

### 3 The Left Opposition and the practices of parliamentarianism within the Bolshevik Party, 1923–1924<sup>1</sup>

*Alexander V. Reznik*

Six years after the October Revolution, in the autumn of 1923, a political contest broke out in Soviet Russia. Commonly referred to as the “struggle for power and for Lenin’s legacy,” it began as a conflict within the Party leadership, but eventually involved the Party as a whole. A heterogeneous coalition – headed by Lev Trotskii – challenged the majority group of the Party’s Political Bureau of the Central Committee, led by the Triumvirate (“Troika”) faction of Iosif Stalin, Grigorii Zinov’ev, and Lev Kamenev. This conflict triggered one of the most fundamental crises faced by the Bolshevik Party while in power. Initially beginning within the intraparty regime – having been started by a group which advocated a reform in the context of the deepening bureaucratization of the Party’s leadership and having been made worse by the latter’s monopolization of power – the conflict spread and ruptured the links between the top tier of the Party and its grassroots, leading to political passivity among many lower-level members.

The roots of this conflict go back to the early 1920s, before the death of Vladimir Lenin. According to official Party statutes, the intraparty regime was to function according to the norms of “workers’ democracy,” which included considerable opportunities for deliberation and leadership renewal. The members of the intraparty (Left) Opposition argued that the effectiveness of the New Economic Policy (NEP), which was also in crisis, depended on the success of the Party’s reforms. In the end, the Opposition lost and faced condemnation on a number of fronts. The symbolic consolidation of this defeat came with the death of Lenin (the Party’s undisputed leader) on January 21, 1924, as the sacred image of Lenin was deployed in a rhetorical attack against the threat to “Party unity” personified by the Opposition. The importance of these few months of intense confrontation can hardly be overestimated in the communist project’s subsequent evolution. As the power of the Party apparatus strengthened, the constant denunciation, demonization, and ultimately repression of the Opposition became the foundation for Stalin’s regime. These factors influenced not only the USSR, but became the norm in Soviet-styled parties and regimes globally. While the history of the power struggle and the so-called “Trotskyist Opposition” has been the subject of numerous studies (Carr 1956; Deutscher 1959; Daniels 1960; Olekh 1992;

Demidov 1994; Kruzhinov 2000; Halfin 2007; Pirani 2008), this inquiry goes further by exploring the practices of intraparty parliamentarianism.<sup>2</sup>

Intraparty discussions were a significant political event; although they occurred within the framework of a single-party system, they were comparable in their importance and intensity to the government crises experienced in Western democracies of the time. Émigré newspapers generally framed the political struggle within the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) or the RCP(b) as analogous to parliamentary debates in the West. However, what made the Soviet case peculiar was the practice of limiting the discussions to “only the Party members,” as a caption on one of the discussion pamphlets stated (*Diskussionnyi sbornik* 1923, 1). “What is settled within a bourgeois democracy by voting, by a discussion of the whole people,” the de facto Soviet Prime Minister Alexei Rykov pointed out, “in our [system], under the dictatorship of the Party, is settled by the intraparty order, and every peasant, every worker, every *spets*<sup>3</sup> and *nepman*<sup>4</sup> – they know that this discussion [...] determines the structure of the government and all of its policy.”<sup>5</sup>

In fact, public sentiment was sometimes alarming to Party functionaries. The editor-in-chief of the newspapers *Krest'ianskaia gazeta* (“The Peasant Newspaper”) and *Bednota* (“The Poor”) claimed to have received letters from peasants, which, according to him, “fundamentally” contained the message “give us democracy!” He appealed to a “sense of responsibility” of his fellow Party members in the face of the danger of “the formation of class consciousness in the corresponding strata [of the petty bourgeoisie] which read in the discussion articles” that the working class was losing its power to bureaucracy.<sup>6</sup> The members of the Opposition were charged with discussing bureaucratization in a manner that threatened the Soviet system; in response, they acknowledged this threat but did not change their approach, as they saw the strengthening of “workers’ democracy” as the best solution.

Although the Soviet system did not solicit public sentiment, democracy was integrated into the Party system in a variety of ways – most notably through the regular conferences, at which pressing issues were debated, reports were heard, and the leadership was elected or reelected. Many members of the Opposition saw the Civil War period as the ideal time for the Party due to the frankness of the discussions among its members, and noted that these democratic Party traditions began to gradually stagnate in the years that followed. In 1922, the Twelfth Party Conference amended the Party Statute. Provincial and district conferences were to be held every six months instead of every three months; the all-Party conferences were to be held once a year instead of twice (as had been resolved by the Tenth Congress a year before). Viacheslav Molotov, a secretary of the Central Committee and a close associate of Stalin, justified these changes by arguing that they matched the existing practices and claiming, “the implementation of parliamentarianism in our Party has not, in fact, been carried out” (Nazarov 2000, 71). The Party’s “parliamentarianism” was supposed to be revived with a new course within intraparty politics. The

resolution “On Party Construction” of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission, adopted on December 5, 1923, stated that at future elections “the Party apparatus should be systematically refreshed from below, by promoting into decision-making positions those members who are capable of ensuring intraparty democracy.”<sup>7</sup>

