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Dimitrov and Stalin

1934–1943

Letters from the Soviet Archives

Edited by

Alexander Dallin and F. I. Firsov

Russian documents translated by Vadim A. Staklo

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Preface

This volume reproduces in English translation letters and memos sent to Joseph Stalin from Georgi Dimitrov, the secretary general of the Communist International, from 1934, when Dimitrov returned to Moscow from a German prison, until 1943, when the Comintern was disbanded, along with Stalin's responses. The documents are currently housed in the Russian Center for the Preservation and Study of Documents of Recent History (RTsKhIDNI), which was established in 1991 to hold the files of the Comintern and of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) that had formerly been held at the Institute of Marxism-Leninism in Moscow. Most of them come from a larger collection of 211 documents identified by a team of archivists working under the direction of Fridrikh I. Firsov, the Russian co-editor of this volume, in the archives of the Comintern and of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Most of the documents were originally written in Russian; the exceptions are primarily radio- or cablegrams sent to the Comintern (from China or Yugoslavia, say) and translated before being submitted to Dimitrov and others, and communications from agents and representatives abroad (for instance, Spain) written in German or French. Unless otherwise indicated, the documents reached us in typewritten form. A number of reports from abroad were transmitted to the Comintern in

code and decoded in its Coding Section; at times the decoding presented difficulties to the staff and produced gaps and errors. In many instances what we have are carbons of letters from Dimitrov to Stalin, but they bear notations (signatures, dates, archival numbers) indicating that they were sent; some originals may have been kept in Stalin's files, which remain inaccessible.

For reasons of space we have had to omit a number of documents of interest; some of these are cited in the notes. Dimitrov and his staff forwarded a variety of reports to the Kremlin, but we include here only documents that were accompanied or preceded by a note or letter specifically from Dimitrov to Stalin. Some of the enclosures were filed elsewhere in the archive or were located as attachments to copies forwarded to other recipients; we include them only when their authenticity can be confirmed. In a few instances the enclosures mentioned in Dimitrov's letters could not be found in RTsKhIDNI; where relevant this has been noted.

This book is not an exhaustive account of the contacts between Dimitrov and Stalin, let alone between the leadership of the Comintern and the Soviet state (or the Communist Party of the Soviet Union). Leaving aside the likelihood that some of the documents exchanged between the two men never made it into their files or into the archives (we indicate below where we think this was the case), there were a number of other forms and channels of communication between the leaders and their staffs. Dimitrov's diary not only testifies to his superb memory and capacity to reproduce conversations and documents accurately; it and other sources make reference to or imply the existence of letters that have not been located in the archives. Where pertinent, we mention these in the notes.

In addition to sending letters and memoranda, Dimitrov and Stalin held conversations. Some of these are recorded elsewhere—for instance, in Dimitrov's diary—or are reported by third parties who were present (Viacheslav Molotov, Dmitry Manuisky, and others). The two also held telephone conversations, for which we have no systematic record, but some of these find reflection in subsequent memoranda and decisions.

Another channel of communication between the Comintern and the Kremlin was Dimitrov's Soviet deputy Dmitry Manuisky. Indeed, some of the enclosures sent with the letters to Stalin were located not in Dimitrov's files but as copies in Manuisky's records. It is also clear that

Manuilsky had extensive personal contact with a number of Soviet officials (including the NKVD), a fact that may help explain some of the surprising gaps in Dimitrov's written contacts with Stalin and those around him.

The Comintern was fully dependent on, and controlled by, the Soviet leadership. It could hardly have been otherwise. The Comintern's role as a source and transmitter of information to Moscow and of instructions to Communists abroad is amply illustrated in the following collection. But it is well to remember that by and large, for the Soviet leadership the Comintern was only one of several channels of information. It remains to be studied in what ways information received in the Kremlin through the secret services and military intelligence—during the Spanish Civil War, say, or concerning the Yugoslav partisans in World War II—or via reports by Soviet diplomats stationed abroad, differed in quality, reliability, bias, or policy orientation from those transmitted through the Comintern. We know, for example, of instances in which Communist leaders abroad preferred not to communicate with Moscow through the Comintern residents assigned to their country. José Diaz, the head of the Spanish Communist party, chose to send a letter to Stalin through the Soviet ambassador to France, rather than through Palmiro Togliatti, Ernö Gerö, or Vittorio Codovilla, the Comintern representatives in Spain.

