times, our rule was to start cutting coal right from the corner, but the instructor taught us not to begin work until we make an undercut. After that, we cut the corner and drive the bench downward. This method allowed us to increase productivity several times over. Previously we cut no more than eight square meters, but now we give no less than thirty. We timber the bench well and prepare work for the next shift. The instructor noticed that our pick points weren't fitted properly. During work, the points wobbled and air escaped from the sleeve, which we hadn't noticed. We used to wonder at frequent pick breakages and cursed the factory that made them. The instructor suggested we chip coal with the pick point while the air supply was turned off. Since then, our pick points break no more.

Pupils of instructor Kravtsov speak very well of him. Shevtsov, a timberer on drift blasting at our mine, describes how Kravtsov passed on his experience and clarified all ambiguities. Kravtsov said proper loading of cartridges is of great importance. Previously, the maximum load of 800 grams of dynamite per hole was used for a depth of 2.5 meters. Kravtsov advised loading 800 grams of dynamite into a 4-meter hole, and it turned out well. Previously, a team worked around the clock in the section: a driller worked the first shift, a rock shoveller in the second, and a timberer in the third. Kravtsov reorganised the process: the entire team goes down simultaneously. While the driller drills, the timberer prepares timber, and the shoveller splits lagging. After blasting a hole, the three-man team clears the rock. Then the driller starts drilling again, while the shoveller digs footings and the timberer splits lagging.

The rock shoveller didn't understand his duties and scooped rock indiscriminately. Kravtsov taught him to take rock only down to the floor level. If rock won't yield, it must be pick-axed and loosened without leaving a single piece of rock in the face, as this increases

the ash content of coal. Previously no attention was paid to this, and ash content in the "Velikan-West" section was very high.

Horse-driver instructor Balandin taught horse-driver Prodan to work with two horses. The haulage length between the face and the siding is 600 meters. Prodan hitches 12 cars to a pair of horses and hauls 100–125 cars of coal per shift. Driving two horses has fully justified itself.

By order of Comrade Ordzhonikidze, several dozen Stakhanovite method instructors have begun work in the Donbas.

June 8. Today is my happy day! The Central Committee of the Party accepted me into the RCP(B) directly, without a candidate period. I see in this a sign of trust toward me from the Party, from the Central Committee, and from Comrade Stalin. I am very grateful and promise to give all my strength to the party.

I received my party card. I will carry the title of member of the great Leninist-Stalinist party high.

June 18. A day of rest. An hour ago, my wife and I returned from the club. We watched the play *Aristocrats*.

The morning began as every rest day morning begins. We got up at nine o'clock, had breakfast. The children are out for a walk, my wife went to visit neighbors, and I stayed home. I listened to the radio and read the newspaper. They write about records set by cutter-loader operators Kolesnikov from Golubovka Mine No. 22 named after Kirov, Perepechai from the "Ilyich" mine, and Orlov from Mine No. 6—Krasnopollye. I am particularly interested in the international situation. Hitler is still raging.

The children returned home; my wife arrived too. Klavochka enthusiastically talked about the movie she saw. Viktor is holding my hands. We are listening to a radio concert from Moscow.

"The family council" decides to go to the Donets for 2–3 hours. It's also decided to have lunch there. At 'M-1' we all get in, grab some food, and the car takes us to the river, where today hundreds of people from the mines are relaxing. We drive through Kadiivka, Maksymivka, across the steppes of Petroveńka, Sentyanivka, and soon we're approaching the Donets River, to the village of Krymske.

Dozens of acquaintances surround us. Everyone invites us to lunch with them. Here I met Komsomol members from the 'Illich' mine. They organised a cultural outing. The youth want to spend time with us — to swim, ride in a boat, play volleyball.

It's nice on the Donets riverbank! We had a fun and pleasant walk.

At home, I got down to my homework. I solved a few problems and wrote a Russian language exercise. It's just a pity that I study irregularly. But I will definitely prepare for Promacademy.

Miron Dyukanov and his wife came over. Over a cup of tea, we talked about Donets, about the mine, about how best to celebrate the first anniversary of the Stakhanovite movement. After tea, the wives went about their own business, and Miron and I played checkers.

When it got dark outside, we all headed to the theatre. In the park, Tkachenko Korney, Sinyagovsky, Kurinny, and other miners came up to us. I talked about how nice it was on the Donets. We decided to go to the river together for a day off the next day.

July 25. Today Mitya Kontsedalov set a new amazing record. What a great miner! During his shift, he mined 202 tons of coal with a jackhammer at the 'Nikanor-Vostok' site, achieving 1806% of the mining quota. He beat me. Really happy for his success.

Before he went down into the mine, I helped him outline a work plan. When he got to the face, he started following the plan right from the first minute. At first, he took down the fifth bench with three supports, and he finished his work on the second bench. The locksmith Kotov helped him a lot; he moved the air duct closer to the face himself and carefully checked the hose and ventilation.

Kotov with astonishing speed disconnected and reconnected the hoses while Konzedalov moved from one ledge to another. They should have more fitters like him in the mine. I was really admiring his work.

Dubovoy and Borisenko proved themselves as masters at gripping in the fight. They didn't lag behind Kontsedalov by a single metre. Miner Pozdnyakov at the 'Rubezhny-Vostok' site exceeded his quota by 527%.

Today is the fifteenth day since the 'Almaz-Vostok' section switched to a piecework-free system. Within half an hour, each

worker gets a lightbulb, descends into the mine, and takes their assigned face. From the very first day, the work went on without fuss or jostling. Under the piecework-free system, each worker's responsibility for their assigned task has increased. For example, the miners Sirota and Bondar insisted that the hose be replaced in the first and second faces. Their request was met. They are now cutting more than twice the usual amount.

By switching to a task-free system, we not only got rid of the noise and crowding in the task area and freed workers from wasted time, but we also eliminated impersonality. The task-free system ensured control not just over quantity but also over quality. For example, before, miners Podtykalo and Sirota often left ledges unsecured, and even when they did secure them, they didn't hammer down the 'ridges.' Now, such cases aren't noticed.

With the introduction of a fixed schedule in the lava, labor productivity has increased. Miner Bordienko used to cut 10 square meters, and now he cuts 15–18 meters daily. Miner Musolitin produces the same amount.

Supervision is working more clearly. The team leaders got more time to better prepare work sites, instruct people, and teach them.

It's a good thing — a tool-free system. We'll definitely need to implement it in all areas. Today I suggested to the mine manager to hold a technical meeting and discuss this issue.

Visited my friends Dyukanov and Kravtsov today. They live in nice, cosy apartments. Each of them got new furniture, Dyukanov even got a piano. Such apartments were a dream for a miner back in the day.

MY TRIPS

Until the end of 1935, I hardly went anywhere. I hadn't been to a single big city. Apart from my own village, the town of Sergo, where the mine is, and the nearby town of Voroshilovgrad, I hadn't seen anything. But after the record, I travelled a lot and saw a lot.

Our miners sometimes go to Voroshilovgrad for a walk. Voroshilovgrad used to be called Lugansk, one of the oldest cities in

the Donbass. The city was named Voroshilovgrad because K. E. Voroshilov worked here as a mechanic and created a Bolshevik organisation long before the October Revolution. I have never been to old Lugansk, but Voroshilovgrad residents told me that after the revolution the city was completely transformed. Voroshilovgrad has paved streets. There are two excellent theatres. In 1936, the most beautiful movie theatre in Donbass was built. But the city's main pride is the October Revolution Locomotive Plant, which produces powerful "FD" (Felix Dzerzhinsky) locomotives.

I visited the Voroshilovgrad factories after my record. I especially liked the locomotive plant. Large, bright buildings. Very good engines. Voroshilovgrad residents told me how much attention K. E. Voroshilov paid to his city. Many years have passed since he left, but he has not forgotten his hometown. When old personnel officers—workers—are in Moscow, they always stop by to see Kliment Yefremovich.

In September 1935, soon after the record, the Stakhanovites of the Makeyevka Kirov Metallurgical Plant invited me to join them. Makeyevka is located only 12 kilometres from the city of Stalino. I was taken to Makeyevka straight from the mine. Without knowing anything, I went to work, and a car was already waiting for me at the mine. Representatives of the plant asked me to come to a rally of shock workers and Stakhanovites.

I decided to go and, thanks to this opportunity, had the opportunity to get to know Makeyevka. Old workers told me that Makeyevka was the dirtiest village in the Donbass. On the edge of the village, on the mountain, stood military barracks. The barracks housed large Cossack units, which were called out whenever revolutionary unrest broke out among the workers.

Now Makeyevka is a large city. It has 150,000 residents. The city centre is paved. Many streets have been rebuilt. Makeyevka has several clubs and cinemas. A new circus has been built. Several summer gardens. Trams are running.

In Makeevka, I went to a metallurgical plant for the first time in my life, and I was really impressed by how easily and freely the workers handle fire. Fire is intense! There's molten slag flowing, then molten iron, then molten steel.

I wanted to visit Stalino. Although I lived in the Donbass for several years, I had never been to this city. We talked a lot about Stalino. In the old days, the city was called Yuzovka, named after the English capitalist Hughes, who owned a metallurgical plant and some of the city's mines.

At the end of October 1935, Miron Dyukapov and I were invited to the opening of the All-Donetsk Exhibition of Suburban Farm Products and the Electronic Archive of the A. A. Kuleshov Moscow State University Library. The exhibition was held in Stalino. We drove there. The weather was fine. This was my first excursion through the Donbass, since from the city of Sergo to Stalino we passed through Gorlovka, through the Yasinovataya station, and past mines that I had never seen.

From Gorlovka to Stalino, a paved road stretches for 50 kilometres. At the very entrance to the city, we saw a student campus consisting of large new buildings. We drove past new housing for workers. Then we immediately found ourselves on the city's main street, which is called the First Line. I later visited Moscow, Kharkov, Kyiv, and other cities; there are few streets like the First Line in Stalino, even in large cities. When you drive along the First Line in the evening, you feel like you're in Moscow.

Stalino is a large city, with a population of about 300,000. This city is home to one of the largest metallurgical plants in the Donbass—the Stalin Plant. Next to the plant is a mine—Centralnaya-Zavodskaya—which before the revolution belonged to the capitalist Yuz.

In Stalino, I was shown the director's colony, the place where the manager of the Yuzovsky plant lived. Large stone houses are surrounded on all sides by high fences. There is a lot of greenery. The capitalists knew how to arrange their lives well even in a dirty town.

The All-Donetsk exhibition of produce from suburban farms and gardens was held in the park. If someone who lived in Donbas before the revolution had been shown the vegetables, potatoes, and fruits on display and told that they all grew in Donbas soil, they wouldn't have believed it. It was generally said that nothing grows in Donbas because it can't grow; the soil, they said, is so bad. There's a lot of

dust. Therefore, every plant withers and dies. But at the exhibition, we saw not only vegetables, potatoes, and fruits, but even grapes grown in Donbas.

For many years, Donbas was supplied from outside. We decided to grow our own vegetables and fruits in Donbas. And in just a few years, we achieved a lot.

After that first trip, I visited Stalino several times. But of all my trips, two remain most memorable to me: the first in January 1936, when I attended the All-Donetsk rally of Stakhanovite coal miners, and the second in November 1936, when I attended the Third Regional Congress of Soviets.

At the rally, I saw for the first time all the distinguished people of the coal-mining Donbass. The rally was held with great enthusiasm. The Stakhanovites shared their successes. At the end of the rally, an order from the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry was read outlining the award of cars to 50 Stakhanovite workers from Donbass. I was among the 50 awarded a car.

Lazar Moiseyevich Kaganovich attended the III Regional Congress of Soviets. I had met him back in Moscow. It was nice to see him in his native Donbass. Comrade Kaganovich was touring the Donetsk Railway those days. He came to our congress to talk about Stalin's Constitution. Comrade Kaganovich listened attentively to the speeches of the regional congress delegates, and at the end of the congress, he gave a speech himself. He showed us the difference between the constitutions of capitalist countries and the Constitution of the socialist country. He showed what our country used to be and what it had become. How much effort it took for the working class and peasants, under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, to achieve victory.

Lazar Moiseevich reminded us of the capitalist encirclement in which our country finds itself and lives. He called on us to constantly remember this and strengthen the defence of the Soviet Union. He called on us to fully provide the country with fuel, metal and machines. Comrade Kaganovich said that the Central Committee of the Party, the government and Comrade Kaganovich personally Stalin was confident that the Donbass people would not let the

country down and would come out on top in all respects—both in industry and in transport.

In January 1936, I was invited to visit my native village. I had long wanted to see how it had changed, how my relatives and friends lived there. I went from Donbass to Yelets. There I was warmly welcomed. From Yelets I travelled by handcar to Izmalkovo station. There was a rally in Izmalkovo. The station workers and collective farmers spoke about their achievements. I spoke and told the Stakhanovites about the life of miners and about my personal work. I called on the collective farmers to achieve a high harvest and fight for Stalin's 7-8 billion poods of grain. The Izmalkovo collective farmers responded to my call and pledged to honourably fulfill all the tasks of the party and government to improve agriculture.

The rally ended, but the people did not disperse. We had not yet talked A lot. Then we went to the secretary of the district party committee, where many comrades had also gathered. I told them in detail how I had achieved high productivity. The secretary of the district committee shook my hand and said:

"Our former Oryol province gave the coal industry people like Stakhanov and Izotov. We are proud of you..."

Late in the evening I said goodbye to the Izmalkovs, thanked them for their hospitality, and set off for my native village of Lugovoe. There it is, already very close. Once, every bush, every little tree, every hillock was familiar to me here. My heart is beating fast. I want to reach my people as soon as possible. Just one kilometre left. I can already see the house where my dear sister Olga Grigorievna lives. I arrived unexpectedly. Olya ran to meet me. She kissed me tightly and cried. Excitement choked me with tears of joy too. My whole past life of hardship and struggle flashed through my mind in an instant... Dark, bleak childhood…

I entered the house and saw my son-in-law and nephews, who warmly shook my hand and immediately began asking about my life. They listened to how recently a simple farmhand had now become a noble man.

It hadn't even been half an hour when the news of my arrival spread throughout the village. Friends and acquaintances gathered at my sister's apartment. I sat for a long time and talked about my

work, how the miners live. People kept coming to the house, more and more each time.

A. Stakhanov and the collective farm chairman A. Zibarov.

The collective farmers bombarded me with questions: how was it that you, Alexei Grigoryevich, could alone achieve such high productivity? I answered them that Comrade Stalin's words about people sank deep into my heart, and I decided to follow Stalin's path.

Late that night, our conversation ended, or rather, was interrupted. The next day, early in the morning, someone from the city of Yelets came to me with a request to immediately go to a meeting where they were already expecting me. I had no particular desire to go, since I had not yet had time to properly talk with my family and ask them about life and work. But then I thought that since people had already gathered, I had to go. We arrived in Yelets. The weather was bad. Still, despite the severe frost and blizzard, thousands of people gathered. The comrades spoke and greeted

Donbass. When I was given the floor, warm greetings in honor of our party and Comrade Stalin came from all sides. I conveyed greetings from the miners' Donbass and told them how we live.

After the rally, I was surrounded by many people who wanted to meet me and talk. We stood in the square for a long time and talked. Then I got into the car, drove to the station, and back to Lugovoe.

I arrived in Lugovoe late at night. I get very tired from meetings—more than at work. I collapsed into bed and fell fast asleep. I decided to rest so that in the morning I could walk around the village and learn about the collective farm's achievements. The next day, my son-in-law, Ivan Fedorovich Mishin, two other comrades, and I went to the village council. There were already collective farmers there, not only from our village, but also from neighbouring collective farms, who came to share their successes with me. I was convinced that these successes were great. The collective farmers had begun to live in a new way. The crop yield had increased. There was plenty of grain. Almost everyone has their own cow and pigs. A film projector often comes to the collective farm. There is a collective farmer's house, where they probably study, read newspapers and books. I advised them not to rest on their laurels, not to slow down, but to move forward and forward. I talked about the work of the coal industry of the entire Donbass. I said that we, the miners, will raise the coal industry and the task of the collective farmers is to increase the yield. From the village council,

I rushed to the collective farm board. There was a conversation, questions and answers. Dozens of people asked me how the miners live. Among those present were old people who had heard a lot about the life of miners before the revolution, the hard labor and beggarly wages of that time. Some of them once worked in the mines of the Donbass and even in our mine "Central-Irmino". Answering questions, I told Donbass has become what our village of Irmino looks like. The Donbass mines are now unrecognisable—they're mechanised. A miner has time to study, relax, and have fun. I told him there are no more drunken revelries or stabbings in Donbass. The people are unrecognisable: it's as if they've been born again.

In Lugovoye, I became interested in the condition of the collective farm and stables. I wanted to see how they cared for the

cattle. I discovered dirt in the stable yard and the cowshed and noticed that the cattle were being kept in damp conditions. I asked the collective farm board and chairman Zibarov to immediately eliminate all the atrocities. Comrade Stalin teaches us to cherish collective farm property and look after it as if it were our own. That same day, measures were taken—the dirt was removed, the cattle were cleaned and washed. The horses and cows now looked different.

My arrival in my homeland soon became known in the region. I was asked to come to Kursk. I said goodbye to my sister, brother-in-law, children, friends, and loved ones. The courtyard was full of people. I left the village in a good mood, as I saw that our village was unrecognisable. My family saw me off to Izmalkovo, from where I took a handcar to Orel.

There were a lot of people on the platform at Orel station, and a rally was held right there. I received greetings from the workers of Orel and was asked to speak. After the rally, I drove around the city.

That evening, I attended a city council meeting dedicated to the memory of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. That day was January 22nd. I spoke and described how we, the workers of Donbas, are fulfilling the legacy of Lenin. I spent the night in Oryol and the next day went to see the factories. I visited a tannery, a shoe factory, and an iron foundry. In Kursk, I was also greeted warmly and shown the knitwear and shoe factories.

I appealed to the regional party committee to help my native collective farm with machinery and purebred seeds for sowing. My request was granted. I wanted the collective farm where I was born and raised to be advanced and exemplary in our country.

Leaving my native village, I promised to come back to see how the collective farmers were keeping the promise they gave me. And indeed, seven months later, in September 1936, I came back to Lugovoe. I had a toothache, and the doctors forbade me from going down the mine for six days. Not wanting to sit idle at home with grandpa, I decided to visit my family.

And this time, I was welcomed in Lugovoye as if I were one of their own. The chairman of the collective farm, Zibarov, told me that after my departure in the winter, the people began to work better, but

still had not fulfilled their promise to increase the harvest. The harvest was below average, partly due to the drought. I told the collective farmers that measures could still be taken to increase the yield despite the drought.

Upon learning that not all the land had been fall-ploughed, that spring cultivation had been delayed, and that the soil was not sufficiently moist at sowing, I asked the collective farm board to take these mistakes into account and prevent them from happening again. My advice was accepted, and in the fall of 1936, all the collective farm land was fall-ploughed with tractors. I told the collective farmers that I would come again and check on their work, how they would sow to achieve Stalin's harvest, and in the meantime, I asked the collective farm to help large families by giving them an extra half kilogram per workday. A general meeting of collective farmers supported my proposal, and it was carried out. Threshing was underway on the collective farm.

In my presence, the thresher was threshing 150 haystacks a day, but after I left, it was only threshing 100 haystacks a day. I brought this abnormality to the collective farm's attention and asked them to once again explain to the collective farmers that they were working for themselves and must consistently deliver Stakhanovite-level productivity.

I was concerned that the collective farm was failing to meet its grain delivery obligations. The grain delivery plan was fulfilled only by 55%, and I told the board and all the collective farmers that this was wrong, since grain delivery is the first duty of every collective farm to the state. The collective farmers promised me that they would fulfill their obligations within two weeks. They kept their word. The grain delivery plan was fulfilled. The plan for autumn sowing and fallow ploughing was also fulfilled on time.

The Izmalkovo district organisations, at my request, sent the chairman of the collective farm, Zibarov, to study at a two-year agronomy course in Kursk because the collective farm had coped well with grain delivery and fulfilled the autumn sowing plan.

While in Lugovoye, I invited the collective farmers to come to our mine "Tsentralnaya-Irmsht" and see how the miners live. The board of the collective farm decided to send a delegation of three to

us A man: the chairman of the collective farm Zibarov, Roman Stakhanov, and Matryona Zibarova. Soon the comrades arrived. I went down into the mine with them and introduced them to the mechanisms. Zibarov went with me to the Nikanor-Vostok section, and Roman Stakhanov and Matryona Zibarova went to other sections. On behalf of the mining organisations, before descending into the mine, I gave Zibarov a jackhammer. He took it with him. He really wanted to chop. I instructed him in detail how to hold the hammer and how to handle coal. In a six-hour shift, Zibarov chopped 55 tons of coal and earned 48 rubles. Many years ago, Zibarov was a miner, then he returned to the village. He had fallen out of the habit of coal. And yet, he was highly productive. The third miner worked in the Stakhanovite style. He chopped coal, and behind him came a timberer, who timbered the face.

The collective farmers inspected our club, reading room, military corner, and shops. They stayed at my apartment and saw the conditions in which the miner lived. Pleased with everything they had seen, the collective farmers went back to Lugovoe. People later wrote to me that their story about our mine and the lives of the miners made a great impression on all the collective farmers.

In mid-February 1936, my wife, daughter Klavochka, and I went to a resort. At the Khartsyzsk station, we boarded the Moscow-Sochi express train. A day later, we were already in the Caucasus. The closer we got to Sochi, the more beautiful the nature became. Mountains. Rich vegetation, which retains a green appearance even in the winter months.

Sochi is clean, beautiful, and pleasant. I had never been to the sea before. I really liked it. I also liked the surrounding nature. Such nature would be a blessing in the Donbass.

There are some nice places in the Donbass. Take, for example, Svyatogorsk, where there is a beautiful pine forest. The Donets River flows through many areas of our region, and around the Donets there are forests. We don’t have the Black Sea or the Caucasus Mountains, but we do have a river! We have the shores of the Sea of Azov, and if we really got our act together, we could build resorts there just as good as Sochi’s. The Donbass Sanatorium was built specifically for miners. I met a lot of coal miners there. Even the sanatorium

director, Barsukov, was a former miner from the Shcheglovka mine in the Makeyevka district. At first, I was embarrassed. I thought I'd feel awkward. After all, I'd never been to a resort. But when I met the vacationers, I saw that they were all just like me—workers. The doctors and staff treated them with care and attention.