What did the Opposition mean by parliamentarianism, and how did they take advantage of the opportunities offered by the Party’s turn toward it? In order to answer this question, one needs to understand the dual practices of “electoral” mobilization and the nomination of their supporters at the conferences of all levels, as well as to explore the relationship between the leadership of the Opposition and the grassroots of the Party, and the Opposition’s perception of their fight for a majority in the Party.<sup>8</sup>

The discourse on intraparty parliamentarianism was primarily influenced by the principle of anti-parliamentarianism, as established in the RCP(b) program (*Vos’moi s’ezd RKP(b) 1959*), and reinforced by the norms of political rhetoric (Iarov 2014). While commenting on the conflict over the composition of the Credentials Commission at a Party conference, Timofei Saprionov, an especially vocal Opposition leader, noted that “it is totally inappropriate for the conference to be turned into a historic bourgeois parliament.”<sup>9</sup> Alongside the perceptions of the institutional obsolescence of parliaments, the members of the Opposition cited the objective realities in the Party politics. David Riazanov, one of the sharpest critics in the Party, stated, “We all understand that [we have] the conditions of a military encampment; the conditions of the Communist Party itself do not allow any referendum, any direct voting rights.”<sup>10</sup> Some members of the Opposition even came up with ad hominem arguments against those whom they accused of participating in parliamentarianism. For Karl Radek, a member of the Central Committee and Trotskii’s supporter, the point was “not that C[omrade] Trotskii is a greater democrat than comrades Tomskii and Zinov’ev; each of them is a democrat of the same kind, good or bad.” To prove his orientation toward compromise, he could unleash criticism on the “overzealous” Opposition members and state:

Comrades, I have never been a democrat in my entire life. I was a left-wing communist, but not a democrat [...] And if ten resolutions were adopted that said: you must become a democrat, I would not become one, because I cannot.<sup>11</sup>

Trotskii, whose articles were essential to the intraparty discussion, carefully steered clear of the metaphors of parliamentarianism. In the amendments to the draft resolution of the Thirteenth Party Conference of January 16–18, 1924, the resolution which denounced the Opposition, Trotskii wrote that the Party’s “governing institutions” both at the center and in the provinces “could never be” turned into a “parliament of opinions” in addition to stressing that “democracy is neither an end in itself nor a single means of

salvation.” Nevertheless, he considered it essential to defend the “free opinion” against the “bureaucratic regime,” as well as to protest the “liquidation of all discussion and any democracy.”<sup>12</sup> In his public statements, the Opposition leader spoke out more often on the issue of voting rights, which was the most visible part of the discourse on the Party’s parliamentarianism. For example, when speaking about the practice of “renewing the apparatus,” Trotskii reminded that those who were “renewed” were “elected” by the Party.<sup>13</sup>

There were nevertheless important nuances and differences in the context of Riazanov’s “conditions of a military encampment” and Radek’s democrats “of the same kind.” In a lengthy discussion in a Moscow printing house, a certain Cherniak polemicized with a more cautious comrade, stressing that the “intraparty democracy is nothing similar to the state democracy” in European countries. Neither this nor other arguments in favor of a more decisive implementation of democracy were supported by the majority. Equally vigorous debates were held at the Party cell of the Moscow State Tram Depot, where one of the Opposition leaders, Vladimir Smirnov, spoke to an audience of just 46 people. The minutes registered opposing views: while Smirnov argued that the transition to the NEP required a simultaneous transition to “democracy,” a supporter of the Central Committee (who eventually attracted most of the votes) stated the opposite – that the NEP was associated with “a limitation of democracy.” The discussion in the Party cell of the *Gospirt* [State Alcohol] factory lasted until two in the morning, and after 18 of the 29 being present had spoken, an Opposition resolution demanding “the steadfast implementation of Party democracy” was adopted with all but one vote.<sup>14</sup> The brief form of the minutes hides a subjective and perhaps a more nuanced interpretation of democracy. While each of these meetings had common features, they also illustrate the important nuances and differences in what might be called the practical meaning of democracy.