It is precisely because the Comintern's role as a contact and source of information was exceptional during the Spanish Civil War, the Chinese hostilities of the thirties, and the Yugoslav resistance during World War II that we chose to single out these cases for separate chapters. We believe that the new material offered concerning them is significant, but we do not argue that these documents give an adequate account of the struggles in these countries or of the Communist role (or the Soviet involvement) in them.

These documents confirm the impression that the Comintern—or at least its Executive Committee (the ECCI)—was a vast bureaucratic apparatus, full of routines, resentments, lassitude, and uncertainties, though outwardly, of course, each member was fully loyal to the Communist cause and the Soviet masters. While it was never a benign organization of well-meaning paper-pushers, the Comintern that emerges from the files is a far cry from the worldwide conspiracy of terrorists it was sometimes believed to be. If indeed some of its activities focused on

espionage and subversion, these are not reflected in either the correspondence or the personal records of its key officers and would have been handled through other channels.

The documentary record also confirms the key role of a few personalities—above all Stalin himself, of course, but also Dimitrov. Perhaps less expected is the finding, highlighted by the archives, that Moscow's strategy and tactics were characterized not so much by clarity, cleverness, or consistency as by dilemmas and ambiguities in decision making. Time and again we observe the tensions between conflicting aims and interests—between international Communist audiences and Western establishments, between going it alone and pursuing a policy of alliance, between deferred gratification and cashing in on victories and deals.

The records presented here give the impression that Stalin was something of a sphinx, to whom Dimitrov forwarded a variety of materials from representatives abroad; drafts of Comintern resolutions and instructions, along with other materials for review and comment (or veto); requests for appointments; budgetary allocations; or requests for authorization to proceed with various tasks. In response Stalin typically scribbled a few words in the margin of the document—even in cases of fundamental policy shifts (for instance, in preparation for the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern)—or transmitted his decisions through an underling (Molotov, Zhdanov, or, later, Poskrebyshev) or sent word (as when Dimitrov repeatedly pleaded with him to receive Zhou Enlai in early 1940) that he was too busy: “Decide for yourselves.”

True, a rather different Stalin comes across from the notes taken by Dimitrov on the several occasions where Stalin spoke informally to a few trusted associates. This Stalin is far more creative and less circumspect; he more nearly matches the man of other personal accounts, such as Milovan Djilas's. Both Stalins are credible, but the picture that emerges from these documents is plausible, given his many other preoccupations, as well as his relative neglect of the Comintern and its mission as time went on—given also what we know of his general bureaucratic and administrative style. It is possible that this image will receive some correction if we ever gain complete access to the so-called Presidential Archive, which contains files that virtually no scholars have had an opportunity to peruse. But we are confident that the available documentation conveys a generally accurate picture of Stalin and his rela-

tionship with Dimitrov, and we doubt that the Presidential Archive holds additional documents crucial to this image.

This book is not a history of the Comintern from 1934 to 1943; but it illustrates both the form and the substance of the Comintern's relation to the Soviet rulers. In addition, it offers unusual insights into Moscow's thinking and decision making on a wide variety of issues, from global strategy to petty disputes. Like the other volumes in the *Annals of Communism* series, this book offers important sources for new insights into dramatic, controversial, and hitherto obscure events in recent history.

Since this volume went to press, RTsKhIDNI has changed its name to the Russian State Archive of Social and Political History (Rossiisky Gosudarstvenny Arkhiv Sotsialnoi i Politicheskoi Istorii, or RGASPI).

Note on Documents

All the documents in this collection reached us in the Russian language; in some instances they were translations from other languages; where originals could be located in the archives, the Russian was checked against them.

In transliterating from Russian to English we have used a modified version of the standard Library of Congress system in the text and documents. Soft and hard signs have been omitted, and the following changes have been imposed.

In final position:

ii in the LOC system becomes y (Trotsky, not Trotskii)

iia = ia (Izvestia, not Izvestiia)

nyi = ny (Nagorny, not Nagornyi)

In initial position:

E = Ye (Yezhov, not Ezhov)

Ia = Ya (Yaroslavsky, not Iaroslavsky)

Iu = Yu (Yudin, not Iudin)

In citations and translator's notes, we have followed the Library of Congress system. For a small number of familiar names the customary English spelling has been retained (Joseph, not Iosif, Stalin; Leon, not Lev, Trotsky). A list of acronyms and abbreviations is provided to assist the reader.