A. Stakhanov with his daughter Klava.

The Donbass Sanatorium is located in a beautiful spot on a mountainside. From here, you can see the entire Sochi resort and the seashore, as well as steamships sailing in the distance. The sanatorium has a good dining room and a large club for 500 people. The entire sanatorium is green. Grapes grow right there.

From the sanatorium, we went to Matsesta for treatment—there we took baths. The road to Matsesta is paved. You drive past beautiful sanatoriums, and the most beautiful of them is the Red Army sanatorium named after Comrade Voroshilov. This sanatorium is white and tall, standing on a mountain slope, facing the sea. An electric lift runs from it to the shore, along which vacationers descend to the beach and ascend back.

In our free time, we went for walks. Lenya Dolgopolov, an ironworker and Order-bearer, vacationed with me. I often went with him to Khudyakovsky Park, where a wide variety of trees grow. We especially liked the cypresses, magnolias, palms, and Chinese pavilion. I also went to Mount Okhun. Its peak is above the clouds. A road leads there. We travelled as a group to Gagra, Sukhumi, and Krasnaya Polyana. The entire road runs along the coast. It is incredibly beautiful. The people of Abkhazia are particularly welcoming and hospitable. I also liked Gagra and Sukhumi. They are only slightly less beautiful than Sochi. Lemons, oranges, tangerines, and tea grow in Sukhumi.

In June 1936, I was summoned to Moscow for a meeting of the Council under the People's Commissar of Heavy Industry. Here I received an invitation to go to Yaroslavl and meet with the Yaroslavl Stakhanovites. Comrade Ordzhonikidze advised Dyukanov and me to go there for a couple of days.

We went by car. The road from Moscow to Yaroslavl is lined with forests. Plenty of greenery. Many people think that only the south is beautiful. Here I was convinced that the north is probably no worse than the south. On the way to Yaroslavl, we made a couple of stops in regional centres. Everywhere we were told about the successes of the Stakhanovite movement.

In Yaroslavl, we visited factories and plants. We looked at an automobile plant where trucks and trolleybuses are made. We went to a rubber plant where all kinds of rubber products are made, mainly tires for cars. I learned that the plant was not working well. It produced a lot of defective products. Later, during the trial of Trotskyist saboteurs, it became known that Trotskyist bandits and spies were sitting at this plant, who wanted to destroy the plant and deliberately produced defective products.

We went to the Krasny Perekop textile factory. Here I saw for the first time how textiles are made. The weavers presented us with flowers. We held a rally. When I went up to the balconies to greet those gathered, an old textile worker came up to me, hugged me, kissed me and said:

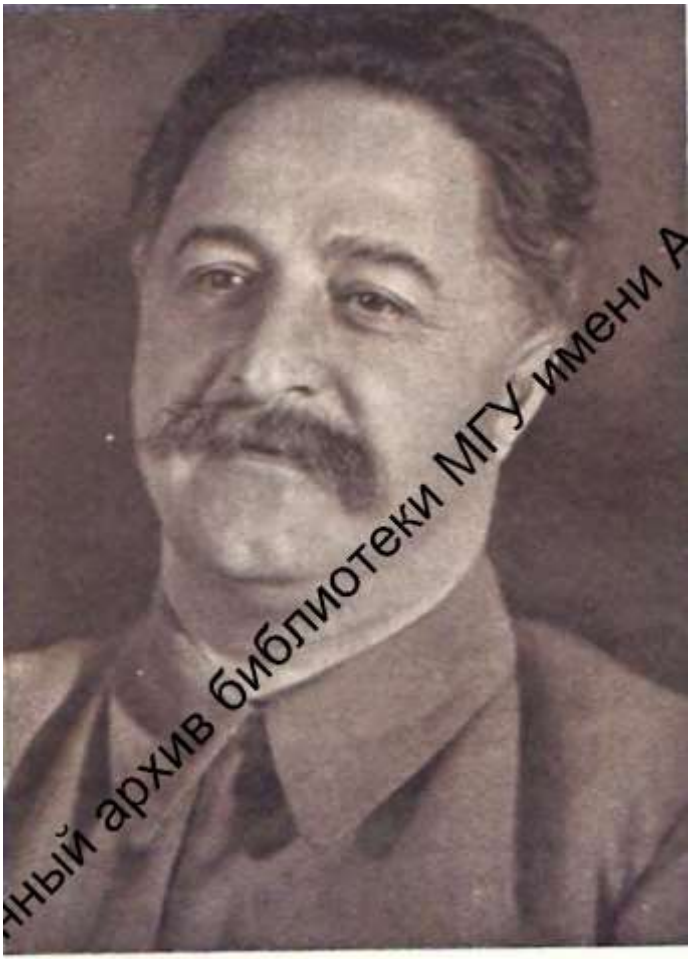
"I can't describe the joy we felt when we learned of the arrival of the initiators of the Stakhanovite movement. Soviet women workers are proud of you as worthy sons."

I responded to these touching words with a firm handshake and presented the weaver with flowers.

On the way back from Yaroslavl to Stalino, I stopped for a day in Kharkov. I had heard a lot about the Kharkov Palace of Pioneers and decided to visit it. The Palace is located in the building that used to house the Ukrainian government. The Palace seemed like a fairy tale to me. What's not there! There are rooms for designers, pilots, inventors, and artists. The premises are lovingly decorated. There are lots of children in the Palace. Everything is in exceptional order. One can only envy our Soviet children, for whom the party and government built such beautiful palaces.

I also liked the monument to the great Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko in Kharkov. The monument stands in the city centre. The pedestal is made of beautiful dark grey marble. The statue of Taras Shevchenko itself is cast in bronze. Below the statue, around the pedestal of the monument, are bronze figures depicting the history of the Ukrainian people's struggle for liberation.

Sometime later, in January 1937, I was able to see the current capital of Soviet Ukraine—Kiev. I went there for the Extraordinary Congress of Soviets of the Ukrainian SSR, which adopted the Constitution of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.



SERGO ORDZHONIKIDZE

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CHAPTER FIVE

IN MEMORY OF SERGO

On February 18, 1937, at one o'clock in the morning, my apartment phone rang. "Alexey! A great misfortune has happened: Sergo has died..." And a moan echoed through the receiver. My head began to spin. In the first minute, I just wanted to run somewhere.

Together with a group of comrades from Donetsk, I hastily left for Moscow for the funeral of our beloved father and brother. On the train, we reminisced about our meetings and conversations with Sergo.

...On November 13, 1935, we were invited to see the People's Commissar. We are sitting in his office. It is a large, bright, pleasant room. There are geographical maps on the walls. There is a desk, and above it hang portraits of Lenin and Stalin. Another table—a long one covered in green cloth—is the one where meetings take place.

The doors opened and Sergo entered. We greeted him with warm applause. He was seeing us for the first time, and we were amazed when, approaching us, he greeted everyone by their last name like his old acquaintances. Sergo said hello to me and jokingly said: "So this is what Stakhanov is like; I thought he was a big strongman..." He says hello to Busygin, shakes his hand firmly, and says: "So, it turns out this is what the blacksmith Busygin is like—the most ordinary person, but I thought you were a real bogatyr..." We sat down. "Well, comrades, tell me how it happened," Sergo addressed the Donbas workers.

We were embarrassed by such a simple turn of phrase and did not know who should start first. We spoke in turn. Sergo listened to us attentively, occasionally interrupting with remarks and questions: "How is it with the haulage?" "And the compressed air?" "And the people?" "How many workers are at the mine, and how many of them are Stakhanovites?" "What is the face line?" "How many compressors?"

Sergo simply conversed with us, smiling warmly and cheerfully, and I immediately felt as though I had known him well for a long time. After I described in detail how I had cut 102 tons in a shift and

how I prepare the workplace, Sergo asked: “Can double the output be achieved at the mine?” I answered: “It can.” “Can the Donbas do it? And what is needed for this?”

I told him what our mine lacked and added that, in my view, the situation was the same at most mines in the Donbas. I remember Comrade Sergo saying: “Alright, I will help you firmly.” And he really did help us firmly.

After Sergo questioned us in detail, a pause ensued. Sergo was calculating something with a pencil in his hands. Then he raised his head and said: “Your mine can already easily produce 1,500 tons.”

At that time, our mine was producing 1,200 tons. We began to calculate quickly in our minds. We knew our strength, our people, our mine, and almost in unison we answered that this was entirely possible. We were even surprised that it hadn’t crossed our minds earlier to raise the question of 1,500 tons.

After us Donbas workers, Stakhanovites from various cities spoke. I liked that Dusya Vinogradova also spoke at the meeting. Although she is a Stakhanovite in light industry, our People’s Commissar invited her too and listened to her with interest. Sergo was a very great man; he worried not only about heavy industry, but also about light industry and about the whole country.

I saw that Sergo really liked the speech of a young girl—the driller Nina Slavnikova and her friend, the driller Marusya Makarova. Sergo looked at them like daughters, and said affectionately after listening to their good speeches: “These are real Soviet girls... I am ready to kiss them...”

After the Stakhanovites spoke, Sergo spoke. He stated, among other things: “One might have thought that Stakhanov, the Vinogradovas, Busygin, Dyukanov were strapping, huge people, but it turns out, look—here is Vinogradova, a slender, tiny girl, and Stakhanov is also not one of the bogatyrs.”

...The Kremlin. The All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites of Industry and Transport. Sergo is the permanent chairman. He listens carefully to every speech. He chimes in and encourages those who are embarrassed, who are in the Kremlin for the first time and participating in such a large meeting.

A. Stakhanov, awarded the Order of Lenin

On the evening of November 16, Sergo was given the floor at the conference. Everyone, as one, stood up and warmly greeted him. He kept asking the delegates, then appealed to the presidium with a request to quiet the hall, but this time we did not listen to him and for a long time did not let him speak, greeting our fighting army commander.

Sergo spoke simply and vividly about how the Stakhanovite movement was born. He spoke about the growth of labor productivity. "You did all this," and Sergo stretched his hand toward the hall, "all of you!"

Sergo spoke with great fervour, and almost every minute we applauded him. Sergo praised the Stakhanovites. Sergo remembered

Sergei Mironovich Kirov, who was torn from our ranks by the Trotskyite-Zinovievite fascist vermin. He recalled Kirov's words—"how one wants to live and live"—and it was clear that our Sergo also wanted to live for a long, long time for the benefit of our homeland...

In his speech, he spoke a lot about Lenin and Stalin. "For our victories," he stated, "we are indebted to Comrade Lenin—the greatest of the greatest men of all centuries, and to the one who was Lenin's chief assistant—Comrade Stalin."

We rose from our seats and for many minutes stood listening to Sergo's burning words about Comrade Stalin: "When it was necessary in the East to defend the country from the hordes of Kolchak, Lenin threw his Stalin there, and Kolchak was routed," Sergo spoke with enthusiasm. "When it was necessary to defend the Soviet state in the South from Denikin, Lenin threw his Stalin there, and Denikin was routed... When it was necessary to rout Yudenich and defend Leningrad, Lenin threw his Stalin there, and Yudenich was routed... When it was necessary to rout Wrangel, Lenin threw his Stalin there, and the enemy was routed..."

There were several thousand of us, and we fixed all our eyes toward Stalin and his friend—his brother-in-arms Sergo. Sergo spoke so passionately that it made the heart beat faster. And when Sergo remembered Sergei Mironovich Kirov, who was torn from our ranks by the enemies of the revolution, a mournful silence fell over the hall.

But again, Sergo's fighting, cheerful voice thundered, along with his call to march toward new victories. When Sergo shouted, "Hurrah for Comrade Stalin!", we applauded for a long time. We harmoniously sang the *Internationale*.

I recall the stocky, strong figure of Sergo, his kind face, his seemingly eternally laughing eyes. When he speaks, he is all in motion, and when he speaks about Stalin, he becomes completely animated, and in every word, one can feel his great love and devotion to his teacher and friend.

...January 1936. I met Sergo Ordzhonikidze in the presidium of the Central Executive Committee. We shook hands firmly. He immediately asked me a question: "How is the mine working now?"

I answered that we are working quite well now too, but going forward we will fight for double the output, as we promised Comrade Stalin. “Let’s work better!” Ordzhonikidze told me. “The Donbas must come out into the leading ranks this year.”

Sergo was pleased with our successes, but even then he warned us against arrogance. He told me that the Order of Lenin obligates one to work even better.

Sergo noticed Dusya Vinogradova: “Ah, Vinogradova! How are you living?” “Well,” she answers. “How is the competition with Odintsova going, are you both working well?” “Nothing of the sort; I have more,” Dusya answers. “And defects?” “There are some minor defects...” “We must eliminate defects,” Sergo said.

He shook Dusya Vinogradova’s hand, and she walked on, greeting the leaders of the Party and government. We stood and watched. Shaking Comrade Voroshilov’s hand, Dusya said: “Comrade Voroshilov, I give my word that I will soon pass the test for the Voroshilov Sharpshooter badge.” “Alright, alright, I’ll be waiting,” Kliment Efremovich replied.

Furthermore, I hear Comrade Stalin addressing Vinogradova: “Vinogradova, how is your work going?” “The work is going well.” Vinogradova is telling something to Comrade Stalin, and he says to her: “I wish you success.”

Sergo suddenly looked me over and said: “You’ve grown.” We started taking photos. “Stand next to me, Stakhanov,” Sergo told me. I stood next to the People’s Commissar.

After the photo session, we said our goodbyes, and since we had come to Moscow with our wives that time, Sergo asked us to drop by and visit him with our wives.

...On May 3, 1936, together with other Stakhanovites of the Donbas, I am at a reception with Comrade Sergo. We are sitting in the meeting hall of the People’s Commissariat. Sergo is in the Presidium, and we are close next to him. “Why is the Donbas lagging behind?” he asked us coal miners.

The Donbas was indeed lagging behind at that time. We spoke about our mine. Comrade Ordzhonikidze, remembering our previous conversations, was very interested in why we had still been unable to

yield double the output. I also said my piece at the meeting. Here is my speech, it was printed in the newspapers:

"At the All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites, we promised Comrade Stalin and you, Comrade Sergo, to achieve a doubling of coal output at our mine. Recently, the mine has been bringing 1,650 tons of coal to the surface daily. This is 80% more than what we gave back then, six months ago. In order to fulfill the promise given at the All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites, we must increase daily output by another 150 tons.

What new things have occurred at the mine, how can our successes be explained? Crucially—we did not allow complacency, we did not lose vigilance, but persistently and daily exposed conservative, sabotaging elements who tried by all means to derail the Stakhanovite movement.

For a long time, the lagging section of our mine was the haulage. Having deeply checked the work of the people, we established that the head of one of the most vital nerves of the mine—the haulage—Dontsov, was essentially a malicious saboteur. He actively resisted the introduction of paired driving at the mine, which increases productivity by 70%, disrupted the precise distribution of empty tubs, and caused dozens of other mischiefs. We exposed Dontsov as an enemy of the people and drove him far away from the mine.

Alongside the persistent struggle against each and every manifestation of sabotage, we introduced advanced working methods into the thick of the miners in an organised manner. Over recent months, dozens of new Stakhanovites, masters of high productivity, have grown at our mine. For instance, a former timberman of the mine, Kravtsov, is present at this meeting. Who knew Kravtsov a few months ago? He was an unnoticeable worker. The deep roots of Stakhanovite methods of work planted in the mine awakened Kravtsov's initiative. He proposed his own method of timbering, increasing the drill to 4 meters. As a result, with a shift target of 0.5 meters of drift heading, Kravtsov achieved an average heading of 4.5 meters, and on individual days—11 meters. Now Kravtsov has been promoted to work as an instructor in the

‘Kadievugol’ trust. He trains dozens of new workers in Stakhanovite timbering methods.

Here is another miner working on untimbering drifts, Anisimov. Having organised the procurement of pairs and beams, he achieved a 550% fulfillment of the quota. Anisimov has now become a first-class master. There are already dozens like Kravtsov and Anisimov. At the ‘Tsentralnaya-Irmino’ mine, we have 140 masters of coal and 12 first-class masters.

But even now we are not complacent. Only the first steps have been taken. The task of all tasks now is to ensure that all workers in the leading professions, and there are currently 560 of them at the mine, become masters of coal.

The productive and technical growth of the new cohorts of workers allowed us to quickly master new technical standards. Only 28 workers out of 750 fail to meet the standards. Overfulfilment of new technical standards in its mass naturally leads to an increase in wages. For example, Kurinny used to earn 300, and now earns 1,000 rubles; Demchenko used to earn 400–500, now 1,200 rubles. The task—to turn our mine into a laboratory of socialist coal culture—will be solved. We will not let you down and will continue to be heroes.

With deeds we will prove, Comrade Ordzhonikidze, that we will not let you down.

I closely follow the work of the entire coal-producing Donbas and want to try, Comrade Ordzhonikidze, to answer your question at least to a small extent: why has output decreased in the Donbas. Everyone knows what a huge surge there was across the entire basin in September–October of last year. But Comrade Stalin always taught us not to become arrogant, not to grow complacent, but to consolidate victory. This is exactly what all the Donbas workers failed to achieve. Part of the economic-technical management turned Stakhanovite methods into storming campaigns. As a result, the curtailment of the Stakhanovite movement occurred. And the Party organisations of the Donbas did not show the necessary vigilance and organisational skill. This is what allowed the sabotaging and conservative elements to act with impunity. These are the reasons that led the Donbas to a drop in output.

To spread Stakhanovite methods far and wide, an institute of instructors was created. I, in particular, am currently working as an instructor. Let me tell you about my work. I had to concentrate attention on the lagging sections. For us, such a section was 'Nikanor-Zapad'. It yielded only 50 square meters of cutting per day. The haulage was 180–190 tons, and now it has become 200–230 tons. I achieved these results through methods known to everyone.

Already the first results of my work as an instructor confirm the full importance of your order regarding instructors."

Sergo listened intently and then asked what we lacked. I replied that things were somewhat held up by the absence of flexible rubber hoses for the airlines—we lacked about 500 meters. "You will receive 500 meters of hoses," Comrade Ordzhonikidze said. I stated that if the entire Donbas raised production the way our mine did, then the plan of the basin would be overfulfilled. "That is correct," Comrade Ordzhonikidze confirmed.

After me spoke the horse-driver Balandin—an instructor of the "Kadievugol" trust. Balandin told how he began working with two horses and how he organised the transmission of experience. Sergo asked him to explain why haulage at many mines in the Donbas is a bottleneck in the work. It was clear that Sergo was interested not in the Donbas in general, but in each of its mines, each section, and all those minor details that prevent us from working.

Many comrades spoke. Sergo was interested in everything. He would help one, demand from another. And this created a business-like atmosphere at the meeting. By the way, Comrade Sergo did not forget about the hoses, and in a short time they were received by us. We were convinced once again that Comrade Ordzhonikidze is a man not only of kind words, but of deeds.

Much later, the people of Irmino turned to him on a number of issues regarding the improvement of our settlement: sometimes equipment was needed for the tramway, sometimes something else, and always with Comrade Ordzhonikidze we found full support. We sat at the meeting for several hours.

I noticed that Comrade Sergo devotes exceptional attention to the Donbas. Comrade Sergo called on us to improve our work, and I gave him a promise that we would double output at the mine no

matter what. When the meeting ended, we rose from our seats and surrounded Sergo in a tight circle. Everyone wanted to stay near him a bit longer, to talk with him. Sergo dressed, and we went out into the street together. He stood among us for 10–15 minutes, joking and laughing loudly. People passing along the street paid attention to our animated group and, noticing Sergo, stopped. Sergo spoke cheerfully and loudly and, upon parting, asked us to write to him about mine affairs. He wished us success, said a warm goodbye, and left.

...June 1936. Dyukanov and I are summoned to a meeting of the Council under the People's Commissar. We come to the hall of trade unions at the Palace of Labor, where the Council was gathering. Dyukanov and I sat in the first row. Sergo immediately noticed us and called us over. He said hello and asked: "When will you speak and who goes first?" We said that I would speak first, then Dyukanov.

When Sergo gave me the floor, the members of the Council listened attentively. The fact is that economic managers spoke before me, and some of them, frankly speaking, hedged and did not talk about the real reasons for the lagging of the Donbas. Everyone wanted to hear: what will the worker say about this? I said frankly that we have a very large number of problems and therefore the plan is not being fulfilled.

At the Council, the question of introducing a "no-assignment-meeting" (orderless) system at the mines was discussed. After all, at any enterprise, workers know their plan if not for a month, then for half a month, or for 10 days. But for us miners, this was not the case. Today you don't know where you will work tomorrow, and tomorrow you don't know where you will be the day after tomorrow. This hinders the Stakhanovite movement. Therefore, some Stakhanovites proposed introducing a system without daily assignment meetings at the mines. This means each worker must be told in advance in which face, in which step, or in which longwall he will work for, say, ten days or at least five days. Then the worker from home will head straight to his section rather than to the assignment room. Knowing that he will have to work in one and the same face not just for one shift but for several, he will care for his face, look after it, and will not let it fall into neglect.

During my speech, Sergo asked: “And what can a system without daily assignment meetings yield?” I answered: “An assignment-free system can yield more coal, there will be less bustling around, and more energy will be preserved by the worker.” “So, the assignment-free system is useful?” “Yes.”

Comrade Ordzhonikidze was pleased with this answer. And right there, he asked another question that constantly interested him: “Comrade Stakhanov, and when will there be double output at the mine?” “In August,” I replied. And indeed, we gave double output in August.

At this Council, Sergo firmly raised the question of the complete mechanisation of the Donbas. At the meeting, the horse-driver Balandin spoke and again remembered how he manages two horses. And Sergo said to this: “No matter how well Balandin spoke here, no matter how well he manages two horses, still, in the near future, in the coming years, all horses must be removed from the drifts, and Balandin, instead of driving behind a mare’s tail, must be seated on an electric locomotive himself—” We all liked this, and especially the horse-driver Balandin.

An interesting incident occurred at the Council with Alexander Busygin. In those days, things in his forge at the Gorky Automobile Plant were not going well—there was major downtime. The administration helped Busygin and other Stakhanovites poorly. Busygin was going to tell the People’s Commissar about all this at the meeting of the Council. But present at the meeting of the Council was the secretary of the shop Party committee, who began to persuade Busygin not to wash dirty linen in public, and if he spoke, not to talk about the problems that exist at the auto plant. When the People’s Commissar found out about this, he was highly outraged. Busygin did not wish to deceive his beloved People’s Commissar, and he spoke boldly and talked frankly about the fact that there is major downtime in the shop, defects, and interruptions in the supply of materials.

In his speech, Sergo said that Busygin did well by criticising the situation in the forge, and thanked him for this. And about our Donbas, Sergo said that the trust officials, when the Stakhanovite movement appeared, decided that things would run on cruise control.

“The Donbas must emerge from the situation in which it currently finds itself,” Sergo firmly stated.

...On October 28, 1936, the jubilee of Comrade Sergo was celebrated—50 years from the day of his birth. We sent him our congratulatory telegram with wishes for long, long health for the benefit of our people. And some 3 and a half months passed, and Sergo was gone... We arrived for Sergo’s funeral.

We went to the Hall of Columns of the House of the Unions. The entire square and the streets closest to the House of the Unions were packed with people. There was a severe frost, but no one noticed the cold, and tens of thousands of people stood for hours to pass by Sergo’s remains and say goodbye to him forever. I entered the Hall of Columns of the House of the Unions. In this hall, I had been many times at evenings, meetings with Moscow workers.

Now, in the middle of the hall in a coffin lie the remains of Sergo. Many flowers and wreaths. For long hours stands Sergo’s wife—Zinaida Gavrilovna. Every five minutes the guard of honor changes. Workers, Red Army men, pilots stand guard. Together with others, I stood in the guard of honor and for several minutes did not take my eyes off the place where lies the last of what remained of our Sergo.

On February 21, we buried him. Comrade Stalin and his comrades-in-arms carried the urn with Sergo’s ashes out of the Hall of Columns of the House of the Unions. We went to Red Square. The urn with Sergo’s ashes was carried the entire time by his friends, together with whom he had fought for so many years—Comrade Stalin, the leaders of the Party and government. Behind them walked Sergo’s wife, his close ones, and relatives. The five orders of Sergo Ordzhonikidze—the Order of Lenin, the Order of the Red Banner, the Order of the Red Banner of Labor, the Order of Azerbaijan, and the Order of Georgia—were carried by Marshal of the Soviet Union Budyonny, our Miron Dyukanov, and Heroes of the Soviet Union Chkalov, Belyakov, and Molokov.

Now we arrived at Red Square. Comrades Stalin, Molotov, Kaganovich, Voroshilov ascend the tribune of the mausoleum. First to speak on behalf of the Central Committee of the Party and the Council of People’s Commissars is Comrade Molotov. Comrade

Voroshilov speaks from the Red Army, Comrade Khrushchev from the Moscow Bolsheviks, Comrade Butusov from the Moscow workers, Comrade Skorobogatko from the workers of Leningrad, and others.

I stood on the left wing of Lenin's Mausoleum near Comrade Stalin, alongside the leaders of the Party and government. After the speech of the Leningrader Skorobogatko, they gave me the floor on behalf of the working men and women, from the working people of the Donbas and all of Ukraine. Just recently, I had hoped to meet with Sergo and talk with him about my affairs, about how I work as a trust instructor, and about my great desire to go study at the Industrial Academy. And I never thought that I would have to speak over the fresh grave of Comrade Ordzhonikidze. I approached the microphone and said:

"Dear comrades! Our Sergo has died! The working people of our country have lost a Stalinist bogatyr, a great revolutionary, a student and brother-in-arms of Lenin and Stalin.

We, the workers of the Donbas, the workers of Soviet Ukraine, like all workers and working people of the USSR, know our Sergo as one of the builders of the Party of Lenin and Stalin, as a fighter for the purity and unity of the Party ranks, ruthlessly exposing and crushing the vile enemies of the Party, the fascists—Trotskyites, Zinovievites, Bukharinites, nationalists.

We know our Sergo as a fighting army commander of the iron battalions of the proletarian revolution, who routed the hordes of White Guards in the fires of the civil war.

We know perfectly well our dear Sergo as a builder of the beautiful edifice of socialism in our country.

We Stakhanovites—Stalin's students—are the sons of beloved Sergo. We remember with what Stalinist love he picked up the initiative of the first Stakhanovites, with what joy he met the victories of each of us. We will also not forget with what fury he scourged and crushed the saboteurs of the Stakhanovite movement.

And now Sergo—the army commander of the Stakhanovites—is gone. Together with the Soviet people, the workers of the Donbas, the workers of all of Ukraine are gripped by grief.

In these mournful days, our thoughts turn first of all to those who were the closest friends of our Sergo, his chief comrades—to the leaders of the Party, to Comrade Stalin.

People like Sergo do not die. He will eternally live in the hearts of the people.

Over the grave of the great revolutionary who raised us Stakhanovites, we, the working men and women of the Donbas, we, the Stakhanovites of all of Ukraine, take an oath: with even more united ranks, with even greater energy to raise high the banner of Lenin and Stalin, which Comrade Sergo held so firmly in his mighty hands.

We swear to you, Comrade Sergo, by our Stakhanovite labor and courage to defend our homeland and achieve the complete victory of communism.

Farewell, our dear, beloved Sergo!"

When the funeral speeches ended, Comrade Stalin descended from the mausoleum. Together with him, members of the Politburo and government carried the urn with Sergo's ashes to the Kremlin wall. Next to the ashes of Sergei Mironovich Kirov was a fresh niche. Lazar Moiseevich Kaganovich placed the urn with Sergo's ashes there. The ashes were bricked up in the wall and a plaque was attached with the inscription:

Grigory Konstantinovich Ordzhonikidze

Hundreds of wreaths were carried to the Kremlin wall. Around Sergo's grave, it looked as though a large flower garden had been planted.

In the evening, I went with my comrades to the editorial office of *Pravda*, and there we once again reminisced about Comrade Ordzhonikidze. We recalled his image and remembered our meetings with him. We sat for several hours, thinking about how to perpetuate the memory of our Sergo. An idea came to mind: to rename our city, Kadievka, in memory of Comrade Ordzhonikidze, since our city was the birthplace of the Stakhanovite movement, which Sergo had supported so tremendously. One of us suggested renaming Kadievka to the city of Sergo, and we immediately decided to petition

Comrade Stalin regarding this matter. We wrote a letter to the editor of *Pravda*, Comrade Mekhlis:

"We earnestly request that you convey our appeal to Comrade Stalin. The city of Kadievka was the birthplace of the Stakhanovite movement. Every step of this movement was linked to the name of Sergo. We propose to immortalise the memory of Comrade Ordzhonikidze and to rename our city, which to this day still bears the name of the despicable mine owner Kadiev, and call it 'Sergo'. If the government adopts such a decision, it will be met with enthusiasm by all the working people of the Donbas."

In Moscow, that very same evening at *Pravda*, we consulted on how to rapidly improve our mine, how to make it Stakhanovite—the way Comrade Sergo wanted to see it. We decided to honor Sergo's memory with good work, and that was when the idea was born for the new record that I set in honor of Sergo on March 5.

I decided that, "although I am an instructor of Stakhanovite working methods, in memory of Sergo, I must take up a jackhammer, descend into the mine, set a new record for coal extraction, and thereby contribute to the further advancement of the Stakhanovite movement." Miron Dyukanov also decided to set a new record. We left Moscow with a firm desire to strongly elevate production at the mine.

Upon returning to the Donbas, together with other Stakhanovites, we wrote an appeal to all workers in the coal and metallurgical industries, proposing to go on the "Sergo Ordzhonikidze Shift" and deliver high productivity, as well as to initiate a new Ordzhonikidze recruitment drive of male and female workers into the ranks of Stakhanovites and shock workers. Our proposal met with a great response everywhere. Not only metallurgists and miners, but workers from other enterprises as well began taking up the Sergo shift and setting new records. Those workers who previously failed to meet the new quotas became shock workers and began fulfilling them, while the shock workers rose even higher and joined the ranks of the Stakhanovites.

I began preparing for my record. After consulting with my comrades, I decided to set the record on the "Beral" seam.

On this seam, coal was mined manually. In the 102-meter coal face, 16 hewers usually worked. They produced 160 tons per day. I went down to the section, familiarised myself with the configuration of the seam, and concluded that if the coal face were mechanized with jackhammers, we could easily double production while cutting the staff in half. I expressed my thoughts to the section chief, Medvedev. At first, he tried to argue that the coal here was soft and that there was supposedly no need for a jackhammer. Some hewers held the same opinion. However, it took no effort at all for me to break down these arguments with a simple calculation.

Experienced mechanics from the machine shop, led by Stakhanovite Zukhov, were assigned to lay the air main line. Every pipe was carefully connected, and the flanges were sealed. The face master Korney Tkachenko—my long-time comrade—put the coal face in order. He eliminated numerous "ridges," lengthened the benches, and adjusted the timbering. Only three benches remained in the coal face (there used to be seven): the first two from the top were 27 meters long each, and the third was 48 meters. At the bottom, where the roof was weak, we left a small bench to be brought down separately. In the lower part of the face, we created a large "bin" with a capacity of 100 carloads of coal. This was done so that the face would not get choked with coal. We also made two spare chutes for unloading coal. In general, we fundamentally changed the existing system for developing the "Beral" seam. This interested other Stakhanovites as well, who began actively helping Korney Tkachenko. The work began to boil.

Along with the mechanisation of the coal face, and anticipating a large flow of coal, we also expanded preparations on the main entry. Tracks were cleared and repaired. Broken timber frames were replaced with new ones. Driving the entry was intensively pursued in order to get ahead of the coal face and thereby expand the front of the extraction work.

On March 4, 1937, the installation of the air main line was completed. During the morning shift, grabbing my personalised jackhammer—a gift from Leningrad workers—I went down into the mine to check if everything was ready. Four timbermen descended with me. In $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours of work that day, I hacked out 150

tons of coal. I didn't get to work the whole shift because there were still many unfinished tasks at the face: the hose was frayed, there was a shortage of timber wood, and there were major interruptions in the supply of compressed air. That same day, all these deficiencies were eliminated.

On the morning of March 5, I descended to the "Beral" seam again along with four timbermen. Everything was prepared, and I immediately set to work. I began hacking from the upper bench. After driving it down by one timber prop (one prop equals 0.8 meters along the strike of the seam), I climbed into the second bench, which I took by two props, and then the third was driven down by one and a half props. Thus, during the first pass, I moved along the face from top to bottom. The timbermen did not fall behind by even a single meter. The wood was correctly laid out and was within reach the entire time. When moving from one bench to another, the mechanic on duty, Zotov, disconnected the hose, thoroughly blew it out so that coal dust wouldn't get into the hammer, and reconnected it to the other end. He knew the layout of the valves along the main line very well and oriented himself quickly.

Every half hour, I lubricated the hammer. But in the middle of the shift, it suddenly began acting up. The "Beral" seam is very dusty, and the hammer got clogged. I immediately took the backup hammer, and the work continued. The compressed air pressure was sufficient.

I split the timbermen into two groups. Each knew in advance what to do, did not rush around, and did not interfere with the other. Yarulin adjusted the props according to the thickness of the seam. The props were all long, and each one had to be cut. His partner, Kravtsov, timbered the face. The second group worked the same way: Zimnich and Sukonny.

During the second pass, I drove the first bench down by three props, the second by one and a half, and the third by two and a half props, moving along the face from top to bottom as well. In fact, I hacked for no more than four hours, and during this time, I cleared 292 square meters, which amounts to 321 tons of coal, or 23 hewer quotas. The daily quota of the section was fulfilled by 172% in a single shift. Characteristically, prior to this, the face was timbered

with cribs specifically during the maintenance shift. On this day, the cribbers Agibalov, Novitsky, and Pozin laid the cribs right after the hacking and successfully managed their work. This was completely new in the operation of steeply dipping seams at our mine.

Having come up to the surface, I advised the section chief, Medvedev, to introduce face spraying at the coal face, which would significantly reduce dust and increase the hewer's productivity. I could have hacked significantly more if the face had been sprayed. At the same time, I proposed my own schedule for organising labor at this face. The schedule consisted of having one hewer and two timbermen work as a pair in each shift; performing maintenance work simultaneously during the coal shifts; and noted that three hours, which remain after the third shift, are sufficient to move the air main line. Such an organisation of labor makes it possible to maximise the workload on the face line and achieve double the extraction in the section with a significantly smaller staff.

The news of my new record in memory of Ordzhonikidze spread throughout the entire mine. When the second shift was descending into the mine, I appealed to all coal miners to follow my example. Dozens of workers of various skills pledged to immortalise the memory of the unforgettable People's Commissar with new victories. Hewer Shishkin assured that from this day forward, his jackhammer would not know a productivity of less than four to five quotas. Stakhanovite Shabaev challenged him to a socialist competition and gave his word to hack out no less than four quotas daily. Hewers Zinchenko and Kulyabin, and electric locomotive driver Nikita joined the competition.

Following me, Miron Dyukanov took up the Ordzhonikidze shift. In the exact same coal face where I worked, on March 6, he hacked out 282 tons of coal, which equals 19 hewer quotas. Komsomol member Poznyakov delivered 9 quotas on the thin "Rubezhny-Vostok" seam on the same day. Hewers Shishkin and Zinchenko delivered 4 quotas each.

The best brigadier of the blasting brigade of our neighbouring mine No. 4—2-bis—Irmino, Ulyanov, drove 5 meters of a crosscut on that day, fulfilling 5 quotas. The drilling master of mine No. 77—Golubovka, Sukhostavets, drilled 105 meters through rock during his

shift, fulfilling more than ten quotas. A shock worker and jackhammer hewer of mine No. 3—3-bis—Kadievka, Tormashev, upon learning of my record, immediately reached an agreement with timbermen Kuzmenko and Pasitievich and, taking up the shift, hacked out 110 tons of coal, which constitutes 11 hewer quotas. The coal-cutter operator of this mine and medal-bearer, Kondrat Telnykh, cut 315 square meters of the face—442% of the quota. On the very same day, he was overtaken by the coal-cutter operator of the "Ilyich" mine, Porosenkov, who delivered 7 quotas.

Just during these days, a report came over the radio about the renaming of our city to the city of Sergo. This sparked a new surge of enthusiasm among the workers. There were rallies at the mines, and we pledged to make our Donbas a leading region. We decided to improve the settlement, build new houses and new public gardens in it, and extend the tram line that Comrade Sergo had helped us build. In the most prominent place in the city of Sergo, a monument will be erected to the People's Commissar of the Stakhanovites—Sergo Ordzhonikidze.

But the best monument we will create for Sergo will be through our Bolshevik deeds.

CHAPTER SIX

FRIENDS AND ENEMIES

There was a lot of talk abroad about the Stakhanovite movement. They could not just bypass this movement over there.

In capitalist countries, they began to write a lot about the Stakhanovites. I saw my portraits and the portraits of my comrades in foreign newspapers and magazines.

From the very beginning, some capitalist newspapers wrote that the Stakhanovite movement in Soviet factories was bringing about a complete turnaround for the better.

I want to quote some statements from the foreign capitalist press, which could not hide the truth and was forced to speak well of the Stakhanovite movement.

In the Czechoslovak magazine titled *Neue Weltbühne*, an article was published in December 1935 which correctly argued that Soviet rationalisation does not resemble capitalist rationalisation.

"If in the United States," Hans Konrad wrote in this magazine, "they primarily investigated the movements that individual workers are capable of producing with maximum dexterity, the main goal of Soviet rationalisation is to organise work in such a way that the available machines do not come to a standstill. The result is that Stakhanov extracts more coal than an American miner, that the *Skorokhod* factory surpasses the quotas of Bat'a (there is such a firm in Czechoslovakia.—*A. S.*), and that the Molotov Plant beats Ford's achievements. At the same time, steel production increases by 17% in a single month and coal extraction by 10%. This sounds joyful even to people who are not socialists but desire the preservation of peace. The most important thing in Soviet rationalisation, however, is that it leads to an expansion of consumption. Stakhanov can mine coal and Vinogradova can weave cloth in unlimited quantities. The enormous needs of the Soviet Union can absorb everything. In such a case, our weavers would soon be thrown out of work. The Soviet weaver Vinogradova, on the contrary, increases the quantity of

consumer goods she produces... Ultimately, this leads to lower prices and, at the same time, to an increase in real wages."

The All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites in the Kremlin interested the entire bourgeois press. The London newspaper *News Chronicle* wrote about the Stakhanovite movement at the time:

"This new wave of labor enthusiasm is producing production records in almost all branches of the national economy. New phenomenal records have been set in such sectors of the national economy as metallurgy, the textile industry, the coal industry, mechanical engineering, and agriculture. With the growing number of workers producing double and triple what was only recently considered the norm, optimism and boundless faith in a bright future and abundance are spreading more and more."

The newspaper drew attention to Comrade Stalin's words that "life has become better, life has become more cheerful." The correspondent wrote:

"In my opinion, the Stakhanovite movement is not transitory. It has taken root in all branches of industry. The USSR is on its way to becoming the greatest economic force in Europe."

Of course, there were many bourgeois newspapers that did not believe in the Stakhanovite movement. There were even workers who did not believe our records. After all, there can be no Stakhanovite movement in capitalist factories. You won't find such eccentrics there who would overfulfil the quota by five or ten times. If such people were found, it would only lead to an increase in unemployment, to many being thrown out past the gates. Therefore, it is difficult for some workers abroad to imagine what this Stakhanovite movement is and how it happens here. Furthermore, the majority of bourgeois newspapers slandered our country and the Stakhanovites.

Once, I had an interesting conversation with foreign workers. On May 1, 1936, while I was standing on the rostrum of Red Square, a group of French miners happened to be close to me. They found out that I was Stakhanov, and I found out that they were French, and we quickly got acquainted.

A French miner from the Briey coal basin—Comrade Émile Plessy—and his two comrades, Dussart and Lheret, told me that

bourgeois newspapers were spreading rumours that I had achieved high productivity through sheer physical strength. I laughed and said frankly:

"They are lying, your newspapers!"

Plessy asked me how much coal I extracted in a working day. I said that my last record for 6 hours was 280 tons of coal, but that this record of mine had long been surpassed and that there were comrades who delivered over 600 tons of coal in six hours. To this, Plessy replied that anyone in his country who increased productivity would enrich the owner and multiply the army of the unemployed.

"That is how it is for you," I replied, "but for us, high productivity improves the worker's situation and strengthens the country's power."

Plessy told me that while working on a seam with a slope of 10 to 35 degrees, he himself at one time delivered 80 tons of coal per shift against a quota of 18 tons. I asked him:

"And by how much did your earnings increase?"

Plessy replied that it was by a few francs a day.

"And what did your comrades say?" I asked again.

"They were outraged by my diligence," he replied, "every extra ton of output led to an increase in the number of unemployed. In 1933, in just one coal basin of the North—Pas-de-Calais—113,000 miners were dismissed. Those are the results of rationalisation."

"But we have tens of thousands of Stakhanovite-rationalisers, and not a single unemployed person," I replied.

At that moment, a new group of foreigners approached us. Among them were two members of the British Parliament—Dobby Smith and Williams—and two members of the General Council of the British Trades Union Congress—Bromley and Elvin. They came up to us and began listening to the conversation. Since I had already learned from the French how things stood, I asked the British:

"Are there many unemployed in England?"

Smith, a former miner, answered me that in ten years the number of workers in the British coal industry had decreased by 400,000. To my question as to why this had happened, the other Englishman, Williams, replied that the mechanisation of mines played a certain

role here. Then I said that we, too, are mechanising our production, yet we have no unemployed.

"You have the Soviet system, and we have the capitalist system," Williams said.

"Well, of course," I agreed, "that is the whole point."

Saying goodbye to me, Plessy said that he would be a Stakhanovite in the Soviet Union too. I shook his hand and replied that I was sure of it.

A few days after the conversation with me on Red Square in Moscow, the French miners went to our Donbas, to Gorlovka. They decided to go down into the mine themselves to verify my working method from their own experience. The French miners wanted to put an end to the false rumours about the Stakhanovite movement spread by the bourgeois press.

The French arrived in Gorlovka at Mine No. 1 *Kochegarka*—the very mine where Nikita Izotov used to work.

On May 14, at 8 o'clock in the morning, they descended into the mine. Three Frenchmen with pneumatic hammers began cutting coal at the face, while the fourth—also a miner—controlled the loading onto the mine cars of the coal produced by his comrades. These Frenchmen had not previously worked on steeply dipping seams with a 70-degree angle of inclination and were unfamiliar with the seam. Still, in 5 hours, applying my method, one of them completed two quotas, the second two and a half quotas, and the third four quotas.

At the end of the shift, they stated:

"We worked normally, without the special strain we usually have. Based on our experience, we came to the conclusion that Stakhanovite methods of work do not force a miner-worker to an exaggerated expenditure of strength. The quota is far from calculated for the maximum utilisation of the workers' strength. On the contrary, these quotas are very minor. Judging by the pay slips we received and verified, we were supposed to get—depending on the work we performed—38 rubles, 44 rubles, and 92 rubles. Having familiarised ourselves with the prices of food, housing, and clothing, we became convinced that a Soviet miner, with normal work, earns quite enough for a prosperous life. Stakhanovites in the Soviet Union enjoy universal respect and receive, in addition to their wages,

various bonuses. For example, Gorlovka miners who fulfill three quotas are promoted to responsible work. The title of Stakhanovite can be earned by any worker.

The experience of our work in the mine of the Soviet Union cannot be applied in France, as it is impossible to draw any parallel between the USSR, where there is a shortage of hands and where the need for them is continuously growing, and our country, gripped by crisis. We are convinced that in the USSR, thanks to the economic construction existing there, any depressions are impossible in the future as well. The Stakhanovite movement is possible only under the socialist system. Appealing to the worker's consciousness and initiative, without any external pressure, the Stakhanovite movement has absolutely nothing in common with rationalisation in the form in which it is applied in the mines of France."

They worked at the face according to my method for only one shift and, having overfulfilled the quota several times over, became convinced that the method was correct. They saw for themselves that one does not need to possess exceptional physical strength to deliver several quotas. One only needs to live in the Soviet Union, work well, and know one's mechanism.