Wherever possible, foreign place names and personal names (for example, in Spanish or Serbo-Croatian) are reproduced in their original spelling, rather than in transliteration from Russian. We have used standard current (*pinyin*) spelling of Chinese names (with earlier alternative spellings indicated in the name index). Here too familiar spellings have been retained (Chiang Kai-shek, rather than Jiang Jieshi). Since the Chinese names were transliterated from Chinese into Russian and then into English, mistakes are almost certain to have occurred: our apologies for any remaining errors. Enumerated dates in documents follow European style: day, month, year.

Unless otherwise indicated, the documents published below were located in the collections at RTsKhIDNI, whose records are organized by *fond* (collection), *opis'* (inventory), *delo* (file), and *list* (page); source references are accordingly abbreviated f., op., d., and l. The Russian abbreviations “vkhod.” and “iskh.” found in the identification of some of the documents refer to “incoming” and “outgoing” messages received by the ECCI, usually its coding and decoding section. The page numbering of some documents (such as translated and decrypted telegrams) in the archives is in reverse order, reflecting the order of insertion in the archival files (thus, for example, ll. 75–72).

The abbreviation TsPA (Sofia) stands for Tsentralen partien arkhiv na TsK na BKP, the Central Party Archive of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party (more recently, of the Supreme Council of the Bulgarian Socialist Party), in Sofia. The letters “a.e.” are the Bulgarian abbreviation for “archival unit” (the equivalent of the Russian *delo*).

Documents, or parts of documents, printed in *boldface italic* were handwritten in the original. Single underlining indicates that the underlining was part of the original typescript. Double underlining indicates that the underlining was done by hand, either at the time the document was written or perhaps by a reader.

Ellipses in the original document are typed as they appear: . . .

Ellipses in brackets indicate editorial omissions: [. . .]

Ellipses in angle brackets indicate illegible words: < . . . >

The annotations are the responsibility of the American editor. The biographical notes identify individuals mentioned in the documents. The most familiar names, such as Hitler, Marx, Stalin, and Roosevelt, have been omitted.

A small number of these documents, or parts thereof, have been previously published or cited in Soviet journals, a Bulgarian collection of Dimitrov's writings, or Palmiro Togliatti's collected works (in Italian).

Acknowledgments

We are eager to express our gratitude for their assistance to the staffs of the archives and libraries we consulted, notably at the Russian Center for the Preservation and Study of Documents of Recent History (Rossiiskii tsentr khraneniia i izucheniia dokumentov noveishei istorii, or RTsKhIDNI) in Moscow. We are also grateful for the help we received at the library of the Hoover Institution at Stanford.

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The editors wish to thank Jonathan Brent, editorial director of Yale University Press, for asking us to produce this volume. Sincere thanks are due likewise to the Yale University Press staff responsible for the *Annals of Communism* series, and in particular to manuscript editor Susan Laity for her high standards and thoroughly professional work on the completed manuscript.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AUCP(b)	All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik). See VKP(b).
CC	Central Committee of a Communist party
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CGT	Confédération Générale du Travail, the French labor union federation
CI	Communist International (Comintern), founded by Lenin in 1919, disbanded in 1943
CNT	Confederación Nacional del Trabajo, the Spanish trade union federation, which in the 1930s was under “anarchist” influence
Cominform	Communist Information Bureau, active 1947–56
Comintern	See CI
CP, CPs	Communist Party or parties
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the official name of the party after 1952. See also VKP(b).
CPUSA	Communist Party of the United States of America
CPY	Communist Party of Yugoslavia
ECCI	Executive Committee of the Communist International
GMD (KMT)	Guomindang (Kuomintang), Chinese Nationalists
ICC	International Control Commission
ILS	International Lenin School. Communist school attached to the ECCI for foreign Communists and Soviet Communists who worked with foreign Communists. Active 1925–38.