When the French comrades returned home, they published their impressions of their trip to the Gorlovka mine in the mine newspaper *Gorniak* of the Briey coal basin. What they wrote is very interesting. I was sent a clipping from this newspaper, and I will now quote their account.

Here is what the French wrote:

"At 11 o'clock in the morning, we were standing at the hoisting shaft of Mine No. 1. The first surprise: on haulage, instead of the two people who perform this work in the Briey mines, six people work here. A good argument against people who try to convince us in France that in the USSR the application of Stakhanovite methods requires great strain.

We descend into the mine. Along the main entry, we approach section No. 10. The angle of inclination of the seam is 70 degrees. We slide down on our backs into the face. The feeling is exactly like getting into a chimney. Here we will work tomorrow.

From afar comes the dull thud of a jackhammer. There are four people at the face. They are clearly displeased by our appearance.

We are introduced to the Soviet comrades. Their mood changes instantly. They raise their lamps—I see black, sweaty, smiling faces.

'Did we disrupt you?' I ask.

'It's nothing,' one of them answers me, 'it's fine for you, you are guests; we thought our own people were barging in.'

'Aren't you paid for forced downtime?'

'We are paid,' answers the hewer Yermachek, who is recommended to us as one of the best Stakhanovites of the mine.

'Then what are you worried about?'

Yermachek: 'What do you mean, what for? If you stand around, there will be less coal, and we need coal.'

This 'we' sounds from Yermachek as if it were pronounced by a mine owner back home.

I ask on purpose:

'Are you short of coal yourself?'

Yermachek (waving his hand impatiently): 'I am talking about the country, and you are talking about me.'

Plessy: 'How is the work paid if you overfulfil the quota?'

Yermachek: 'If you complete two quotas, you get about three times more money.'

Plessy: 'But for us, if you complete two quotas, one of your comrades will be thrown out onto the street.'

Yermachek: 'For you it's one thing, for us it's another!'

Beautifully said. But it is difficult for a worker from a capitalist country to change on the fly the concepts of work and the worker that have become ingrained in his consciousness.

We learned from the conversation that Yermachek was an active participant in the Civil War.

'Was the revolution worth making?' we asked him.

Yermachek: 'Well, judge for yourselves. Before the revolution, I lived in a half-ruined shack in the settlement of 'Shanghai'. I worked so hard my eyes bulged. I lived half-starved and wasn't counted as a human being. Now I live in a new house on Izotov Street. I have two beautiful rooms, and there are only two of us in our family. I sleep on a nickel bed; in the dining room, there is beautiful furniture, curtains,

pictures. I have a gramophone, records. For the month of April, I earned 1,765 rubles. I have honor and respect from everyone. And if you think about it, what special thing am I doing? Only that I work honestly, conscientiously, and for the work, as you see, I get paid very well. Now tell me—was it worth fighting for Soviet power?'

We agreed that it was worth it."

We read about the difficult conditions in which workers live abroad. We can imagine, of course: since there is capitalism and fascism over there, the workers really catch it. Only here, little is told and written about the details of this heavy life. Yet this is very interesting and important for us, Soviet workers, to know.

In May 1936, I received a letter from Donetsk Esperantists. They informed me that the Donetsk committee of the union of Esperantists had received many letters from foreign miners of different countries with a request to help them become better acquainted with the essence of the Stakhanovite movement, with its production successes, and to organise a correspondence with Donetsk Stakhanovite miners. Letters were received from Belgium, Holland, Norway, Spain, China, and other countries. The comrades want to get acquainted with the Stakhanovite movement.

I received many letters from abroad myself, and they show with what hunger foreign comrades strive to know the truth about the Stakhanovite movement. True, not all of them pursue the same goal. Some want to learn Stakhanovite methods in order to increase their earnings and support a starving family; some in order to find long-awaited work for themselves by mastering Stakhanovite methods. Eccentrics! They do not understand that whatever rationalisation measures the capitalists introduce in their production, they do it ultimately to increase the exploitation of the working people and to increase their profits.

But there are also many of those foreign brothers by class who understand this or are already beginning to understand it. A Welsh miner, Herbert Nicholls, who still has some work, writes to me:

"Among us, there are those who dream dreams of abundant food. You wake up—and you want to eat even more. That's how it was with me when I read about you. I went down into the mine and

began hacking. It seemed to me that I was working, like you, for myself. But so far this is the dream of a hungry man...”

A group of Belgian miners writes to me in the same vein. In their letter, they prudently state, among other things:

“Understandably, if we receive a detailed report on your work, we will not think of applying this experience here. There are many unemployed in the royal mines. If each of us begins to extract twice as much, he will jeopardise a comrade...”

The bulk of the letters are letters expressing delight and admiration for the Stakhanovite movement in the USSR. These are letters of brotherly love and greeting. A French miner, Marcel Palluqu, ends his letter like this:

“I embrace you alone on behalf of 300 workers and 5,000 waiting at the labor exchange.”

From these few words, it is not difficult to judge what the life of the workers at his mine is like. There are 16 times more unemployed there than working people. Can Marcel Palluqu, and with him all the miners of France, think about applying Stakhanovite methods at home?!

Some letters from abroad I received without a return address, even without a signature. In most of these letters, instead of signatures, a clenched fist is depicted with the call “Rot Front.” One author from Santiago—the capital of Chile—wrote just four words in Latin script: “Bravo, Stakhanov, long live Stalin.”

I receive letters not only from foreign workers but also from representatives of the intelligentsia. By the way, I have a letter from an American who became interested in the Stakhanovite movement but considers its primary source to be Taylor’s teachings. This Taylor developed a system of brutal exploitation of the worker on the basis of secret timing of all his movements during labor operations. The American writes:

“My dear Mr. Stakhanov.

I read about your successes in methods of labor productivity with great interest and would like to congratulate you. As you probably know, these ideas about the coefficient of efficiency were developed mainly in our country over the course of 20 years,

especially under the influence of Mr. Taylor, who founded the so-called Taylorism.

I am sure that if a special society were created in your country that would study this system on a large scale, based on American experience, the success would be grandiose. Only a systematic dissemination of these ideas, through theoretical and practical study, can lead to the results that you have undertaken to achieve. If I have the opportunity to come to Russia in the near future, I will be happy to discuss this problem with you and with the officials of your country and help organise such an important movement. Please let me know if this opportunity will be available. I very much regret that I do not speak Russian.

Respectfully yours, Bruno Born."

Mr. Bruno Born did not carry out his intention to come to the USSR. What a bitter disappointment he would have experienced upon becoming acquainted with the work of the Stakhanovites. The Stakhanovite movement is the victory of man over the machine, the mastering of it, while the Taylor system is a system of squeezing sweat out of the worker, a system of enslavement of man by the machine.

I received a couple more curious letters. One was from a professor of history at Lincoln University in America.

"To the esteemed Aleksey Stakhanov.

My dear Sir—

Some time ago, the Lincoln Memorial University organised a chamber of holograph acts, which now contains many autographed photographs and original letters of great people of our own and past generations.

We would consider it an honor to add your photograph with a handwritten inscription to our collection and would be grateful if you would send it to us.

We feel fully prepared so that the institution, founded at the special request of Abraham Lincoln and dedicated to the dissemination of his ideas, should be able to render a service to the students of that region which gave Abraham Lincoln to the United States.

Sincerely yours, Robert Stanley M., Professor of History."

First the capitalists screamed that the Stakhanovite movement was invented by the Bolsheviks, and then—here you go—they "consider it an honor" to have a photograph with a handwritten inscription of a Soviet Stakhanovite-Bolshevik.

With approximately the same request, the Historical-Biographical Archive in Vienna turned to me, attaching a questionnaire that I had to fill out. I will announce the questions of this questionnaire:

"1. Last name, first name (patronymic is not used by foreigners). 2. Place of birth, number, day and year of birth. 3. Religion. 4. Information from family history (parents, ancestors, former place of residence of the family). 5. Marital status (maiden name of the wife, number of children, etc.). 6. Relationship with well-known famous personalities or families. 7. Youth and education. 8. Your activity during the war regarding the mitigation of war disasters. 9. Years of success (works, creativity, actions, book and other publications, year, publisher, etc.)"

Are there famous personalities with whom I am related?—they ask me. Yes, there are. My father was a famous... poor man in the village of Lugovoye.

And there are genuinely famous personalities with whom I am related, as are all the working people of the world—they are Lenin and Stalin, the leaders of the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet government.

Is there a famous family with which I am related?—the gentlemen historians ask me. It is the fraternal family of the peoples of the Soviet Union and the working people of the whole world. I am related to them, and very closely.

The Historical-Biographical Archive in Vienna is interested in my religion. I am a non-believer. In God, of course. And what I do believe in is the victory of communism throughout the world.

Years of success. They began in our country in 1917 and continue to this day. These successes are huge, and I would have to write a lot to list them all. Most briefly they are stated in the Stalin Constitution, in the approval of which I participated at the

Extraordinary VIII All-Union Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

But the point, of course, is not this questionnaire. What is interesting is that people all over the world are interested in the Stakhanovites. It was pleasant to hear that in December 1935, in the capital of France, in the city of Paris, in the Hall of Mutuality, at a meeting, Professor Georges Friedmann delivered a special report on the Stakhanovite movement. Mind you—a report in Paris. This means the capitalists are forced to recognise the Stakhanovite movement and reckon with it. And the smartest and most honest among them already openly admit that the Stakhanovite movement could only have arisen in our free country.

In January 1936, after I was awarded the Order of Lenin, a special report about this was printed in the English newspaper *The Star*, and they wrote openly like this:

"Stakhanov's happiness is that he does not live in England. If he lived in England, some minister or government official would have to think a lot about creating some other department to limit and control his production and his dangerous methods of increasing the real benefits of the world."

In those same days, another English newspaper, *Daily Herald*, carried an article about the Stakhanovite movement, which, according to the newspaper, was causing "considerable interest" in England. The author of the article admitted that here they show extraordinary care for technical study at every enterprise.

The newspaper of the British Conservatives—the most sworn part of the British bourgeois—*The Observer*, was also forced to write:

"An unknown miner from the Donbas, Aleksey Stakhanov, came forward and became the centre of public attention, turning into a national hero of the Soviet Union in a matter of days. Hundreds of thousands of people from different branches of the economy seek the honor of being in the ranks of the Stakhanovites. The universal adoration surrounding the Stakhanovites is caused by their heroic deeds on the labor front; this heroism has already managed to lead to a colossal growth in production."

I think the bourgeois newspapers did not write with particular willingness about the significance of the Stakhanovite movement.

But far from all of them gave a calm and business-like assessment of the Stakhanovite movement. Some bourgeois newspapers, and primarily the fascist ones, simply went out of their minds and barked like mad dogs at the Stakhanovite movement. In the fascist newspaper *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, in November 1935, an article by someone named Just appeared. What didn't he heap up. "And Stakhanov is not handsome," he writes, "and his smile is not good..." But to hell with him, it's not a matter of my beauty! The main thing that worries the fascist Just is that, supposedly, the workers will have to "strain themselves" after Stakhanov, and this is "tiring," this is "exhausting." Right there, Just adds that prices in our country have increased 2 to 3 times. I am not going to argue with Just. Of course, if this were an honest man who is mistaken, one could argue with him, talk, convince him; but if he is an enemy carrying out the order of his masters, writing a blatant lie, then there is no point in arguing with him.

The newspaper *Daily Herald*, which is published in England by a party calling itself "Labor," spoke well of the Stakhanovite movement at one time; I have already cited its statement. And then the masters snapped at it, and it wrote that this is a form of "forced labor." We, Soviet workers, can only laugh at this.

And here is a newspaper published in Czechoslovakia under such a heavy title as *Christliche Gewerkschaftskorrespondenz*; this is how it responded to our movement:

"Two weavers tend 100 spinning looms! This happens not here, but in the Soviet Republic. This is a fact, however incredible it may seem. *Rote Fahne* itself (the communist newspaper) printed two photographs in its November 9 issue, under which there is literally the following caption: 'Dusya and Marusya Vinogradova—weavers from the Nogin factory in Vichuga, tend a hundred looms, producing 1,085–1,070 meters of yarn daily.' The organ of the Czechoslovak Communist Party calls a 'Soviet achievement' the very same phenomena thanks to which tens of thousands of families in our Sudetenland are deprived of a piece of bread. At our enterprises, the communists pose as irreconcilable enemies of capitalism and storm

against rationalisation. When it comes to Russia, *Rote Fahne* declares that rationalisation is technical progress and praises it in every way."

That is how the fascist scum speaks of the Stakhanovite movement. But the Czechoslovak communist newspaper *Rote Fahne* gave it a hard punch in the face. It replied:

"The Stakhanovite movement is indeed rationalisation, but rationalisation differs from rationalisation. When it is carried out at a capitalist enterprise, production increases, but wages lag far behind, and the entrepreneur puts the additional profit in his own pocket. A part of the workers turns out to be redundant and is thrown out. As a result, every new rationalisation leads to even greater enslavement of the masses, to even greater unemployment, to an even greater reduction in sales.

It is completely different in the socialist Soviet state. After all, there is no capitalist there whose sole purpose is to squeeze as much profit as possible out of the worker. When, with the help of rationalisation measures, a Soviet factory releases a double amount of textiles, it means that the working people will receive twice as much fabric for clothing. In order for all the manufactured products to be distributed to the workers' homes, wages are increased accordingly or the price of the commodity is reduced accordingly.

Under such conditions, the worker has nothing to fear that rationalisation will make him unemployed. The more goods he produces, the better. For seven years now, rationalisation has been carried out in the Land of Soviets with the help of shock brigades and socialist competition. Has anyone heard of unemployed people appearing in the USSR? On the contrary, all these years you only hear about the growth of production, the growth of consumption, and the insatiable need of enterprises for workers.

Rationalisation here and rationaliSation there are not the same thing at all. In the USSR, there is no one to exploit the worker, because the enterprises belong not to a private individual, but to the state. And the state there is the workers themselves. The Soviet workers themselves thought of new rationalisation measures in order to raise production. Would they do this if they did not know that they were doing it for themselves?

Do you understand now why the Stakhanovite movement and capitalist rationalisation cannot be thrown into the same pot? Do you understand why we greet rationalisation in the Soviet country with such joy, while simultaneously waging a desperate struggle against rationalisation in capitalist enterprises? Is it clear to you? No, we do not mock our workers, but we call on them to take the only path that will lead them to prosperity and freedom; this is the path taken by the workers of Tsarist Russia."

I had such a case with a correspondent of an American newspaper. In December 1935, on a day off, two women unexpectedly entered my house. It turned out—one of them was an employee of an American newspaper, and the other was her secretary. The secretary knew Russian and explained to me that they had specifically come to meet me and see how I live.

The correspondent asked me many questions, and I answered. She asked if it was true that I cut a lot of coal. I confirmed that it was true. Then she asked how I achieved this, whether it was difficult, and whether my health had weakened after the record. I explained that I felt great, and that after the records we live better. Then the correspondent began to ask me whether I love music, whether I read the classics, and whether I visit the theatre. How much do I earn? I said that I love music, I read books when there is free time, I go to theatres, and I earn a lot.

The guests inspected my apartment and wrote everything down. I invited them to dinner. After dinner, the correspondent suggested to my wife that they go sledding. I called the mine, and the manager sent us two pairs of horses. They went for a ride. In an hour—no more—they returned home. I saw that my wife was displeased with something.

"What's the matter?" I asked.

"Don't invite such guests anymore..."

"What happened?"

She replied that the correspondent kept asking her whether many workers were dissatisfied with Soviet power, what they were dissatisfied with, whether her husband worked exhaustingly, and whether he complained of poor health after the records. My wife told her that our workers have nothing to complain about regarding

Soviet power. Soviet power opened their eyes and gave them a new life.

As for my husband's health, as the saying goes, may God grant everyone such health.

The next day, the correspondents arrived again and wanted to go down into the mine to my section. They wanted to see me at work.

The correspondent climbed into the bench with me. She asked me to hack coal in front of her eyes. Of course I could. In 10–15 minutes, I fulfilled the shift quota of a hewer. The rumble from the operation of the hammer echoed through the coal face. The coal broke off in large chunks. I turned around, wanting to look at the American woman, but she was no longer in the bench. Apparently, she grew frightened of the unfamiliar environment and climbed out onto the entry.

Some fascist newspapers outright prophesied that the Stakhanovite movement would cause a collapse here. They claimed that the Stakhanovites would produce so many goods that there would be nowhere to put them, resulting in a crisis. The anti-fascist magazine *Rabochaya Illyustrirovannaya Gazeta* (Workers' Illustrated Newspaper) responded to this as follows:

"Such assertions would cause the same bewilderment in the USSR as if someone came forward with a proposal that people should crawl on all fours. In the Soviet Union, there will never be a marketing crisis; over there, the very concept itself seems absurd. Here in Western Europe, an increased output of, say, footwear would be a downright misfortune, because the difficulties of marketing would increase to a corresponding degree. In Soviet Russia, it is clear to every child that producing another million shoes means having a guaranteed market for them in advance. What else would they do with the shoes there? Destroy them, burn them, halt the operation of the factories? In Soviet Russia, this sounds just as meaningless as it seems natural to us in the capitalist world. Unlimited marketing in the USSR is not witchcraft, but a self-evident phenomenon in a country where all the means of production are in the hands of society itself."

In general, the revolutionary communist newspapers rejoiced along with us at the rise of labor productivity in the Soviet Union,

which, of course, is something we cannot expect from bourgeois newspapers.

Not long ago, I received a translation of an article from the French technical magazine *Textile Review*, which was published in September 1936. In this article, Dusya Vinogradova is called the champion of 216 looms, and they admit that the emergence of the Stakhanovite movement in the USSR caused a great stir in the textile world. They explain Dusya Vinogradova's entire success by the fact that she had four years of training, just like... a French female cycling champion. But are there no female workers with a lot of training in France? There are such workers there too, but apparently, training alone is not enough. In addition to training, Soviet power must also be present; then the workers will deliver high productivity.

Regarding the Stakhanovite movement, the French writer—our friend Romain Rolland—rightly said:

— It is possible only in a real socialist society, where the worker feels like the master rather than the exploited, where he works not for the enrichment of a class hostile to him—whose entire job is to extract the greatest benefit from the worker—but for the whole of society, where the worker rightfully occupies the first place. This feeling of dignity and pride is truly thrilling.

The fascists and the capitalist press, together with the newspapers of the Menshevik trade unions, did everything to cloud the minds of their workers and continue to spread lies about the Stakhanovite movement. I found out about this when, together with other Stakhanovites, I met with foreign delegations in Moscow during the celebration of the anniversary of the October Revolution. We gathered at the Palace of Labor, in the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions (AUCCTU). The Secretary of the AUCCTU—Comrade Shvernik—familiarised the foreign workers with how trade unions operate in the Soviet country, how our wages are growing, and how our workers are developing culturally.

After Comrade Shvernik's speech, the floor was given to us, the Stakhanovites. Since I knew that everyone abroad was babbling that my record was allegedly achieved due to my great physical strength, I said:

— It is not a matter of physical strength... I get tired now, when I deliver over 100 tons per day, no more than when I delivered 14 tons. On the contrary, working now is significantly easier and simpler. I hack, the timberman timbers, and the work goes smoothly. My earnings have grown. Previously it was 600 rubles; now it is up to 2,000 rubles. But is all our satisfaction found in earnings? Previously, coal extraction fluctuated across the entire mine, but now it has risen significantly.

Aleksandr Busygin said it well:

— Foreign capitalist newspapers write as if they are pulling the strings out of us. Nonsense. We ourselves took up the work in a new way. And how? We mastered the technology and organised the work. My brigade's mood now is such that after work, we leave the plant singing.

Nikita Izotov spoke and told the foreign comrades how miners used to live before and how they live now among us. He said frankly: "I call upon you to fight against fascism, dear brothers by class, and we here will build and strengthen our state against fascism."

Murashko, a hewer from the Donbas, also spoke about the slander of bourgeois newspapers:

— Slandering the workers of the Soviet Union is the usual task of the class enemy. But slander is powerless and ridiculous. Well, what harm can come to the working class from working for itself under socialism in a way it never works and never will work under capitalism! The Soviet worker must work better because he must be an example for everyone in the Soviet country. After all, agriculture under the collective farm system is not the same now either. Machines have appeared in the village, and the task lies upon us to show the whole country how to work. Look at how culturally the worker has begun to live here, having mastered technology! It is clear why the bourgeoisie is raging now. After all, if the Bolsheviks have taken technology into their hands, there will be no salvation for the bourgeoisie even in the grave.

— Did anyone force me to switch to a larger number of looms? — Dusya Vinogradova asked. — A ridiculous question! When I learned about Stakhanov, I decided to switch to an increased number of looms. I went to the director—give them to me. The director did

not give his consent immediately. “Have you considered your strength?” he asked. My friend and I replied—we have considered it. The first day—1,492 meters of fabric; the second day—1,502 meters; the third day—1,512 meters. Bourgeois newspapers write about our exhaustion. But after work, I still study and conduct social work. I am a Pioneer leader—I am preparing the next shift. And we live culturally and well.

After us, the foreign workers spoke—French, English, Czechoslovak, Spanish, American, Dutch, and Belgian. They thanked us for our accounts and stated that they were now convinced that the bourgeoisie slanders the Stakhanovite movement. The foreign workers understood us quickly. If some of them, when leaving for the Soviet Union, were still mistaken and, let’s say, believed the bourgeois newspapers, upon arriving in our country, they saw everything in its true light. It is precisely because foreign workers are learning more of the truth about the Soviet Union day by day, and are sympathising more with the Stakhanovite movement day by day, that the fascist newspapers are furious, inventing all sorts of nonsense and rubbish about us. The way I understand it: that’s what enemies are for.

Enemies of the Stakhanovite movement exist not only abroad. They are also on the territory of the Soviet Union. First and foremost, these are the agents of fascism; these are the very same despicable Trotskyites and Rightists who, on the instructions of German and Japanese fascists, spied at our plants, staged explosions, and caused train wrecks with human casualties. These agents of fascism vilely disrupted the Stakhanovite movement and proved to be the most ardent enemies of this movement. The Trotskyites hid under the mask of Soviet people in order to do us more harm.