KIM	Communist Youth International
Komsomol	All-Union Leninist Youth League
KPD	Communist Party of Germany
KPÖ	Communist Party of Austria
KPP	Communist Party of Poland
KUTV	Communist University of the Toilers of the East, established in Moscow in 1921
MOPR	International Red Aid
NKVD	People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs. A successor to the GPU and predecessor of the KGB.
OMI	Department of International Information of the Central Committee of the CPSU
OMS	Department of International Liaison of the ECCL. After 1935, known as the Liaison Service (SS).
PCE	Communist Party of Spain
PCF	Communist Party of France
PCI	Communist Party of Italy
POUM	Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista, a Leninist opposition group to the PCE during the Spanish Civil War
PSOE	Socialist Party of Workers of Spain
Politburo	Political Bureau, the highest executive organ of a Communist party
Profintern	Red International of Labor Unions, the counterpart to the Comintern's trade union arm
RTsKhIDNI	Russian Center for the Preservation and Study of Documents of Recent History, an archive holding records of the Comintern and the CPSU up to 1953
SED	Socialist Unity Party, the Communist-controlled ruling party of the German Democratic Republic (East Germany)
SFIO	French Socialist Party
TsPA (Sofia)	Bulgarian Central Party Archive, Sofia
UGT	Unión General de Trabajadores, the Spanish trade union federation close to PSOE
VKP(b)	Russian abbreviation of All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik), the official title of the Soviet Communist party from 1925 to 1952, when it became the CPSU
WFTU	World Federation of Trade Unions

Introduction

BY 1934 THE SOVIET UNION had undergone a series of traumas that had profoundly transformed the country, the way it lived and the way it was governed. World War I had inflicted widespread devastation. And before that was over, in 1917 the February Revolution ousted the tsarist regime and, amid chaos and suffering, the October Revolution brought Lenin and his followers the Bolsheviks to power and instituted Soviet rule. There ensued three years of civil war, in which some twelve foreign powers intervened. By 1921, when the Reds emerged victorious, the country was on the verge of starvation, the people were exhausted, and the Communists' hopeful illusions of the early years were bitterly disappointed. Lenin felt compelled to launch a new policy of moderation to help the economy recover (the so-called New Economic Policy, or NEP), though never relaxing his party's monopoly of power, a policy marked by "coexistence" with both enemies at home—above all, the peasants who constituted the majority of the population—and the non-Communist world abroad.

Lenin died in 1924, and from the bitter struggle for succession emerged Joseph Stalin, who soon consolidated his grip on the party and tightened its control of the country. In 1929 he launched a massive transformation program that probably affected more people

more deeply than any of the previous upheavals—the so-called first Five Year Plan, which called for the rapid industrialization of the country “from above” and the forcible collectivization of agriculture. This entailed the resettlement (and exile) of millions of peasants. By 1934, it seemed, the worst was over, but the siege mentality persisted. And now new crises were in the offing, both at home and abroad.

Although profound suspicions persisted on both sides, in the 1920s the Soviet Union had established diplomatic and trade relations throughout the world. Britain and France were seen as its major capitalist enemies, but the country was too weak to contemplate a major test of strength with anyone, even its smaller neighbors. By 1934 that situation had begun to change, as the implications of the rise of the Nazis in Germany and an aggressive Japan in the East sank in.

One institution whose existence was unique to the Soviet Union was the Communist International: the Third International, or Comintern.¹ Its establishment in March 1919 reflected the Bolsheviks’ belief in—and commitment to promote—world revolution. In Bolshevik theory, Russia had merely been the first to see Communists come to power; other countries, especially the major developed nations in the West, were bound to follow. And in this process the Comintern would coordinate, direct, and assist Communist efforts worldwide. The Comintern considered national Communist parties to be sections of the International; these parties were obliged to follow the directives and the discipline of Moscow headquarters. To varying degrees, the national parties, eager to support the one country that had had a successful Communist revolution, went along with this. If there was a heavy dose of self-deception and naïveté in this effort, it soon came to serve as the principal vehicle for all forms of aid and instructions to Communist parties abroad.

It did not take long for the Communists to realize that their hopes

1. The Comintern was the “Third International” because the “First” had been the International Working Men’s Association, founded with Karl Marx’s support in 1864 and disbanded a dozen years later; the “Second” was the Labor International launched in 1889, which, after some mutations, still survives. In Lenin’s view, the Second International had betrayed true proletarian internationalism and been “captured” by moderate social democrats; thus, the Third International was needed to replace it.