The traitor, turncoat, and vile scum Pyatakov directed trains onto occupied tracks and caused wrecks, and organised an explosion at the Kemerovo mine, where 12 Stakhanovite miners and shock workers perished. Trotskyite spies and bandits disrupted preparatory works so that the Stakhanovites would not have prepared coal faces. They staged accidents on machinery so that the workers would have downtime and their earnings would fall. They disrupted housing construction.

I read with great attention the report on the trial of the Trotskyite wreckers who engineered the explosion at the Kemerovo *Tsentralnaya* mine. When the Stakhanovite ten-day drive was announced, and on the day when the workers had a great surge of enthusiasm and a great desire to truly work in the Stakhanovite way, they engineered an explosion, and the best people perished.

During the Stakhanovite five-day drives, Trotskyite wreckers on the quiet neglected the mines in such a way that after the Stakhanovite five-day drives, the workers had nothing to do. And when the workers were outraged, they said that Stakhanovite methods were to blame for everything. Were it not for Stakhanovite methods, they treacherously asserted, there would allegedly be no downtime.

At the Gorlovka Chemical Plant, the fascist bandit Rataichak organised an explosion, from which Stakhanovite Ivan Lunev, female shock worker Irina Strelnikova, and other fine comrades perished.

Pyatakov and other traitors, enemies of the people, fought against the party and Soviet power, and plotted the assassination of Comrade Stalin.

I am sure that they—Trotsky, Pyatakov, and their fascist gang—are to blame for the death of Comrade Ordzhonikidze. They wanted to kill Sergo; they were preparing an assassination attempt on him. They did not manage to kill our Sergo with a bullet or a bomb, but they undermined his sick heart, and Sergo left us prematurely. I will never forget this!

Pyatakov and his gang have been shot. If these vipers had fallen into our hands, each of us would have torn them to pieces. But that old scum Trotsky is still alive. I think his hour will strike too, and we will settle scores with him as expected.

But for now, we must be on the alert. I think Trotsky and Hitler will still send many of their spies to us. The more successes we have, the more furious they will become and strive to harm us. But we have become wiser now. I think we can no longer be fooled. We will be watchful and vigilant. We will keep our eyes peeled.

But how, after all, was it possible to harm us? How did we overlook all this? I asked myself this question many times. There was a lot of talk about this among the workers. And we received a

completely clear answer from Comrade Stalin. His speech at the Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU(b) in March 1937 explained everything to us.

In his report, Comrade Stalin showed that many of our comrades were careless, lost their vigilance, and did not notice the enemy. Previously, some ten years ago, when we understood little about technology, enemies took advantage of this and harmed us. Now we have already mastered technology, but we lacked Bolshevik vigilance. Enemies managed to infiltrate some important posts and cause a lot of harm. Enemies were especially eager to get into our glorious Donbas. The spy Sarkisov, who infiltrated the Donetsk Regional Party Committee, planted many spies and wreckers in the Donbas; we are smoking them out of there like bedbugs and ruthlessly smashing them.

After the wrecking was uncovered, some economic managers said that the Stakhanovites would supposedly make up for everything. Comrade Stalin said that this is a rotten theory. If it were not for the wreckers, the Stakhanovite movement would develop even better. Economic managers and party organisations must root out wrecking and protect Stakhanovites from wreckers. Without leadership, Stakhanovites cannot do much on their own, no matter how hard they try and how much they want to work well. I know this from the example of our mine. After all, our mine should have been deepened long ago. It was necessary to move to the lower horizon. A few years ago, a project to deepen our mine was even developed, but the Trotskyite-Bukharinite wreckers mothballed the project. And instead of our mine becoming one of the largest in the Donbas, the wreckers wanted to completely ruin its work. Were it not for the Stakhanovite movement, our mine would not have delivered more than 900 tons of coal in 1937. Yet, when it was decided to deepen the mine, the Stakhanovite movement did not exist. And it was not counted upon.

The question arises, what is to be done now, since the mine was not deepened, and coal must be delivered? They decided to allocate a piece of the coal field from the neighbouring mine No. 4—2-bis to our mine. As a result, neither our mine nor the neighbouring mine No. 4—2-bis fulfils the plan because, on the one hand, we have no

room to expand, and on the other hand, we took away a part of the coal from mine No. 4—2-bis. A total mess resulted. Wreckers created such a mess wherever they could in the mines of the Donbas. The Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party rightly decided that it is necessary to liquidate the consequences of wrecking and that an environment must be created so that not a single wrecker can infiltrate our mines. Then it will be easy for Stakhanovites to work, easy to raise productivity, and overfulfil the plan.

When the trial took place in Moscow, first of Zinoviev–Kamenev, then of Pyatakov and his gang, we immediately demanded that they be shot. This was the opinion of all our miners and generally the entire population. In our settlement, even those women who, it seems, never engaged in politics, clenched their fists when they heard what was written in the newspapers. Both young and old demanded that the bandits be destroyed. When the court passed its verdict and said on our behalf that the Trotskyite spies must be shot, I waited for the newspaper which would state that they had already been shot. When I heard on the radio that the sentence had been carried out, it directly made my heart feel lighter.

But Comrade Stalin rightly said in his report that the Trotskyite-Bukharinite spies have not yet been fully destroyed. The fascists will send their spies to us, they will try to do dirty tricks to us. Therefore, we must be even more vigilant. We must be able to see the enemy, grab them by the hand, and destroy them.

CHAPTER SEVEN

HOW WE ARE GROWING

Time flies tremendously... It feels like just recently I set my record... The conference of Stakhanovites in the Kremlin... And yet, the second anniversary of the Stakhanovite movement has already passed...

Time flies unnoticed. And it is only when you look back that you realise how much has been done during this time, how much ground has been covered. The most interesting part is what has happened to people during this time.

Before the Stakhanovite movement, I was an ordinary hewer. Even in Irmino, nobody knew my name. But since I demonstrated an exemplary use of technology and a new way of working, I became known throughout the entire country. The exact same thing is happening to many workers in our country. Take, for example, the Mariupol steelmaker Makar Mazay. A young guy. A Komsomol member. Nobody knew him. I didn't even think such a last name—Mazay—existed. But when he set a record on an open-hearth furnace, his name immediately swept across the entire country. All the steelmakers began competing with him. As the winner of the competition, he attended the All-Union Congress of Soviets and the Congress of Soviets of Ukraine. At the All-Union Congress of Soviets, Makar Mazay delivered a speech in which he said that we would brew so much steel that it would be enough to drown all the fascist vipers. Makar is a celebrity in the Soviet Union. Tomorrow, any worker can achieve Mazay's glory.

Over the two years of the Stakhanovite movement, I have advanced my knowledge and enrolled in the L. M. Kaganovich Moscow Industrial Academy.

As for my comrades and acquaintances, there is hardly a single one whose life has not also changed for the better during the time of the Stakhanovite movement.

Miron Dyukanov, my former face comrade and the section's party organiser, is now the secretary of the Sergo City Committee of the CP(b)U. Like me, he is a member of the Council under the

People's Commissar of Heavy Industry. Dyukanov took up his studies with great resolve. I must say, he studies more regularly than I do and is making good progress. The party rank-and-file at our mine loves respects Miron and trusts him. In the last elections, by secret ballot, we once again elected Miron Dyukanov as the Party organiser (*partorg*) of our mine, and soon after—as the secretary of the city Party committee (*gorkom*).

Nikolai Mashurov is the former head of the "Nikanor-Vostok" sector. Under his leadership, during several months of the Stakhanovite movement, our sector nearly doubled its production. His abilities were recognised. Mashurov was appointed manager of Mine No. 2–3-bis. Mashurov does not have a higher education—he is a mining technician, but he has accumulated a wealth of experience, and he manages the entire mine well. Former *partorg* Petrov is also in management now, running a mine.

Mitya Kontsedalov was one of the first to break both my record and Dyukanov's record. Previously, he was an almost illiterate guy who could barely even sign his name. Mitya took up his studies with great enthusiasm. For nearly a year, he studied hard at home, and then he enrolled in the preparatory course at the Moscow Industrial Academy.

Vasya Kravtsov was one of the first to initiate Stakhanovite methods in the preparatory workings of our mine. He did an immense amount of work at the "Tsentralnaya-Irmino" mine named after Stalin. When our Stakhanovites pushed forward, the extraction faces began to advance rapidly, but the main ventilation drifts were lagging behind. Vasily Kravtsov managed to quickly accelerate the preparatory work. He started out as a timberman, and later he was promoted to trust instructor for the implementation of Stakhanovite work methods. After some time, Kravtsov was appointed sector chief at the Stalin "Tsentralnaya-Irmino" mine, and later a mine manager in the Stalinsky district.

Or take Vasya Balandin—the famous horse-driver (*konogon*). He used to be a horse-driver, but he became an instructor for the "Sergougols" trust, implementing Stakhanovite methods in haulage. He has dozens of students of his own. He is a member of the Council under the People's Commissar of Heavy Industry.

Take, for example, Vasily Tkachenko—a former cutter-loader operator. He was one of the first to apply Stakhanovite methods to the coal-cutting machine. He became an instructor for the "Sergougols" trust. He is currently preparing to enter the mining institute. Tkachenko used to be a Komsomol member and has now become a Party candidate. He was sent to a six-month training course for sector chiefs.

Or remember the old man Porfiry Grishin, the very same Grishin with whom I competed in my mind when I went for my record. Grishin was one of the first Izotovites. When the Stakhanovite movement began, the old man did not fall behind; on the contrary, he began to work even better. He used to be a hewer, and became a sector chief at Mine No. 4–2-bis – Irmino.

And then there is Platon Isaev from Mine No. 22 — Golubovka, named after Kirov. He used to be a cutter-loader operator. He became a trust instructor for the implementation of Stakhanovite methods and is studying in the courses for training sector chiefs.

In the city of Sergo alone, besides the comrades I have already named, former horse-driver Esin, former horse-driver Dragovets, former driller Sukhostavets, former cutter-loader operator Zasevsky, former cutter-loader operator Obmetka, and former timberman Likhoy have also been promoted to instructors for the implementation of Stakhanovite methods.

In our mine, people have grown noticeably. Korney Tkachenko, Yarulin, Ershkov, Sinyakovsky, Pozdnyakov, Kuripny, Anisimov, Silin, Tolkunov, Gontar, Schiry, Melnichenko, Zvonik, Udovichenko, Kholodkov, Panchenko, Minakov, Gusev, and many others—these are the best Stakhanovites of our mine. Each of these people could fill an entire book telling what happened during the Stakhanovite movement in his life, in his industrial work, and in his studies.

Thanks to the growth of the people, the mine grew as well, and production rose. By the first anniversary of the Stakhanovite movement, in August 1936, the average daily output at the Stalin "Tsentralnaya-Irmino" mine was 1,600 tons, and in the last ten days of August, when the mine was preparing for the anniversary, production reached 1,750–1,800 tons per day. Let us recall that

before the Stakhanovite movement, the mine produced 900–950 tons daily.

A. Stakhanov at his library.

The average labor productivity of a hewer grew from 6 tons to 10 tons per shift in just one year of the Stakhanovite movement,

which is an increase of 66%. The productivity of a single worker (this includes underground workers, surface workers, and office staff) grew by 45% during this time. In the spring of 1936, as is well known, production quotas were revised. By the anniversary of the Stakhanovite movement at our mine, the new, increased quotas were being fulfilled by an average of 170%.

Thanks to the increase in labor productivity, earnings rose sharply. Most importantly, many achieved high earnings not just for a single day, but over months. Dozens of our workers systematically receive Stakhanovite wages. For example, hewer Sukhodolsky earned 500–550 rubles a month in 1935. His average earnings in 1936 were 1,000–1,200 rubles a month! Anishevsky used to earn 400–430 rubles a month, and in 1936 he began earning 900–1,000 rubles. Horse-driver Dragov earned 200 rubles a month in 1935, and 400–500 rubles in 1936.

At the Stalin "Tsentralnaya-Irmino" mine, the average monthly salary of a hewer before the Stakhanovite movement was 320 rubles, and in 1936 the average monthly salary rose to 467 rubles. Although the number of staff at the mine remained the same, the monthly payroll fund rose from 450,000 rubles in 1935 to 700,000 rubles in 1936.

The growth in earnings can best be traced through retail trade turnover. In our mine's stores alone, the purchase of food and goods increased one and a half times over the year.

In October, November, and December of 1935—that is, in the first months of the development of the Stakhanovite movement—972,000 rubles worth of food was bought in our mine's stores, and during the same months of 1936, almost one and a half million rubles worth of food was purchased. The purchase of manufactured goods increased fivefold during this time.

My reasoning is this: since more was bought, it means more was eaten. The increase in wages allowed our workers to eat better. The improvement in nutrition is already evident from how food purchases in stores increased. But besides that, many workers also have their own food supplies. The workers of the "Tsentralnaya-Irmino" mine own 1,500 pigs and piglets, 500 cows, 600 goats, 3,000 chickens, and many geese and ducks. Almost all of the workers and employees

in our settlement have their own vegetable gardens. From our gardens, we get vegetables for almost the entire year.

Электронный архив библиотеки МГУ имени А.А. Кулешова

The village of Irmino.

Since life has become better, life has become more cheerful. The workers of our mine and their families began to show more interest in amateur activities and physical culture. 1,600 people are engaged in physical culture at the mine. Dozens of hewers, timbermen, and haulers participate in various worker and employee activities.

People want to live cultured lives. Money is spent not only on food and clothing. Everyone tries to furnish their apartment better. They acquire furniture and musical instruments. In 1936, the workers of our mine owned 100 gramophones, 70 radio receivers, 6 pianos, 258 balalaikas, 82 guitars, 38 mandolins, 13 violins, and 19 bayan accordions. By the anniversary of the Stakhanovite movement, more than a thousand radio relay points had been installed in workers' apartments. 260 workers at the mine have their own bicycles.

It is interesting to look at how our birth rate has increased. In 1934, 279 children were born at the mine; in 1935, 330 children were

born; and in 1936, 715 children were born. In 1934, female workers and the wives of workers at our mine had 980 abortions; in 1935, there were 792 abortions; in 1936, before the ban on abortions, there were 301, and after the ban, there were 3. The birth rate is increasing, while the mortality rate fell by 2.5 times over the same period.

Illiteracy has been almost completely eliminated at the mine. 560 people are studying in the school for the semi-literate. From our mine alone, 40 young men and women entered higher educational institutions in 1936. One mine produced 40 students! Now we have three thousand subscribers to newspapers and seven hundred to magazines at the mine.

Not only has our mine changed, but the settlement of Irmino has changed significantly. It is interesting what the old miners say about the pre-revolutionary settlement of Irmino. There was no greenery in the settlement. Not just flowers, but even ordinary trees were considered a great luxury. In the summer, the population did not know where to escape from the heat. The settlement lacked water—it was brought in barrels. Workers received vouchers for a specific number of buckets of water. The only "decent" buildings in the settlement were the mine manager's house and the church. Clouds of dust stood perpetually. At night, the settlement plunged into darkness.

There were few stores. The miners bought food from their artel bosses—exploiters. The artel bosses acquired products cheaply and sold them to the workers at exorbitant prices. The mine owners received products from large cities. The only thing the owners thought about was how to cloud the miners' heads. They campaigned among the workers to build a church.

In 1910, a Sobriety Society was organised. To anyone who stopped drinking, they presented a small icon of Saint Michael the Archangel and immediately demanded a contribution to a God-pleasing cause—the construction of a church.

The majority of the workers were illiterate, and the wives of the workers were almost all illiterate. I was shown a payroll list where, in the column "signature for receipt of money," crosses and sticks stand along the entire length of the sheet. That is how the workers signed the payrolls.

From the accumulation of filth and waste, from impenetrable mud, and from the consumption of spoiled water, diseases raged in the settlement, especially gastric ones—typhus and cholera. In 1910, when a cholera epidemic broke out in the settlement, 43 people died in two days. There was no medical help whatsoever. There was not even a paramedic in the settlement. People were treated by old women and medicine men, who helped them depart to "the other world" even faster.

The October Revolution changed the appearance of our settlement. Over the years of the revolution, dozens of new houses have been built. Many of them are equipped with running water and sewage systems. All houses have electric lighting. In the very first days of the revolution, the church was repurposed into a workers' club.

But the face of the settlement has changed especially during the years of the Stakhanovite movement. The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), the Government of the USSR, the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, and the Government of Ukraine strongly supported our mine. We developed a grand plan for the improvement of Irmino. This plan was discussed by all the miners and their families. We held two cultural and lifestyle conferences where the people discussed how best to arrange the settlement.

In the centre of the settlement, there is now a beautiful square that is well-planned and asphalted. It is decorated with two fountains. In the summer, it is a solid flowerbed. Just a couple of years ago, there was a bazaar on the square with lopsided little shops and stalls.

The central square is surrounded on all sides by new buildings. The most beautiful building is a three-story school for 400 children. Two stores have been built right there. Now there is no need to walk or travel to the city for every little thing. Residents of the settlement can get everything they need on the spot.

Behind the central square—closer to the mine—two day-care buildings have been built, and not far from them, a new maternity hospital with 60 beds.

We planted a wonderful park on the site of what used to be the mine dump. In the evenings, a brass band plays in the park. The

residents of Irmino are also proud of their stadium. The stadium stands can accommodate five thousand spectators. Nearby, a sports hall has been built, equipped with everything necessary for athletic activities.

Our roads and crossings are now unrecognisable. Previously, after a little rain, it was impossible to walk through the streets. When the mud dried, a terrible dust would rise. In 1936, several kilometres of roads and sidewalks were paved in the settlement.

We planted tens of thousands of trees and shrubs along the streets and in the yards of the workers' houses. Many flowers have been planted. Flowers have become highly esteemed among us. Previously, it used to be that when a miners' artel worked well, the artel bosses would set out a bucket of vodka for the brave fellows. Now, when a hero-Stakhanovite comes out of the mine, he is showered with flowers.

A powerful radio centre has been built in the settlement. Three houses were built for Stakhanovites. All the houses where the workers live were repaired and put in order. Bachelor dormitories were renovated. Some of them were furnished with upholstered furniture.

The club and the dining hall were remodelled. Dozens of various kiosks and stalls were constructed. At night, the streets of the settlement are lit by lamps, and there is a pond spanning an area of seven hectares. The pond is lined with trees. More than 100,000 rubles were spent on its construction. Now we have water too!

From the settlement to the city of Sergo is 4 kilometres. People used to walk back and forth from the settlement to the city on foot. Now, a tram line has been built. The residents of Irmino have been given the opportunity to visit the city daily.

The city of Sergo has also grown significantly. Few people remain who remember the old, pre-revolutionary Kadievka—that dirty settlement which was also called Shubinka, after the name of the mine owner Shubin. But these few dozen old miners currently living in the city can tell what this city was in the past, and how the working people used to live and work here.

Timberman Kiselev, who lived in Kadievka for several decades, says that the first mine was built more than forty years ago. A

settlement grew around the small pit. It consisted of mud-plastered dugouts and small barracks that looked like cattle sheds.

The miners worked and lived in artels. As a rule, an artel consisted of countrymen—people from the same village or, at the very least, the same province. There were artels that were constantly at odds with each other. The miners of Shubinka had no cultural entertainment. The only things they entertained themselves with were vodka and cards. The monopoly shops—stores where vodka was sold—operated very efficiently.

The centre of the vodka trade was Torgovaya (Trade) Street. The old miner Kochergin once told about Shubinka's Torgovaya Street:

"The entire little street consisted of small shops. Moldy sausage, scrawny dried fish, and dried-out bubliks hung in the windows. Good goods were not brought to us. The miners will eat anything! Every shop traded in vodka. There was a tavern right there. If you end up on this street, you're bound to leave without money. You go into a tavern—have a shot, a glass, a tumbler, and then it goes on from there. You leave everything behind and walk home with empty pockets. Mind you, you didn't always make it home. Other times, a policeman or a sergeant would stop you. Right there on that same street was the police station. As soon as a miner was a bit tipsy, they'd throw him into the lock-up, dig into his pockets, take the rest of his money, give him a dozen lashes with a whip to sober him up, and let him go home."

The Shubinka settlement was buried, so to speak, in filth. Like Irmino, it was littered with garbage and various wastes. Throughout all the years from the founding of the mine until the revolution, its owners did not spend a single kopeck on clearing the mud and garbage from the streets where the workers lived. There were not even toilets on those streets.

There was only one park in Shubinka. But workers, of course, were forbidden from entering. Director Semashko's house stood in the park. The park was enclosed by a high fence. Cossacks guarded the park.

Like Irmino, Kadievka is unrecognisable after the revolution. There are 80,000 inhabitants in the city. There are many enterprises there: ten mines, a coke-chemical plant, a foundry and mechanical

plant, and a woodworking factory. A power station, a meat processing plant. Hundreds of buildings have been constructed. The former Torgovaya Street, which Kochergin talks about, has not preserved a single old building. In the place where a tavern reeking of vodka and cabbage once stood, a large two-story building has been constructed. On its ground floor are large stores and a barbershop, and on the second floor are workers' apartments. On the street, there are two- and three-story houses, a movie theatre, a dining hall, and new stores. The street is paved. Good sidewalks have been laid out on it.

In just three years, seven new schools of two and three stories have been built in the city. Five day-cares and kindergartens have been built.

The former director's park is now the city park of culture and rest. It has, of course, been greatly expanded, and tens of thousands of new trees have been planted in it. The park is a favourite place not only for the residents of the city but also for the residents of our settlement. It features a good reading room, a relaxation pavilion, a hall of mirrors (room of laughter), a billiard room, a shooting range, a library, a dance floor, a volleyball court, and a children's town with a carousel, small bridges, ladders, slides, and swings.

There are more than ten clubs in the city. In addition to the central city library, there are libraries in every club, in every enterprise, and even in some dormitories.

The city dwellers are particularly proud of the "Stakhanovets" movie theatre, built not so long ago. Now a Palace of Culture is being built in the city.

The year of the Stakhanovite movement was interesting in the life of the entire city. During this year, many new buildings were constructed, many new trees were planted, and new streets were paved. The city of Sergo became one of the cleanest in the Donets Basin.

The Stakhanovite movement gave us a great deal. People grew, mines grew, cities grew.

When we celebrated the first Stakhanovite anniversary, we were pleased that the mine's successes were recognised not only by us but also by the government. After all, previously the mine was simply

called “Tsentralnaya-Irmino.” The government granted our request and named the mine after the leader of nations, Comrade Stalin.

By the anniversary of the Stakhanovite movement, I received many letters from enterprises and individual comrades, and received many congratulations. Hero of the Soviet Union Comrade Belyakov wrote to us:

“The miners of the Donbass have to overcome no fewer difficulties underground than pilots do in the sky. But for the Stakhanovites, who carry out the instructions of our great leader Comrade Stalin, there can be no barriers either on earth or in the sky.”

From the letters, I learned what great successes the Stakhanovites of many cities had achieved. Here is what they wrote to me from the city of Maykop in the Azov-Black Sea Krai:

“Good day, Comrade Stakhanov! Allow us to congratulate you on the anniversary of your movement, named after you—the Stakhanovite movement—and to convey a fiery, comradely Bolshevik greeting from the Stakhanovites of the Maykop bakery—Brigade No. 3, working under the leadership of brigadier Andrey Moiseevich Boldyrev.

Comrade Stakhanov, in connection with the anniversary of the Stakhanovite movement, we decided to share how we are working now. Before the Stakhanovite movement, our brigade consisted of: 5 masters, 12 apprentices, 10 basket-weavers/carriers, and 5 bread-carriers. For this amount of workforce, the production quota was 9,800 kilograms, with:

Heating the oven ..... 50 minutes
Loading ..... 20 minutes
Baking ..... 10 minutes
Unloading ..... 20 minutes

That is, one hearth cycle of one oven took 2 hours and 40 minutes, whereby the output per master was 1,976 kilograms and per assistant master 420 kilograms (of annual production), and the daily wage was 6 rubles 19 kopecks for a master and 5 rubles 09 kopecks

for an assistant. Working an eight-hour shift, the brigade completed three hearth cycles across ten ovens.

We also joined the Stakhanovite movement and achieved the following results:

Now the brigade consists of 3 masters, 9 assistant masters, 4 bread-carriers, and 6 basket-carriers.

Heating the oven is now . . . . 37 minutes
Loading .... 13 minutes
Baking ..... 06 minutes
Unloading ..... 11 minutes

Now one hearth cycle took 1 hour and 47 minutes. Output per master is 3,952 kilograms, and per assistant master is 1,317 kilograms. The master's wage is 11 rubles 72 kopecks a day, and the assistant master's wage is 8 rubles 09 kopecks.

But we are not stopping at what we have achieved. In connection with the anniversary of the Stakhanovite movement, we are already aiming, with this same workforce, for six hearth cycles across six ovens during an eight-hour shift by the following means:

Heating the oven ..... 15 minutes
Loading ..... 9 minutes
Baking ..... 50 minutes
Unloading ..... . 6 minutes

That is, one hearth cycle takes 1 hour and 20 minutes. We will implement six hearth cycles not only on six ovens, but on ten.

In concluding our letter, we assure you that we will achieve six hearth cycles on ten ovens—in this, we give you our Bolshevik word.

On behalf of the brigade: brigadier Boldyrev, laboratory assistant Gorchenko, master Nevzorov, quality inspector Chalykh, assistant master Nagoryansky."

From Leningrad, I received a letter from the workers of the Neva Machine-Building Plant named after Lenin. Here is what they wrote:

"Comrade Stakhanov! On the day of this glorious anniversary, allow us to convey to you a warm Stakhanovite greeting…"

The more time passes since the day of your first record, the more Stakhanovites we have here in the Soviet Union. This date will never be forgotten, because you, a hero of our heavy industry, were the first to respond with action to our deeply loved Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin. Following you, thousands of builders of socialism rose up and, under the leadership of the Communist Party, carried the banner of the Stakhanovite movement. Together with you, our collective celebrates this glorious anniversary and sums up these glorious results, so that on the second anniversary we can achieve even greater success for the benefit of the further prosperity of our motherland.

Over the Stakhanovite year, our plant—and we along with it—has changed so much that, in sending you our congratulations, we cannot remain silent about our achievements.

Our most remarkable achievement is the plant's transition to producing Stakhanovite machines. All parts, from the pattern to the final assembly of the machines, are made using Stakhanovite methods. We began building Stakhanovite machines on the initiative of our leader of the Leningrad Bolsheviks, Comrade Zhdanov.

We made the first Stakhanovite turbo-blower in two months instead of six. In manufacturing the second Stakhanovite blower, we cut off another 18 working days. This method of manufacturing machines allowed the plant to significantly shorten the production cycle and lower the cost price. Our country must receive machines in a short time, of excellent quality, and cheap. We remember this well. Right now, we are making a Stakhanovite turbo-exhauster, Stakhanovite boiler units, etc. In a word, we are expanding Stakhanovite experience to all units.

The quality of production has improved. Now we no longer have those colossal losses from defective goods that we had before the Stakhanovite year. Over seven months, the plant made 1,570,000 rubles in net profit.

All this was achieved thanks to the introduction of Stakhanovite methods and persistent study. Technical education has become as mandatory for us as food. 438 people are studying in Stakhanovite

courses, and 113 in courses for masters of socialist labor. Stakhanovites of the new quotas have grown, new masters of socialist labor have emerged, and now a new enrolment for Stakhanovite courses and courses for masters of socialist labor has been announced. 380 people are completing their technical minimum, while the rest are studying at worker's faculties (*rabfaks*), in technical schools, and in institutes.

We too have grown over the Stakhanovite year. A participant in the First All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites, turner Dushenkov, now works as a foreman; Vlasenkov, a Stakhanovite of the six-ton hammer, has been promoted to shift foreman of the forge. Comrade Petrov became a foreman of a large six-ton hammer, turner Fedorov grew into a foreman of the boiler shop, and Stakhanovite Grebenov works as an inspection foreman. Stakhanovites Petrov, Shurupov, and Voitov are studying at the Industrial Academy. These are by no means isolated examples of people's growth over the Stakhanovite year.

Our productivity is high, and our earnings are high too. The lowest earnings of the Stakhanovites is 500 rubles, but we have Stakhanovites who earn 1,000 rubles each. Over this glorious year, the Stakhanovites have become more cultured people. It is no coincidence that all of them are readers of the plant library.

Stakhanovites are Stalin's pupils. It is a joy to work, life is cheerful. The care of the Party and the government fills us with vigour for the further struggle for high labor productivity.

You can't recount everything. The victories are great. But we all remember the instructions of Comrade Stalin, who teaches us not to stop at what has been achieved and not to get conceited. Bearing in mind this instruction from our beloved Comrade Stalin, on the second anniversary of the Stakhanovite movement we will work even better, raise new Stakhanovites, and turn the entire plant into a Stakhanovite one.

Please accept, Comrade Alexey Stakhanov, our greetings and wishes for further success in your work.

The workers of the Leningrad Neva Machine-Building Plant named after Lenin: Shurupov, Pridorogin, Mironov, Sokolov, Vertilov, Kubikov, Nikolaev, and others.

From the city of Rybinsk, I received a letter from the workers of the Uritsky warehouse of the "Volgoles" trust.

"Dear Alexey Grigoryevich!

We work in the most backward industry, where mastering machinery is a bottleneck. Your example of working with a machine gave our collective an impulse toward the correct mastery and utilisation of machinery.

A year ago, our machines were still working at 40–50% capacity, delaying the output of timber exports, pit props, and sleepers. Poor utilisation of machinery required labour-intensive manual work, a large workforce, and funds.

Today we can report to you that over the course of the year, our collective systematically transferred your example with the jackhammer to the machines operating here: swing saws, barking machines, tie-cutting machines, winches, and elevators. As a result, productivity on the machines increased: on saws up to 250%, on barking machines up to 230%, on unloading units up to 210%. This made it possible to fulfill the tasks assigned to the warehouse for timber exports by 155%, for pit props in the second quarter by 113%, and in the third quarter by 160%.

The rise in the productivity of machinery gave us the opportunity to cover the shortfalls of the first quarter in pit props and gives us confidence in the early fulfillment of the entire annual plan in both quantitative and qualitative indicators.

To commemorate the anniversary of the Stakhanovite movement, the collective of workers and engineering-technical staff (*ITR*) of the warehouse is sending to your mine, our dear Alexey Grigoryevich, a route of uniform, dry mine timber and assures you that the collective will not stop at the results achieved. It will achieve greater results and better indicators so as to ensure that the coal industry has the opportunity to report to our great, dear leader Comrade Stalin on the fulfillment of the Five-Year Plan in four years."

Both on the day of the first anniversary of the Stakhanovite movement and on the day of the second anniversary, there were huge rallies at the mine. They were broadcast across the entire Soviet Union via the Comintern Radio Station. And what took place at our

mine could be heard in all corners of our country. We told the working people of the entire Soviet Union how we had grown and what successes we had achieved.

When I was at the 8th All-Union Congress of Soviets in Moscow, where I met many fellow Stakhanovites, I learned that much had changed in their lives too.

Petr Krivonos—a former locomotive engineer—became a major economic manager. L. M. Kaganovich appointed him chief of the Slavyansk locomotive depot.

Nikolay Smetanin—a former shoe-lasting machine operator—became a shoe shop foreman, and later the deputy director of the "Skorokhod" factory, and he is handling his job well.

Blacksmith Aleksandr Busygin became an instructor of Stakhanovite work methods among blacksmiths and later enrolled for studies at the Stalin Industrial Academy.

Moscow milling machine operator Ivan Gudov became an instructor of Stakhanovite methods and is studying at the Industrial Academy.

Dusl and Marusl Vinogradov and A. Busygin.

Dusya and Marusya Vinogradova, Gorlovka hewer Artyukhov, and Moscow drill operator Slavnikova are studying at the Industrial Academy.

Yesterday a worker—today an instructor, a sector chief, a director. Yesterday a worker—today a student.

Yesterday an unknown person—today respected by the entire country. That is how we grow. That is how people grow in our country!

What can be said after this except words of heartfelt gratitude to our Party, our government, our dear Comrade Stalin, who made us human beings and who give people happiness?

TWO YEARS

(Here I present my article "Two Years", published in the newspaper Pravda on August 30, 1937.)

Two years ago, on the night of August 31, in the Donbass, at the "Tsentralnaya-Irmino" mine, which now bears the name of Comrade Stalin, an event occurred that was destined to be recorded in the history of the struggle for communism. On the surface, a simple event. Having come to an agreement among themselves, a jackhammer hewer and a *partorg* (Party organiser), with the active assistance of the sector chief, lengthened the coal face ledge and divided the labor of the hewer and the timberman, which yielded a productivity unprecedented for those days and overturned all existing quotas.

The event at the Stalin mine immediately became known nationwide and rapidly grew into a movement of innovators of the national economy. The old quotas were cracking everywhere, breaking like ice floes in a spring flood. To be a Stakhanovite became an expression of devotion to the motherland, the Party, and the great Stalin.

We, the miners, surprised and delighted, looked at what we had accomplished, and there was no end to our joy. We were happy that our example was highly elevated and appreciated by the brilliant mind of Comrade Stalin—the father of the Stakhanovite movement.

With the greatest emotion, I reread every time Comrade Stalin's speech at the First All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites, in which every word is a profound truth of life.

Looking back at what has been lived through over these two years, one clearly sees and joyfully feels that Comrade Stalin's words are coming true, being embodied into reality. It is also a joy to feel that my example was not accidental. It was prepared by the long years of work by the government and the Party, and personally by Comrade Stalin.

I remember as if it were now with what enthusiasm we applauded Comrade Stalin when he said to us in his speech at the conference:

"Life has become better, comrades. Life has become more cheerful. And when life is cheerful, work goes well."

One also recalls what a wild howl and shriek the fascists of all countries raised around the Stakhanovite movement, what torrents of filth and abuse they poured upon us. You bet! The Soviet Union is not only growing richer—it is becoming more invincible with every passing day. In the Stakhanovite movement—vital and fruitful for socialism—the fascists saw the growing power of socialism.

It is clear why the frenzied dogs of fascism—the Trotskyite-Bukharinite saboteurs, wreckers, and spies—tried with such persistence to strangle the Stakhanovite movement. But nothing came of their efforts. The movement for high labor productivity is capturing more and more new branches of the economy, new areas and regions; it is growing and expanding.

The Stakhanovite movement has given a lot of wealth to the country and the people over these two years. This is evidenced by the growth in production of our industry and agriculture. The Stakhanovite movement has brought forth from its ranks new cadres of future commanders. Hundreds of Stakhanovites went to the industrial academies and institutes of the country. For instance, this year, besides myself, Sukhostavets, Telnykh, Tkachenko, Dubovoy, and others have been accepted from the Donbass into the Kaganovich Industrial Academy. At the entrance exams of the Industrial Academy, representatives of the Stakhanovite movement from various branches of the national economy met. Many hundreds

of Stakhanovites during this time became excellent production commanders. Thousands of Stakhanovites became masters, chiefs of sectors and shops.

Hundreds of us became instructors of our own work methods. In the Donbass, besides myself, Molostov, Melnikov, Shemyakin, Tkachenko, Telnykh, and many others work as instructors for the implementation of their methods. Each brings something new to his branch and makes it the property of all workers.

What has experience shown us? The very fact of the appearance of an "instructor of Stakhanovite work methods" at a mine already forced many engineers and technicians to move faster. Shock workers (*udarniks*) and Stakhanovites came to us, the instructors, for help and advice. We went down into the shafts to them, teaching, passing on our experience, finding and promoting new masters. Thousands of new masters in the Donbass are the fruit of the instructors' work. Instructors of Stakhanovite work methods are a great force. But it must be admitted that in the Donbass, this force is still being kept under wraps. Molostov, Tkachenko, Telnykh, and I could have done ten times more. Nor are they promoting new instructors.

The Stakhanovite movement lives on; it is spreading both deep and wide. It has also drawn in many engineering and technical workers. The entire Donbass knows and respects the names of the innovator engineer Zhukov and instructor Sabozhkov, among others.

Two years of the Stakhanovite movement have left a deep mark on the lives of the workers. Much has changed for us. Tens of thousands of working men and women have studied and are studying, having realised that you cannot maintain the title of Stakhanovite, a master of your trade, through practice alone without deep study. The cultural level has risen, and wages have increased. I can say this using the example of the Stalin mine. You won't meet such an eccentric person among us now who would dare to assert that today's methods, quotas, and earnings are the last word.

The essence of our work is the continuous enrichment and improvement of labor methods. Our method knows no stagnation. It is continuously changing and improving thanks to the creativity of

the collective. The best people of the Donbass have put and continue to put their skill into it.

The misfortune of the Donbass, including our mine, is the large lag in preparatory work, which has narrowed the already narrow face line. This, together with the disorder prevailing at many mines and in trusts, prevents Stakhanovites from expanding their potential, and prevents tens of thousands of shock workers from winning the title of masters.

Over the past six months, the spirit of collectivism and solidarity among the workers has risen high. More than ever, they provide production assistance to one another. The majority of Stakhanovites teach their skill to young and lagging coal miners.

Let's take the Stalin mine. There are 75 coal masters here. All of them teach young coal miners. Many of the masters show great promise. These are Ivan Dyukanov—brother of the order-bearer Miron Dyukanov, Marchenko, Grishin, Shibaev, Gurov, Sysoev, and others.

Today, just as two years ago, our combat task is to fulfill Comrade Stalin's instruction "to help the Stakhanovites develop the Stakhanovite movement further and spread it wide and deep".

First of all, the commanders and organisers of production must help us. They are capable of leading; they have a lot of technical knowledge. They, just like us Stakhanovites, need to master Bolshevik principles as quickly and thoroughly as possible. Bolshevism teaches vigilance, sharpness, persistence in achieving the set goal, discipline, and order. Without this, it is difficult to work now, and even more so to lead.

Now our Great country is celebrating the 20th anniversary of the October Socialist Revolution.

Comrade Stalin pointed out that the Stakhanovite movement itself is the result of all the victories of the October Socialist Revolution, and its causes lie in the fundamental improvement of the material condition of all working people, in the absence of any exploitation among us, and in the availability of advanced technology and cadres who have managed to master the technology and drive it forward.

The results of socialism are embodied in the great Stalin Constitution. The Constitution of the USSR, Comrade Stalin said at the Extraordinary 8th All-Union Congress of Soviets, is:

"...a historic document that treats simply and concisely, almost in a protocol style, the facts of the victory of socialism in the USSR, the facts of the liberation of the working people of the USSR from capitalist slavery, and the facts of the victory of a fully developed, thoroughly consistent democracy in the USSR."

Comrade Stalin said that the Constitution:

"...arms our working class, our peasantry, our working intelligentsia spiritually. This drives forward and raises a feeling of legitimate pride. This strengthens faith in our strengths and mobilises us for a new struggle to win new victories for communism."

On the basis of the Stalin Constitution, numerous pre-election meetings of workers, collective farmers, Red Army soldiers, and employees are now taking place across the country with tremendous enthusiasm, nominating the best people of the country as candidates for deputies to the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities.

The working people of the Soviet Union demonstrate their solidarity around the Party of Lenin and Stalin and the Soviet government. All the peoples of the USSR, workers, collective farmers, Red Army soldiers, and employees cast their first vote for the Great leader Comrade Stalin, who ensured the historic victories of socialism and is leading us forward to win new victories for communism.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CORRESPONDENCE

Out of the many hundreds of letters received by Alexey Stakhanov (unfortunately, not all have survived), the editorial board selected a portion of the letters from workers, employees, Red Army soldiers, collective farmers, and children, and publishes them in this chapter.

Comrade Stakhanov included some of these letters in his own narrative; others he did not quote because, as he put it, "they praise Stakhanov too much." We print them as a separate chapter as they are of public interest. We also publish some of Stakhanov's own letters.

LETTERS TO STAKHANOV

Letter from the Drillers of Vaigach

"Greetings, dear Comrade Stakhanov!

We send you warm, friendly greetings from the Arctic. We, a group of Stakhanovite drillers, gathered today at the apartment of our best Stakhanovite driller—the master of the hammer drill, Comrade Leshchenko—and decided to write you a collective letter. Taking advantage of the arrival of the first airplane from the mainland, piloted by flyer Comrade Farikh, we received the latest news about the Stakhanovite movement. We work in the far Arctic at the Amderma fluorite mine, extracting the rare and valuable mineral fluorspar, which is used in the metallurgical industry and especially for aluminium.

We learned about the Stakhanovite movement on the mainland after the All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites, where Comrade Stalin delivered his historic speech. From that period, the Stakhanovite movement was born here as well. We work with a hammer drill of the 'Jack' system. Our mine is unique. The specific features of our mine are that, firstly, we work in permafrost, and

timbering is almost never used. Our Jack-type hammer is of a light model. It drills well in rock hardness 6, but is very inefficient for hardness 15. Our quotas are set depending on the rock hardness. For example, at rock hardness 6, the drilling quota is 12 linear meters, and at hardness 15, it is 3 meters; before the Stakhanovite movement, rarely anyone exceeded these quotas. But after we launched the Stakhanovite movement, many of us began to fulfill two, three, and even four quotas. How we achieved this is what we want to share in this letter.

First of all, we persistently studied our drill and the geological conditions in which we have to work. Great help was provided by our power plant and the mine's compressor facility, which previously gave us air pressure for the drills only within 2.7 to 3 atmospheres, and then brought it up to 4.5 atmospheres. As a result of the developing Stakhanovite movement, we set ourselves the task of overfulfilling the plan month after month. Soon we achieved this.

Along with fulfilling the plan, we increased the number of Stakhanovites. On the basis of introducing Stakhanovite labor methods, we will raise our productivity even higher. We have the conditions for this. Firstly, the polar night has ended, and the day has arrived and is growing longer. We already see the sun every day, and that means a lot. After all, the dark night lasted for three months for us. Secondly, we are now switching to a more advanced, heavy-type drill. Thirdly, we have already accumulated experience working in the Arctic, adjusted to the rocks, and studied them. All this, Comrade Stakhanov, will enable us to raise our productivity even higher and give the country more fluorspar.

Comrade Stakhanov, we ask you to share with us the work experience of the Stakhanovites at your mine and in the Donbass in general.

Our professions are almost identical. You work with a jackhammer, and we work with a hammer drill, and we would very much like to strengthen our bond with you and systematically share production experience.

Long live the Stakhanovite movement, first initiated by you, Comrade Stakhanov, and taken up by all the working people of our socialist motherland!

Long live the Communist Party—the friend and teacher of the peoples, our great, our beloved leader and the best Stakhanovite, Comrade Stalin!

With deep comradely greetings, we shake your hand!

Stakhanovites-polar explorers of the Vaigach Mining and Ore Trust: Tishchenko, Leshchenko, Temkin, Rudchenko, Belenky, Nasonov, Dmitriev, Stulnikov, Ananyev, Antipin, Dmitriev, Ivanish.

Amderma, April 1936."

Letter from the Tea Plantation Workers of Georgia

"Dear Alexey!

With great attention and joy, we read your letter to the notable workers of tea and citrus crops in Georgia.

The Laituri Tea Sovkhoz named after Kirov, where five years ago there was an impenetrable forest, is considered the largest and most advanced sovkhoz in Georgia. We want to briefly share with you the successes our sovkhoz has achieved.

In addition to 1,015 hectares of tea plantations, tung trees have been cultivated over five years on an area of 130 hectares within the sovkhoz. On an area of 88 hectares—Japanese persimmons, mandarins, and lemons; on an area of 6.3 hectares and 50 hectares—bamboo. We have mandarin and lemon saplings in the amount of 23,000 units and other valuable crops.

In 1930, when the sovkhoz was being established, all the workers huddled in two long barracks and simply under wooden sheds. At the beginning of 1936, these barracks-sheds are no longer there. On the territory of the sovkhoz, 32 individual and 9 two-story houses have been erected, along with new buildings, a school, a crèche, a kindergarten, a hospital, a dining hall, a recreation room (*Krasny ugolok*), a club, etc. The paved roads of the sovkhoz settlement are adorned with decorative plants.

Movies are shown daily in the settlement, and concerts and dance evenings are frequent. At the newly built stadium, workers participate in physical culture; they are cheerful, healthy, and happy.

The ranks of Stakhanovites in the sovkhoz fields are growing every day. The material well-being of the sovkhoz workers is continuously rising; the vast majority of the workers have their own individual plots, vegetable gardens, pigs, goats, poultry, cows, etc.