for early revolutions had been sadly misplaced. By 1921 it was apparent that all the efforts outside the Soviet state had failed, whereas the Soviet state itself had survived. Inevitably, and with vigorous manipulation from Moscow, the Comintern became an instrument of Soviet foreign policy, at times in bureaucratic rivalry with the Soviet Foreign Office but increasingly “Sovietized,” “Bolshevized,” and “Stalinized.” Still, appearances—vis-à-vis foreign Communist parties as well as foreign states—required that the Comintern be seen as separate from the Soviet government, and Stalin himself (and therefore his underlings) remained mildly suspicious of the organization. Not without reason, he never had great confidence in its ability to score important successes abroad.²

Formally, the world congresses were the highest body of the International; in fact, they were never decisive, and (just as with the congresses of the Soviet Communist party) they took place with increasing infrequency. After the Sixth Congress in 1928, the Seventh did not convene until 1935, and it was to prove the last ever held; even the dissolution of the Comintern in 1943 took place without a world congress. In the International’s operation the key body was the Executive Committee, or ECCI. Originally the national parties named their own delegates to the ECCI, but as Soviet control tightened, Moscow began proposing the whole slate. The ECCI in turn elected its Presidium and Secretariat. Other administrative units, such as regional secretariats and international liaison and coding sections, were also created by the ECCI. The ECCI Secretariat (un-

2. There are no fully satisfactory histories of the Communist International. For helpful though not always objective or accurate accounts, see, e.g., Julius Braunthal, *History of the International*, vol. 2 (London: Thomas Nelson, 1967); Franz Borke-nau, *World Communism* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962); E. H. Carr, *Twilight of the Comintern* (New York: Pantheon, 1982); Richard Lowenthal, *World Communism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964). The quasi-official survey of its history is Institute of Marxism-Leninism at CPSU Central Committee, *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional* (Moscow: Izd. Pol. Lit., 1969). On the organization of the Comintern, see also Günther Nollau, *International Communism and World Revolution* (New York: Praeger, 1961), chap. 4. A reliable documentary collection is Jane Degras, ed., *The Communist International, 1919–1943: Documents*, vol. 3 (London: RIIA, 1965). See also Aldo Agosti, ed., *La Terza Internazionale: storia documentaria*, vol. 3, pt. 2 (Rome: Ed. Riuniti, 1979), pp. 1928–43; Kevin McDermott and Jeremy Agnew, *The Comintern* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997); and the careful and well-documented study by Grant Adibekov, Eleona Shakhnazarova, and Kirill Shirinia, *Organizatsionnaia struktura Kominterna, 1919–1943* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1997).

til 1935, the Political Secretariat) conducted much of the Comintern's current work. Some of the activities of the International, such as its intelligence functions, are scarcely mentioned in the documents here surveyed.

The first president of the Comintern, who served from 1919 to 1926, was Grigory Zinoviev, a prominent "left" Communist who was widely disliked among his colleagues and later a victim of Stalin's purges. (Chapter 2 will look at the "left" and "right" factions of the Soviet Communist party.) Formally the position was then abolished, but in fact Zinoviev was succeeded from 1926 to 1928 by a leading member of the Political Secretariat, Nikolai Bukharin, at that time a brilliant "rightist"; ultimately, he, too, was a victim of the purges. After his ouster the leadership was left open until 1935, when Georgi Dimitrov, one of the leaders of the Bulgarian Communists, was formally named secretary general of the Executive Committee of the International.

Dimitrov was born in 1882 near Radomir, Bulgaria. His father was an artisan, and when the family moved to Sofia, young Georgi went to work as a typesetter. He joined the Social Democrats in 1902, and when the party split he supported the Tesniaks—in some regards, the Bulgarian equivalent of the Russian Bolsheviks (though Dimitrov later objected to the identification of the Tesniaks with the Bolsheviks). In 1909 he was elected to their Central Committee and began to attend political and trade union conferences.

In 1913 Dimitrov was elected to the Bulgarian parliament from Sofia. In 1918 he was sent to prison for undermining military discipline but was freed in December, after Bulgaria surrendered to the Allies. In 1921 he managed to attend the Third Congress of the Comintern in Moscow (the Tesniaks had reorganized as the Bulgarian Communist Party), as well as the founding congress of the Profintern, the Red International of Labor Unions, also run from Moscow.

In September 1923 Bulgarian Communists launched an ill-conceived and futile insurrection. For his alleged role in the uprising, Dimitrov was sentenced to death in absentia. Having fled the country, he remained abroad until 1945. In the intervening twenty years he worked for the Comintern, first in Vienna, then in Moscow and Berlin. Although he could not return to Bulgaria, he attended Com-

intern congresses and the plenums of the ECCI as a Bulgarian delegate and rapidly gained visibility. Beginning as an alternate member of the ECCI in 1924, he moved to alternate member of the Presidium and Secretariat (1926), member of the Central Council (1921) and then of the executive of the Profintern (1922), and finally secretary of the Balkan Communist Federation (1926).