Life has become better, dear Alexey, life has become more cheerful. And that is why the voices of the sovkhoz workers sing ditties (*chastushki*) so loudly and happily:

'We will accept Demchenko's challenge, We will take the Stakhanovite course, We will raise productivity,— We will gather tea beyond the plan. There is coal and sugar in heaps, But we won't let you down either, We will treat our native country To fragrant, strong tea! We won't drink tea holding sugar in our teeth, And we have lemons for flavour, And we'll add for dessert Citron jam as well.'

The earnings of each of the sovkhoz workers amount to hundreds of rubles. But we do not get conceited. Maria Demchenko challenged us to a competition, and you wrote us a letter expressing confidence that we would achieve victory in this competition. And so we are mobilising our forces now to justify your hopes.

Stakhanovites of the Laituri Tea Sovkhoz named after Kirov."

Letter from Oil Worker Shishkanov

"Greetings, dear Comrade Stakhanov!

This letter is from Mikhail Shishkanov, who visited you in the Donbass, specifically at the 'Tsentralnaya-Irmino' mine, in October 1935.

I vividly recall my conversation with you and Comrade Dyukanov about the Stakhanovite work experience. Upon leaving Irmino, I concluded a socialist competition agreement with you; later, such an agreement was concluded between your mine and our oil field named after Comrade Azizbekov. Since the time I visited you, talking about Stakhanovite methods, I have grown a great deal and have mastered my qualification well.

During this time, I experienced the most joyful, happiest moment of my life. In January of this year, I attended a reception with the leaders of the Party and government, where I saw dear

Comrade Stalin. I was awarded the highest distinction—an order; you were also honoured with the Order of Lenin, and I hasten to congratulate you on this.

Recently, Alexey Grigoryevich, I learned that you are currently working as an instructor for the 'Kadievugol' trust, introducing Stakhanovite methods on the jackhammer. This is a very good initiative—promoting Stakhanovites to instructional work. This will help pull the Donbass out of the shortfall in which it currently finds itself. The other day, I too was transferred to instructional work, and therefore I decided to write you this letter.

Our oil field is also facing a shortfall. We have not yet properly developed the Stakhanovite movement, nor have we fully applied your remarkable work methods. True, we meet our oil production plan by 100%, but with drilling, we are lagging behind significantly due to frequent machinery breakdowns.

I turn to you with a request—write and tell me how you organised your work as an instructor. This will help me in my instructional practice; it will help bring our oil field into the ranks of the advanced.

Pass on my sincere regards to Comrades Dyukanov, Petrov, Kontsedalov, and other Stakhanovites.

M. Shishkanov. Baku, June 8, 1936."

Letter from Quality Inspector (*Braker*) Molchanov

"Dear Comrade Alexey Stakhanov!

I have a big request for you. I work as a quality inspector for pit timber at the Mozhga Logging Enterprise of the 'Udmurtles' trust.

Our logging enterprise supplies pit timber to the coal industry of the Donbass, namely to the trusts 'Kadievugol', 'Chistyakovugol', 'Donbassantratsit', 'Artemugol', and 'Shakhtantratsit'. Last year, we fulfilled the timber supply plan for these trusts in both qualitative and quantitative indicators. In terms of plan fulfillment, our logging enterprise took first place in the region last year.

This current logging season, however, is proceeding unsatisfactorily. We failed to fulfill the plan for the fourth quarter of

1935 for the hauling of raw materials. Things are no better in the first quarter of 1936. The situation with the processing and shipping of pit timber to the Donbass mines is particularly bad. The managers of the logging enterprise pay no attention to the processing of pit timber or its timely shipment, and every cubic meter of it literally has to be taken by storm. I have turned to the district party committee and the district executive committee several times, but the district organisations have provided me with no help. I also wrote about this situation to the district newspaper, but even that did not help.

I ask you, dear Comrade Stakhanov, to provide me with assistance. Write a letter to the Mozhga District Party Committee, in which you detail what kind of shortage the mines are experiencing regarding pit timber, what grade of timber you need, and how its consumption by the mines has increased in connection with the Stakhanovite movement. Point out in this letter the harm caused to the mines because we often send low-quality pit timber. When I try to reject such timber, they view it here as fault-finding and reason like this: 'This isn't for export; no matter what timber we send, they'll accept it anyway,' and we inspectors are forced to accept unprocessed timber, still in its bark, because we know how badly the mines need it.

I earnestly request you to write such a letter to our organisations, and if you find the time, drop a couple of lines to me as well.

Inspector Molchanov. Mozhga, March 27, 1936."

Letter from Literary Club Member Smirnova

"Silently in the deep coal face, Stakhanov strikes with his hammer. The hammer is heavy, the swings are not easy, The hewer produces coal beyond the quota. He strikes relentlessly, the boulders are smashed, More than a hundred tons have been cut, Stakhanov stood up, rode out in the cage, A wondrous feat has been accomplished by him. The hewer-miner fights for a record. He is cheerful, strong, and eager. He was the first to answer the leader, Answered the wise call. A great movement has unfolded, A beautiful example has been shown. The hewer is held in honor, Stakhanov is famous, The entire

USSR is proud of him. Honor to his labor, glory to his feat, Stakhanov is noble, great, He is a miner to be proud of, A gallant hero—a Bolshevik. Long live the mining hero! Long live Stalin, the world leader!

Highly esteemed Comrade Stakhanov!

Please accept my poem dedicated to your anniversary, and bless me with your response, which I will be proud of.

Nina Smirnova. Taganrog, Andreev Plant."

Letter from Moscow Subway Builders (*Metrostroyevtsy*)

"Dear Comrade Stakhanov!

We send a Metrostroy greeting to you, the organiser of the fighting movement for raising socialist labor productivity.

We have read and heard many times about how brilliantly you work and how your best comrades and students work.

We know that the jackhammer, even more so than here on our subway construction, is the primary mechanism through which coal is mined in many Donbass pits.

We also know from our own experience how many troubles and malfunctions in a jackhammer depend on the lack of lubrication of its parts during operation.

We read about the importance you yourself attach to the good lubrication of the hammer. After all, when you went to work in the pit, you took a bottle of lubricant with you so that your hammer wouldn't suddenly fail you or break down during work.

If carrying bottles or oil cans around is inconvenient for us at Metrostroy, we can well imagine what an inconvenience this creates for you in pits with steeply dipping seams. Most importantly, lubricating hammers from a bottle at the coal face robs you of precious minutes of your Stakhanovite working time.

To eliminate these inconveniences, at our pit of the NIS Metrostroy, in January of this year, we began conducting experiments on the automatic lubrication of jackhammers using oil cans from the Kharkov Coal Institute. The oil cans had to be screwed onto the fittings of the jackhammers. They are inconvenient because

they make the hammer heavier and interfere with its operation; therefore, our tunnelers were reluctant to take hammers with these oil cans.

The management of our pit also supported us and organised a test of hammers with our oil cans.

We tested the hammers with our oil cans here, and now we want you to test them at your mine too. Therefore, we are sending you a gift of two jackhammers with automatic lubrication and ask you to test them and, in a comradely manner, point out any deficiencies in the automatic lubrication that you notice.

We will be glad if our small effort helps the miners of the Donbass, even to a small extent, in their glorious struggle for coal, for the introduction of Stakhanovite labor methods, and for the fulfillment of the promise given by the miners to the Party, the government, and our dear Comrade Stalin to complete the Donbass coal Five-Year Plan in 4 years!

With comradely greetings, Locksmiths of Pit No. 52 of the Moscow Subway Construction: K. A. Azuyev, V. M. Bogoyavlensky. Moscow, July 25, 1936."

Letter from Participants of the All-Union Women's Auto Run

"The participants of the All-Union Women's Auto Run dedicated to the Stalin Constitution, passing through the birthplace of the Stakhanovite movement, the Stalin mine, send you warm greetings. Over the 6,841 kilometres that we have already covered in our domestic vehicles, we have seen the cities, villages, and settlements of our motherland and the colourful, prosperous life in them.

We are confident that the Stalin Constitution will inspire the Stakhanovites and shock workers of industry, transport, and agriculture of the Donbass to even greater victories.

Run Commander Volkova, Political Instructor Orlova. May 11, 1936, City of Kalinin."

Letter from Tankman Loginov

"To the initiator of the great Stakhanovite movement, order-bearer Alexey Stakhanov, a Red Army tankman's greeting!

Dear Comrade Stakhanov!

Your glorious name—the name of a revolutionary on the coal front, a destroyer of old quotas and limits—is borne by thousands of the finest people of our immense motherland, who have taken up your great initiative and begun to work in a new, Stakhanovite way!

In the ranks of the heroic Red Army and in our glorious OKDVA (Special Red Banner Far Eastern Army), thousands of soldiers and commanders honourably bear your name, having earned it through Stakhanovite work in mastering combat military technology. I, Loginov, a Red Army border guard of the OKDVA, was the first in my unit to raise the banner of the Stakhanovite movement and achieved great success in mastering the technology entrusted to us, the border guard soldiers. I systematically fulfill all our standards by 300–400%.

With a Red Army tankman's greeting, Loginov. Far Eastern Krai (DVK), May 27, 1936."

Letter from Student Irisov

"Comrade Stakhanov!

Allow me to introduce myself. I am a student at the Donets Industrial Institute, specialising in mining exploitation, Krasov Andrey Vasilyevich. At present, I am vacationing at the Svyatogorsk rest home.

Now, allow me to begin on the substance of the matter. During the preparation of my graduation thesis project, I proposed a system for developing steeply dipping seams. I would like you, Comrade Stakhanov, to help me implement it in practice. Desirably at your mine, and directly with your participation and guidance.

I won't write down now what my proposal consists of—it would turn out very long, and besides, I cannot mail you the blueprints. It seems to me it will be better if I speak with you in person.

I think, Comrade Stakhanov, that through a persistent struggle, you and I will achieve another major victory in the coal industry, double or triple the productivity of the mines, and lower the cost price of coal on the basis of your work methods.

I firmly shake your hand. Your acquaintance, Andrey Krasov."

Letter from Shoemaker Alekseyev

"A year ago, I read a report about your record labor productivity in the newspaper *Pravda*, and back then the idea occurred to me to transfer your work method into my own production. I carried out a series of measures, organising my workspace, and achieved a monthly quota fulfillment of 300–400% while saving 15–20% on leather goods. Working in a Stakhanovite manner, I set a number of records that are of world significance.

Stakhanovite of the Mikoyan Factory, P. Alekseyev.
Rostov-on-Don."

Letter from Bakery Worker Kolodyazhny

"When I first read your article in the newspaper, in which you described your work methods, I thought hard about whether your methods could be applied here. Having graduated from the technical school with 'excellent' marks, I realised that your methods are fully applicable to our production.

I switched from working on three ovens to five. The results were not long in coming. With a bread baking quota of 9 tons, I began to produce 18–19 tons in an 8-hour working day. The rest of the oven loaders at the bakery followed my example.

I am proud to have become the initiator of introducing Stakhanovite labor methods in my shop, for which I have been awarded prizes several times.

Stakhanovite of the Rostov Bakery, Mikhail Kolodyazhny."

Letter from the Pioneers of the City of Stalino

"Greetings, dear Alexey Grigoryevich!

We, the Pioneers of the detachment named after you, closely follow your work and the development of the Stakhanovite movement in our country.

We eagerly await a meeting with you to tell you in detail about our studies and work, which give our detachment the right to bear the name of Stakhanov."

"And while there is no opportunity to meet with you, we will tell you about our lives in letters.

There are fifty people in our detachment. We all study in three schools in the city of Stalino. Some of our Pioneers are already in the 7th and 8th grades.

In terms of academic performance, our detachment took first place across all three schools. The passing rate for our detachment is 94%. But this is not yet a complete victory. We also have some children who lag behind in their studies and lower the indicators of our entire detachment.

But we give you, Alexey Grigoryevich, our honest Pioneer word that with the help of the teachers and our collective assistance, these children will catch up by the end of the first semester and will study well.

Right now, our detachment is the first in the Soviet Union to begin building a children's radio, a telephone station, and a telegraph.

We will build all of this ourselves, and once we build it, we will operate these institutions ourselves.

With this, we conclude our letter. Upon receiving a reply from you, we will immediately write to tell you how our construction plan is being fulfilled.

We earnestly ask you, Alexey Grigoryevich, to come visit us, if only for a single day. We have a lot to tell you and show you.

On behalf of the Pioneers of the A. G. Stakhanov detachments, with Pioneer greetings, Golin, Alferova, Sycheva.

City of Stalino."

Letter from Pioneer Germayze

"Dear Comrade Stakhanov!

Our team, like all the other teams in our detachment, having read the letter from the Pioneers of the Radishchev School, pledged to prepare some kind of gift for the 10th Congress of the Komsomol. We decided to prepare embroideries for the congress, an album dedicated to the legendary commander Shchors, and we will write a play that we will perform ourselves. Personally, by that time, I will write a poem dedicated to your records.

Besides all this, our team pledged to achieve excellent academic performance this quarter so that, as adults, we can quickly win the title of Stakhanovites.

I am writing this letter, on the one hand, on behalf of the team and from myself personally. And so I want to inform you that I have already written the first part of the poem 'Alexey Stakhanov.' However, I have run into some difficulties.

Firstly, I cannot recall in which month you cut 102 tons of coal, and secondly, I know very little about how you achieved your records (obviously, you thought about it a lot, or how else?). Please forgive me for not knowing the date of your record, but I honestly admit that I do not know it.

I know how busy you are, but I would very much ask you to write even just a couple of words in reply to this letter. How it would delight and inspire the kids in my team! I decided to send you the first part of the poem and ask you to answer my questions with at least two words and provide your feedback on the verses.

With Pioneer greetings, Yu. Germayze."

Letter from Homeless Youth Vakhno

"Esteemed Comrade Alexey Stakhanov!

Please answer this letter for me. Right now, I am homeless. But since the government is reaching out to me and granting me the right to labor, I want to justify this right with honor. I would very much

like to, and earnestly ask you to, permit me to be your apprentice and, under your guidance, master the technique of mining.

With comradely greetings, Sergey Vakhno. City of Stalino."

Letter from the Railway Workers

"To Comrades Alexey Stakhanov and Petr Krivonos.

The Stakhanovites of transport and industry of the territory of the Batraki Settlement Soviet (Batraki Station of the V. V. Kuybyshev Railway), having gathered for a rally of Stakhanovites dedicated to the glorious anniversary of the great Stakhanovite movement in our country, send to you—the first innovators of the Stakhanovite movement in industry and transport—our warm Stakhanovite greetings!

Today we have in our ranks Stakhanovite heroes who have been awarded the highest distinction, order-bearers. But we still have few shops and no enterprises that have completely switched to your work methods. At our rally, we have set the task—by the October anniversary, to turn the majority of transport and industrial enterprises into Stakhanovite ones.

Long live the great Stakhanovite movement in our country. Long live the great, wise, our beloved Comrade Stalin!

On behalf of the rally of Stakhanovites in the number of 450 people—the Presidium of the Rally. Chairman of the Rally, Kuznetsov."

Letter from the Miners of the Ridder Mine

"On the day of the first anniversary of the Stakhanovite movement, the general meeting of the miners of the Ridder mine sends you a militant miner's greeting.

Thanks to the Stakhanovite movement, our mine raised its production from a thousand tons of ore per day last year to 1,700 tons this year. We are fighting for 3,000 tons.

Under the leadership of the great Stalin, our country will scatter all enemies of socialism into dust and will confidently march even further toward an even brighter, even more joyful life.

Long live our leader—the best friend and teacher,
Comrade Stalin!

On behalf of the meeting of Stakhanovites: Bratukhin, Tuvichev, Vlasov, Eremeev, Afanasyev, Abichev."

Letter from the Collective Farmers of the Stakhanov Collective Farm

"Our dear Alexey Grigoryevich!

We received your letter, in which you ask how our sowing operations are going, and decided as an entire collective to write to you about how we live and work.

First of all, thank you for your attention to us, for your warm words of greeting. Our Stakhanov Collective Farm is working much better than last year. The care of the Party and the government for us, and your winter visit to us, raised our spirit, initiative, and enthusiasm. We decided to work the way you work, our glorious countryman and comrade.

We have actively joined the struggle for Stalin's 7–8 billion poods of grain.

We have completed the sowing plan. This year we have sown spring wheat on an area of 25.4 hectares, oats on an area of 22.7 hectares, barley on an area of 7.6 hectares, peas and lentils—14.7 hectares, vetch for grain—39 hectares, and potatoes, for which we overfulfilled the plan, we have sown 38 hectares. Tomorrow, May 28, we finish the sowing of millet and buckwheat. True, we are somewhat late with the sowing of late crops. But we win on the quality of work. Our fields have never seen such high-quality cultivation as this year. 179 hectares of spring crops were sown with a row seeder. We completed the sowing in 25 working days, whereas previously we usually sowed for 35–45 days.

In total, we have 272 hectares of winter rye and wheat. You should see, Alexey Grigoryevich, our winter crops at 75–80

centimetres high. They cover our rich fields like an even green carpet. The harvest will be quite good!

A. Stakhanov and the chairman of the kolkhoz, A. Zibarov.

This current Stakhanovite spring is remarkable for us due to high labor discipline. Throughout the spring, not a single instance of absenteeism occurred here, and not a single collective farmer was late to work without valid reasons. Real Stakhanovites have appeared in our fields. Ploughmen Egor Zibarov, V. P. Stakhanov, and I. I. Stakhanov—with a quota of 1.25 hectares a day—plowed 1.6 hectares. Seeders Nikolay Mamonov, Zibarov, Fedor Andriyanov, and Timofey Zibarov also overfulfilled their quotas the entire time.

With every passing day, the work of the pig farm improves. Recently, for exemplary work, we rewarded pig tender Matrena Malygina and pig tender Gavril Stakhanov with piglets. By autumn, we will have completed a new pigsty for 120 head.

With the help of district organisations, we began building a school, which we also expect to finish by autumn. From June 1, we are opening a children's playground.

We stand on guard for the harvest. Soon we will begin weeding work. The collective farm is growing richer with machines. This spring we acquired two new reapers, a No. 5 sorting machine, three single-horse wagons, and two plows; right now we are repairing harvesting equipment. We set ourselves the task: to gather the harvest without any losses and, first and foremost, to fulfill our obligations to the state.

As you know, last year we received 1.275 kilograms of grain, 3 kilograms of potatoes, and cash per labour-day (*trudoden*). This year we are fighting for 4–5 kilograms of grain per labor-day, for 10 kilograms of potatoes, and 20 kopecks in cash. Despite the low grain profitability of the collective farm last year, the collective farmers live prosperously. The lack of cows among collective farmers has been eliminated. All collective farmers without exception have pigs, and many also have sheep.

You write that you are planning to visit us in the automobile that was presented to you. We will be very glad of this, be sure to come. You will come and see how we are fulfilling the obligations we gave you in the winter.

Come, dear friend! By the day of your arrival, the new harvest will be ready—you will taste our bread from the new crop and eat apples from our orchard.

We inform you that we have decided to rename our collective farm from the 'Krasnaya Zvezda' (Red Star) collective farm to the Stakhanov Collective Farm. Our shock work in the fields gives us the right to this.

Greetings to you and best wishes, we firmly shake your miner's hand. On behalf of the collective farmers: A. Zibarov, F. Malyakhin, I. Stakhanov, I. Zibarov. Village of Lugovoye. May 27, 1936."

Letter from Junior Commander Afanasyev

"Dear Comrade Stakhanov!

Today I read in the newspaper *Pravda* that while on watch, you produced 321 tons of coal in 6 hours.

This is direct heroism! You have proved once again how capable any of us is, as a patriot of our motherland, to achieve such unprecedented output.

I am writing this letter with emotion, reading it several times and looking closely at your portrait. After all, in 1935, I sat next to Nikita Izotov in the club where you were present as well (in the club of Kadievka); back then, you were still a hewer. How I would like to see you again now and shake the hand of a coal hero in a Komsomol way. I am now in the army for my second year. I finished regimental school with excellent indicators. I was awarded the rank of junior commander. I remember when I was still a cadet, we tried with all our might to be army Stakhanovites. And so it turned out. Many of us never left the red Stakhanovite board. And now, with your new victories, we commanders are showing new combat and political results.

Comrade Stakhanov!

Please share your work with us, the commanders. For us, this will be a great thing and a joy. You can be sure of our sharpness and vigilance.

I firmly shake your hand. With communist greetings, Afanasyev."

Letter from Red Army Soldier Lukyanov

"Greetings, my dear and beloved Comrade Stakhanov!

I firmly shake your hand and send you my fiery Chekist greeting.

I am a former worker of the suburban farm of the 'Tsentralnaya-Irmino' mine, but now I am in the ranks of the RKKA (Workers' and Peasants' Red Army). I listened to your speech on Red Square in Moscow about the country's grief over the loss of our beloved Sergo Ordzhonikidze—the great commander of the revolution.

I wish you, as well as the entire working collective of the Stalin mine, to raise coal production even higher than it was raised, to wage a struggle against absentees, and to watch vigilantly so that not a single Trotskyite saboteur can infiltrate our mine, as happened at the Kemerovo mine.

And I give you, dear Alexey Stakhanov, as a worker close to you, my faithful Chekist word that I will vigilantly guard your peaceful labor—and not only yours, but that of our entire country, our sacred, inviolable motherland—and study military technology only with marks of 'good' and 'excellent.'

I also pledge, at the first call of the Workers' and Peasants' Government, to stand up in defence of the USSR against all dangers and attempts by all enemies, and in the struggle for the USSR, for the cause of socialism, and the brotherhood of peoples, to spare neither my strength nor life itself.

Worker of the Stalin mine—Lukyanov.

Also, dear Alexey Stakhanov, all the Red Army Chekists, commanders, and political workers of our school send you a fiery Chekist greeting and want to have the strongest bond."

Letter from the Collective Farmers of the Poltava Region

"Greetings, dear Alexey Stakhanov!

We congratulate you on the new record you set on the watch named after Sergo Ordzhonikidze.

This is written to you by the collective farmers of the 'Bolshevik' artel, Poltava District in the Kharkov region. Recently, we unanimously decided to begin deep preparations already now for the upcoming celebrations regarding the 20th anniversary of Soviet power—the 20th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. We decided to comprehensively and deeply study our socialist motherland, to study what has been built by our people under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party during these 20 years of the Proletarian Revolution. Our rural correspondents, together with the collective farm activists and Stakhanovites, organised groups of comrades who are gathering rich material to create a history of our

collective farm and the entire village, gathering material that characterises the difficult, disenfranchised, bleak past, as well as material about our beautiful, joyful, prosperous, and cultural life today, to which the Bolshevik Party and our wise leader, dear father, Comrade Stalin, have led us.