In 1929 the Comintern placed Dimitrov at the head of its clandestine but important West European Bureau in Berlin. There, on 9 March 1933, he was arrested for setting fire to the Reichstag—the German parliament building. The newly ascendant Nazis used the fire to portray their enemies, especially the Communists, as dangerous subversives, but their efforts were rather clumsy. The prosecution's case was weak, and Dimitrov's behavior in particular, boldly challenging the case and especially Hermann Göring, then president of the Reichstag, earned him a good deal of publicity, not only in Communist circles but in other Western media as well.³

The German court, which was not yet fully under the control of the Nazis, found Dimitrov and his fellow Bulgarian defendants Not Guilty, and in December 1933, Wilhelm Pieck, a leading German Communist, sent a telegram to Osip Pyatnitsky, a prominent member of the Political Secretariat of the ECCI: "It would be politically expedient if the Sov[iet] gov[ernment] in some form informed the German government that it—the Sov[iet] gov[ernment]—is prepared to offer Com[rade] Dimitrov and the other Bulgarian com[rades] the right of asylum in the USSR." Pyatnitsky forwarded this message to Stalin on 29 December.⁴ Bulgaria had meanwhile deprived its three defendants of citizenship. On 16 February 1934 the Soviet embassy in Berlin sent a note to the German Foreign Of-

3. This sketch of Dimitrov is based on Joseph Rothschild, *The Communist Party of Bulgaria, 1883–1936* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959); Branko Lazitch, *Biographical Dictionary of the Comintern* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1973); Edward H. Carr, *Twilight of the Comintern, 1930–1935* (New York: Pantheon, 1982); Elena Savova, ed., *Georgi Dimitrov: Letopis na zhivota i revoliutsionnata mu deinost* (Sofia: Bulg. Akad. na Naukite [1952]); and F. I. Firsov, "Georgi Dimitrov and the West European Bureau of the Comintern," in *Georgi Dimitrov: An Outstanding Militant of the Comintern* (Sofia: Sofia Press, 1972), pp. 48–78. On the Reichstag Fire trial, see Georgi Dimitrov, defendant, *Leptsigskii protsess* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1961).

4. RTsKhIDNI, f. 495, op. 19, d. 248, l. 243; also cited in F. I. Firsov, "Stalin i Komintern," *Voprosy istorii*, 1989, no. 9, p. 11.

office stating that the three had been granted Soviet citizenship. The Foreign Office was requested to assist in their prompt release and early departure for the Soviet Union.⁵

On 27 February Dimitrov and his comrades, Blagoi Popov and Vasil Tanev, arrived in Moscow, where Dimitrov was received by Stalin on 7 April and, after derogatory comments by Stalin regarding the performance of leading Comintern officials—Dmitry Manuilsky, Wilhelm Knorin, and Pyatnitsky—invited to join the leadership of the Comintern.⁶ For all intents and purposes he headed the Communist International from then on, though his formal elevation to the post of secretary general did not occur until the Seventh World Congress in August 1935.⁷

5. Ministerstvo inostrannykh del SSSR, *Dokumenty vneshnei politiki SSSR*, vol. 17 (Moscow: Izd. polit. lit., 1971), docs. 59, 60, 61, 64.

6. Dobrin Michev, “Georgi Dimitrov i podgotovkata na Sedmiya kongres na Komunisticheskiya internatsional,” *Vekove* (Sofia), 1972, no. 2, p. 34 (citing Dimitrov’s diary).

7. Vasil Tanev was killed after parachuting into Bulgaria during World War II to set up a partisan unit. Blagoi Popov was arrested in November 1938, “confessed,” recanted, and was sentenced to fifteen years’ confinement. In 1940 Dimitrov requested that Popov and twenty-eight other Bulgarian Communists be released from Soviet labor camps but was turned down by Viktor Abakumov of the NKVD. Popov was finally released and “rehabilitated” after Stalin’s death and returned to Bulgaria. See Arkadi Vaksberg, *Hôtel Lux* (Paris: Fayard, 1993), pp. 126–131.