Our great-grandfathers and grandfathers were serfs under the famous Prince Kochubey. It was about him that Pushkin wrote in his poem 'Poltava':

'Rich and famous is Kochubey, His fields are boundless...'

Yes, he was truly rich and 'famous,' and the serfs bent their backs in forced labor (*panshchina*) on his boundless fields. What was our village like before the revolution? On the edge—a church, two beer houses, a tavern, the shop of the village elder, and a small parochial school. Life was hard and bleak; the majority of the peasants of our village were illiterate, and the heavy boot and whip of the police officer and the local administrator roamed across our peasant backs.

Our present collective farm village is unrecognisable, just as our free, joyful, beautiful, real human life is unrecognisable. Our collective farm is one of the advanced ones in the district. We now have: a ten-year school, a seven-year school, a club, Lenin corners, a maternity hospital, a crèche, a veterinary hospital, and a model cooperative store. We have radio and electricity. You walk at night, and it feels like we are in the city. Electric light illuminates our collective farm houses, streets, and our collective farm buildings, and it shines just as brightly as our entire life shines—radiant, prosperous, and cultural.

Spring is already arriving. We have prepared excellently for the spring sowing: we fertilised the fields well, turned up the winter plowing since autumn, provided ourselves with pure-bred seeds long ago, and our horses are vigorous and strong. Everyone is studying—everyone, from young to old, we are studying agricultural technology and attending evening general education school.

We have 160 Stakhanovites in our collective farm. They are our pride. These are the advanced people of the socialist collective farm

fields who will ensure a real Stalinist collective farm harvest this year.

Dear Comrade Stakhanov!

We turn to you with a request. Write to us about how your affairs are going, how you are working now, how you are studying, and how your fellow miners are preparing for the great holiday—the 20th anniversary of the Great October Revolution.

Write an answer to the collective farmers, dear Stakhanov. Your letter will inspire us even more, and not only us, but all collective farmers and, first and foremost, the Stakhanovites of the fields of the Poltava District.

And we also ask you, dear Comrade Stakhanov, come to visit us for at least a day or two. You will be our dear guest. And it is not far to travel to us, straight to Poltava, and here, 12 kilometres from the city, is our collective farm. We have two automobiles; we will bring you over right away."

We wish you, dear Comrade Stakhanov, great success in your work, studies, and life; know that we, the collective farmers, follow your work with exceptional attention and, together with you, together with your and our comrades—the Donets miners—always rejoice unspeakably at your new successes.

We firmly shake your hands.

On behalf of all collective farmers, the letter was signed by: Chairman of the "Bolshevik" artel, Moskovets; collective farm agrotechnician and rural correspondent, Stepan Bondarenko.

Our address: Poltava, Kharkiv Oblast, Zhuki village, Takhtaulovo Selsoviet, "Bolshevik" Collective Farm. To the Chairman of the Collective Farm, Comrade Sergey Petrovich Moskovets.

LETTERS OF STAKHANOV

Letter to the Poltava Collective Farmers

"To Poltava, Zhuki village, 'Bolshevik' Collective Farm. To the Chairman of the Collective Farm, Comrade Sergey Petrovich Moskovets.

Dear comrades, collective farmers, men and women!

The other day I received your letter, which you wrote to me after my latest record. Thank you for the greeting. Thank you for the warm, comradely letter.

I am very glad about the successes of your collective farm. I will try, through our newspaper *Put Sergo* (formerly *Kadievsky Proletary*), to make this wonderful letter about the joys and victories of the new collective farm life known to all working people of the city and the Sergo District. Thank you for the invitation to come visit you. If time permits, I will certainly come.

I am studying and continuing to work as an instructor for the 'Sergougol' trust on the introduction of Stakhanovite labor methods. I must inform you that things in the coal Donbass are not doing well right now. The Trotskyite saboteurs have done us a lot of harm. They ran down development work, disrupted Stakhanovite labor methods, and caused accidents with machinery. The vile traitors to the motherland, betrayers of the working class, hoped by this to stop the wheel of history and turn it backward to capitalism. But they have now been exposed by the NKVD organs and our Stakhanovites. All these fascist spy-saboteurs—the Pyatakovs, Rataychaks, Loginovs, and other scum—got what they deserved, while the cause of socialist construction, the cause of the Stakhanovites, prepared and nurtured by the great Stalin, will remain invincible. Right now, our Party organisations, commanders, and Stakhanovites are working to eliminate the consequences of sabotage at the Donbass mines as quickly as possible, to clear the way for Stakhanovites and shock workers, and to squeeze everything possible out of the technology with which the Donbass is richly equipped.

The life of our miners, comrades, has become unrecognisable. The settlement of our Stalin Mine—Irmino, has been transformed

into a city. It has a club-cinema, schools, a polyclinic, a hospital, a summer park with a large stage, a sports hall (*Dom fizkultury*), a maternity hospital, two crèches, a beautiful stadium with 5,000 seats, two department stores, a pond equipped for summer recreation and swimming; the sidewalks are paved with asphalt, the main streets are paved, tens of thousands of trees have been planted, and there are two public dining halls, a bathhouse, and a good library-reading room. An old miner in pre-revolutionary times knew and saw nothing of this. We owe all this to our Soviet government and the Party of Lenin-Stalin, who care like fathers for the lives of workers and all working people.

It would be good if your comrades could come to visit us for May 1st. You will see everything with your own eyes. After all, the collective farmers of the Poltava region know little about the life of a Donbass miner. Here you will talk with old workers about the past and see the changes that have taken place now under Soviet power.

I firmly shake your hands.

Alexey Stakhanov. April 10, 1937"

Letter to the Railway Workers

"Dear locomotive comrades!

I recalled the year 1935, which you and I nearly failed, both in coal and in transport. Over the course of eight months, our plan, together with yours, kept going down. Thanks to the Stakhanovite movement, you and I were able to pull our mines and our entire transport system up to a high level in 4 months.

Now, dear locomotive comrades, we face the task of working well, and not only working well, but safely, without accidents. For during the single month of March, we had three major accidents. Personally, I believe that our best locomotive masters will take the most crucial factors into account and will work without accidents.

We also face a big task, as Comrade Stalin said: we must learn, for only then will you and I be able to work well. I believe that together we will keep the words of Comrade Stalin and your People's

Commissar, Comrade Kaganovich, and honourably fulfill the 1936 plan. Greetings to all the best railway masters and their managers.

A. Stakhanov”

To the Delegates of the 10th Komsomol Congress

“Dear comrades!

Before expressing my wishes to you, I want to pass on warm, filial greetings to our teacher and inspirer, the great Stalin, whose students we all are. Thanks to his wisdom and fatherly care, the working people of our country are successfully building a new socialist society in happiness, joy, and prosperity.

The Stakhanovite movement is a lush and precious fruit, grown and nurtured by the great gardener of working humanity—Comrade Stalin.

We live and work in the Stakhanovite year of 1936. The December plenary session of the Party Central Committee, whose decisions were joyfully welcomed by Party and non-Party Bolsheviks, serves as the program for our work. Komsomol members, young men and women, workers, and collective farm youth are showing literal miracles of productivity and mastery of Stakhanovite methods. I am very happy that my glorious friend and comrade-in-arms Mitya Kontsedalov, who was awarded the Order of Lenin, is present at the 10th Komsomol Congress as a delegate. Now, in honor of the Komsomol Congress, our Kadievka Komsomol members have once again set many remarkable records.

Order-bearing Komsomol members distinguished themselves: Kondrat Telnykh, Vasya Tkachenko—the most notable cutter-loader operators. Komsomol members Isaev, Salkov, Maska, Sukhostav, Vlasenko, and dozens of others also distinguished themselves.

But records are not enough now. The entire year of 1936 must be a record year; all Komsomol members must be Stakhanovites at whatever work they are assigned. This is my main wish. In order for it to be realised, one must study and master technology in a Stalinist way. After all, Komsomol members firmly remember Vladimir Ilyich Lenin’s fiery appeal—’to learn, to learn, and to learn.’

My second wish concerns defence work. We live far from the borders, but we feel its every breath. Our Stakhanovites now eagerly catch every piece of news from international life. At the borders, German and Japanese fascists are currently preparing an attack on our country. What conclusion should Komsomol members draw from this? Intensely prepare yourselves and prepare all working people to defend our great motherland from the enemy, to deal him a crushing blow. We need to deploy a network of shooting clubs, parachute stations, and aero-clubs across the whole country right now. This is the demand and wish of all our Stakhanovites.

I wish everyone fruitful work; I wish for you to see and hear dear Stalin. This is the greatest happiness for every citizen of our Soviet country.

I firmly shake your hands.

Alexey Stakhanov"

Letter to the Winterers of Wrangel Island

"The miners of the birthplace of the Stakhanovite movement pass on a warm Stakhanovite greeting to all the glorious winterers of Wrangel Island.

We, Stalin's students, are conducting extensive work in the Donbass to master the latest technology with which our great Party of Lenin-Stalin, our government, and our beloved leader Comrade Stalin have armed us.

Smashing conservative elements, we are striving to double coal production and complete the coal Five-Year Plan in four years.

While working at our mines, we do not forget our winterers; we closely follow your work, and we rejoice at all your undertakings and all your successes.

You, comrades, are doing a great, honorable deed.

We wish you every success in your beautiful, militant work in mastering the Arctic. May the ranks of Stakhanovites grow among the workers of the Arctic.

We ask you to write to us regularly about your life and work; on our part, we will regularly send you information about our experience and our work.

We firmly shake hands with all the winterers.

Alexey Stakhanov, Miron Dyukanov, Nikolai Mashurov.

October 11, 1936”

Letter to the Editorial Board of “Pravda”

“Having returned from Sochi, where I rested and received treatment together with my wife and daughter, I want to pass on through *Pravda* a warm greeting to the great and dear Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin and the People’s Commissar of Heavy Industry, Comrade Sergo Ordzhonikidze. In their person, I thank the Party and the government for caring for us, the miners of the Donbass. The ‘Donbass’ sanatorium, where I rested, is a wonderful health resort for coal workers. Excellent food, attentive care for patients, polite treatment, and good service leave an unforgettable impression and deep gratitude toward the staff of this sanatorium on every worker who has visited it. Its manager, Director Comrade S. I. Barsukov, and Chief Physician Comrade A. I. Speransky, managed to establish a cultural regime and exemplary order in the sanatorium.

During my month-long stay in Sochi, I improved my health and gained 5.5 kilograms. My wife, Evdokia Ivanovna, gained 4.5 kilograms. My little daughter, Klavochka, also recovered very well and has become unrecognisable.

I found the mine in an unenviable position. Although the mine’s daily production rose to 1,400–1,500 tons, i.e., 50% more than what it produced before the Stakhanovite movement, I consider this insufficient. After all, we gave our word to Comrade Stalin and Comrade Sergo to achieve doubled production.

The newspaper *Pravda* strongly helped us with its article ‘They are not helping Stakhanov’s mine.’ The mine received all the necessary equipment—a large compressor, pipes of various sizes, hoses, timber for support, and other materials. And yet, we are moving very slowly with production.

What is the matter?

Firstly, the haulage works outrageously, coal is left behind in the faces, and the hewers sit idle. The head of transit, Dontsov—a man with a dark past—stubbornly resists the introduction of Stakhanovite methods in haulage. Let me give an example. A brigade of the best haulage masters arrived at our mine—horse-drivers (*konogony*) from the 'Ilyich' mine, Comrades Balandin and Esin. They came to us for a month to pass on their experience of paired driving (*sparennaya ezda*) to our horse-drivers. But the saboteur Dontsov kept them from working for a long time, declaring: 'We can manage fine on our own.' Now, paired driving has been successfully applied in two sectors: 'Nikanor-Zapad' and 'Almaz-Vostok.'

The second issue is the air. Strange as it may seem, having received an additional compressor, compressed air is again lacking in the face. The air is there, but due to a large leak, it falls short in the working face. The thing is, the pipes are poorly connected, and the air is lost on the way to the face. I saw this for myself on March 17, when I was checking the reasons for the poor performance of certain sectors ('Velikan-Vostok', 'Velikan-Zapad', 'Nikanor-Zapad').

Pravda's articles, which struck at the management of the 'Kadievugol' trust, served as a signal for our mine as well. The Stakhanovites of 'Tsentralnaya-Irmino' do not wish to and will no longer tolerate treading water. Saboteurs, big and small, will be removed from our way. In a few days, I am resuming work in the 'Nikanor-Vostok' sector. The sector is already overfulfilling the plan, producing an average of 350 tons per day against a plan of 320 tons. I pledge to help bring the sector's production to 400–500 tons and be the first at the mine to achieve doubled production compared to August 1935.

Through *Pravda*, I appeal to all miners of the Donbass with a call: Let us crush the saboteurs who oppose the introduction of new revolutionary methods of work! Let us eradicate *krysinovshchina* [Krysinism]—people who are ready to fraudulently gain easy fame only to leave the mine in a collapse tomorrow! Let us tenfold our efforts and the struggle for the introduction of Stakhanovite methods on the cutter-loader, which determine the success of coal mining for the entire Donbass, as well as in haulage and development work! Let

us introduce individual piecework by share and thereby put an end to petty-bourgeois equalisation—brigade piecework! Let us lead our Donbass onto the wide road of a Stakhanovite surge in coal production.

A. Stakhanov. March 21, 1936"

Letter to the Soldiers of the Spanish Republican Army

"To the Madrid editorial office of the newspaper *Mundo Obrero*.

To the militant organ of the Spanish Communist Party, to thousands of its readers—the fearless soldiers of the Spanish People's Army, and to all the working people of the heroic Spanish Republic, a revolutionary May Day greeting.

On the day of May 1st—the great holiday of the unity of working people all over the world—on behalf of the Stakhanovites and all the working people of the city of Sergo (formerly Kadievka, Donbass), the birthplace of the Stakhanovite movement, I send my best, warmest wishes to my brothers in class and labor.

Dear comrades! The working people of the city of Sergo, just like all the peoples of the immense Soviet Union, follow with deep emotion every step of the heroic struggle of the Spanish people against a handful of bloody fascist generals, against the German-Italian fascist interventionists. Each victory of the Spanish Republic brings us endless joy, for in them we see the victories of all advanced, progressive humanity against the fascist barbarians.

We know of the valiant deeds of the soldiers of the Spanish Republic, who rush impetuously at the fascist hordes and, with an irresistible bayonet attack, drive the enemies from their occupied positions.

We know the deeds of the republican pilots—the proud falcons of your country. They fearlessly strike the enemy in the air, and with the grazing fire of their machine guns, they mow down the columns of rebels and interventionists.

We know the marvellous feats of the republican tank crews, who, with the armoured chests of their machines, are liberating the

sacred soil of your motherland from the traitors and interventionists, span by span.

The weapons of the fighters of the Spanish Republic are already shrouded in undying glory and deep hatred for the enemies of the working people, for the fascist interventionists. Such weapons are invincible, for they are in the hands of the great, free Spanish people, who will never tolerate obscurantism, humiliation, and oppression.

Strengthen, therefore, comrades, your unity of will and revolutionary actions, and victory will be yours.

Salute to Spain! Instructor-hewer Alexey Stakhanov. City of Sergo, April 1937.

FROM A LETTER TO THE NEWSPAPER "INDUSTRY"

The entire Soviet people recently celebrated the second anniversary of the beginning of a new, higher stage of socialist competition, which is called the Stakhanovite movement. Only two years have passed since the day I set my first coal mining record, but in this short stretch of time, tens and hundreds of thousands of new masters of socialist labor have grown up. Many Stakhanovites have already been promoted to leadership positions, both in the coal Donbass and in other branches of industry. The notable tunneler of the Stalin mine, Comrade Kravtsov, is now working as a mine manager. After 6 months of training in professional development courses, Stakhanovites Berdyansky and Kozlov were promoted to mine managers. Many Stakhanovites work as shift foremen, assistants, and heads of mine sectors, and they are coping with their duties quite well.

And this is understandable. Convinced of the advantages of new methods of organising labor and production, the promoted Stakhanovites apply them widely, and when necessary, prove their advantage with personal example. After all, a Stakhanovite who is promoted to leadership work or is studying at a higher educational institution does not lose his qualifications. On the contrary, engineering knowledge helps him to master Stakhanovite methods even more and to rationally apply them in production. This was

confirmed quite well by Dmitry Kontsedalov, who, during his vacation, went down into his home mine and set a record for production with a jackhammer. This was on August 19. Kontsedalov went to the "Rubezhny" sector of the Stalin mine and, with a quota of 7 square meters, cut 150 square meters in a single shift—fulfilling more than 20 quotas. He worked in a Stakhanovite manner in long steps and in pairs with timbermen Sharilov and Marchenko. The cut coal was hauled out by Stakhanovite horse-drivers Ryazanov and Bondar. In one shift, they hauled out 120 wagons of coal, while according to the quota, the two of them should have only hauled out 56 wagons. The remaining coal stayed in the coal face.

I am citing this example not only to confirm that Kontsedalov, like other promoted Stakhanovites and those who were studying, has not forgotten how to work in a Stakhanovite manner. The fact that the horse-drivers, working in a Stakhanovite manner, still did not haul out all the coal, speaks to many shortcomings in the organisation of Stakhanovite work. The point is that on many mines, there is no coordination between individual production processes. This is the result not only of the mismanagement of commanders, but also of the uneven degree of mechanisation in individual production sectors. If electric locomotives were working instead of horses, there would be no delays in hauling coal. Or if there were more sidings on the haulage drift, it would be possible to add a couple more horses and in that way haul out all the coal.

One can meet with such "bottlenecks" on many mines. Previously, all of this was explained in a petty way; meanwhile, it is the result of Trotskyite sabotage. It is no accident that numerous demands and proposals by workers and honest commanders to accelerate the mechanisation of development work, haulage, and other labour-intensive sectors were not fulfilled. The enemies of the people operating in the Donbass saw the delay in the mechanisation of these decisive sectors of production as an opportunity to disrupt the work of the Stakhanovites. Sabotage did not meet with resistance because many engineers and technicians did not get rid of anti-mechanisation sentiments, especially when it came to mechanisation outside the coal faces.

Comrade Stalin, at the All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites, emphasised that the Stakhanovite movement “was born and began to unfold to a certain extent against the will of the administration of our enterprises, even in a struggle against it”. And even now, the leaders of a number of mines have not changed their attitude toward Stakhanovite methods.

Of course, it is difficult now to meet such leaders who would openly try to discredit Stakhanovite methods. On the contrary, there is no shortage of approvals and declarations. But the conservatives continue to act quietly, sometimes hiding behind innocent pretexts. It is enough, for example, to give an incorrect or untimely order for the preparation of a workspace, and this will be enough for the worker not to produce Stakhanovite productivity.

Recently, a Stakhanovite of the Stalin mine, Ivan Dyukanov, cut 80.4 square meters in a shift, fulfilling the quota by almost 1200%. It would seem not bad. But let us look at how he worked while doing so. The brigade arrived at the face at 3 o’clock in the afternoon, but could not immediately start working because the air main was torn in three places. Only thanks to the energetic work of the mechanic Gorgon was it possible to repair the main in an hour. After cutting the third step, there was another delay—in the next step, the hoses turned out to be faulty. There were other interruptions. In total, Ivan Dyukanov worked for only 4 1/2 hours. And if he achieved record productivity, it is the merit of his skill and persistence, as well as the merit of the mechanic who quickly eliminated the problems.

What are the Stakhanovites essentially complaining about? About the “troubles” and numerous inconveniences which, for some reason, are considered inevitable on many mines. For example, the foreman of mine No. 4–2 near Irmino, Comrade Sytnin, recently reported in the local newspaper: “In the first five-day period of August, I was producing two quotas, but this is not the limit for me. I could increase my productivity day by day if they gave us good lamps. Right now we are getting poorly fuelled lamps, and you don’t even have time to reach the workplace before they burn out”.

Another foreman of the same mine, Comrade Ulyanov, who has repeatedly shown examples of high productivity, complains that a blaster is not attached to the brigade. In most cases, the blaster

arrives at the wrong time and holds up the work of the main workers. Hewer Shcherbakov, working in the "Velikan" sector, states that they have large interruptions in the delivery of timber, and the timber that is brought is incorrectly laid out along the face. It is concentrated in one place, and the hewers have to break away from work to lay out the timber so that it is always close at hand.

In the Donbass, there are still no rules of technical operation. And the fact that such rules are needed became clear from the very first days of the Stakhanovite movement. The first to agree with this was Comrade Ordzhonikidze. Order No. 1160 states: "Glavugol to develop and publish by January 1, 1937, the rules of technical operation in the coal industry, regulating the order of maintenance of workings and mechanisms and the organisational-administrative order at the mines". Eight months have passed since the deadline set by the People's Commissar expired, but there are no rules of technical operation at the mines.

A. Stakhanov at training in the Promacademy

In the Donbass, there are now more than 8,000 Stakhanovites who, day after day, produce two or more quotas. At the mines of our Sergo district, for 25 days in August, over 600 workers fulfilled two or more quotas. I know dozens of workers who, over the course of

two years, month after month, day after day, have produced Stakhanovite productivity. We have many shock workers and workers persistently striving for high productivity. The matter, as before, rests with the commanders of the coal mines, who are obliged to lead the initiative of the Stakhanovites in a Bolshevik way and, as Comrade Stalin said, help them to further expand and deepen the Stakhanovite movement. It is necessary to raise the fury of the masses for the uprooting and crushing of all enemies of the people, the Japanese-German, Trotskyite-Bukharinite spies, and for the liquidation of the consequences of sabotage!

I began writing this little book two years ago. Each time I finished it, I had to supplement it, as there was something new in my life.

And now, the book is finished, and much did not get into it. I have been studying at the Industrial Academy named after L. M. Kaganovich for two months now. Recently, I was at a rally of Stakhanovites—Donbass miners—together with Lazar Moiseyevich Kaganovich. One could tell many interesting things about this. But that will have to be done another time.

My comrade, I. Gershberg, helped me write the book.

A. Stakhanov.

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