Some Party members did not merely express their thoughts in the circle of their comrades in one Party cell. A Party member, who authored one of the many oppositional articles that polemicized with Stalin and went unpublished in *Pravda* (“Truth”), defended the “democrat” Georgii Piatakov (a member of the Central Committee and a moderate member of the Opposition), while at the same time questioning Trotskii’s alleged “democratism.” His conclusion was that among the Opposition “there are, without a doubt, also some bureaucrats. But the Opposition’s line is democratic, antibureaucratic.”<sup>15</sup> An anonymous note submitted to Zinov’ev at a meeting at the Communist University maintained that Lenin’s authority could only be replaced by “the Party bodies endowed with the maximum trust of the vast majority of the Party, as revealed in free elections.” Another one relied on symbolic authority:

I think of “workers’ democracy” as Rosa Luxemburg thought of it. If the Party mass does not participate in the discussion and elaboration of issues

[...] then the “top leaders” are nothing more than a “withering sect,” to quote Rosa. This leads to bureaucratism, careerism, and so on.<sup>16</sup>

Indeed, the “red” students formed a particularly active part of the Opposition. The memoirs of Isai Abramovich, who in 1923 was a student at the Moscow Institute of National Economy, are illustrative in this regard.

My institute mates and I first comprehended the values of democracy when, in the twenties, we began to study the works of Marx and Engels under the tutelage of such teachers as D. B. Riazanov. We could not, of course, fail to see that the principles proclaimed by the founders of scientific communism were sharply at odds with the policies pursued by our Party. But we believed that the centralization of power, the prohibition of “dissent” and so on were temporary phenomena, caused by the fact that the country was under siege. We believed that with the transition to peacetime, the democratic methods of governing the country would be implemented.

And so, when the republic entered peacetime, in 1923–1926, disagreements arose and intensified within the Party, precisely on the question of democracy. Perhaps many of us (myself included) joined the Opposition, which proposed to rebuild the Party in a democratic way, under the fresh impression of having read the works of Marx and Engels.

At the same time, it must be admitted, we did not even think of granting any rights to other socialist parties [...] we did not go that far. But we believed that, within the ruling Party, there should be complete freedom of criticism regardless of persons, freedom of factions and groupings, free speech in the press and at meetings, unrestricted elections of Party organs and so on. (We did not yet understand then that freedom based on privilege is not freedom).

(Abramovich 2004, 68)

Certainly, common sense suggested a skeptical attitude to the prospects of the Party’s democratization under the tutelage of its own apparatus. Stalin, the chief of this apparatus, warned against the “extreme” reliance on elections, which, as he put it, “consists in the fact that some comrades seek elections ’till the end.’ If there are elections, then elect all the way! Party record?! What is it for? Elect whoever pleases your soul. This view, comrades, is erroneous.”<sup>17</sup> Speaking in the Zamoskvoretsky District of Moscow on the newly adopted resolution on intraparty democracy, Kamenev chided “the comrades who said with a sneer: the freedom of election was granted,” referring to the “liberal manifesto” of October 17, 1905, which declared but did not guarantee liberties. Kamenev promised the opportunity “to renew the entire apparatus of the Party at the forthcoming elections.”<sup>18</sup> Speaking

after Kamenev, Evgenii Preobrazhenskii joked that he was not thinking of blaming “the Central Committee the same way as they blame the next ministry to be brought down in Italian parliamentary elections, which is even blamed for the fact that goats do not give enough milk.”<sup>19</sup>

But the accusations were not ungrounded. The further away from Moscow, the less friendly the system of intraparty democracy was toward potential opposition. Zinov’ev, speaking at a conference of the Petrograd Provincial Party organization on December 1, 1923, felt no need for the liberalism of his Moscow colleague in the Triumvirate:

We might have been told: the Central Committee of the Party, just before the congress at which it will be criticized [and] reelected, picks its own delegates and cuts the voting rights of Party members. From the point of view of abstract workers’ democracy, this is a mockery of “democracy.” But we needed this from the point of view of the fundamental interests of the revolution, from the point of view of the benefits of the revolution, to allow only those who are the real Party guard to [get] elect[ed].<sup>20</sup>

Apparently, even in Petrograd, a city where the Opposition was barely supported, Zinov’ev decided to secure his position by holding a conference before the publication of the resolution “On Party Construction,” one month before the All-Union Party Conference and five months before the Party Congress. Shortly afterwards, speaking to Moscow cell leaders, Zinov’ev maintained that one must wait for the next congress, if it was to be convened immediately, “in a disciplined manner, and not go running [‘snooping’ in the version in *Pravda*] through cells and undermine confidence in the Central Committee.”<sup>21</sup> The fact that there was applause in response is deeply symbolic. Sapronov interpreted Zinov’ev’s words as a demand for keeping silent until the congress and a prediction that the Opposition “will not get the support of even three percent at our Party congress,” and then, for a newspaper publication, extended the phrase to “will not get the support in our Party.” Later Sapronov “assured” Zinov’ev that “if this congress is elected without pressure from the apparatus,” then “there will be a few dozens of those you do not like.”<sup>22</sup> Overall, the members of the Opposition did not appear to be overly optimistic about their electoral prospects.

Speaking at the aforementioned meeting of Moscow cell bureau members, Sapronov expressed his understanding of the electoral freedom: “One must elect without recommendations, without reinforced testimonials, without prior arrangements, and elect the cells of one’s bureaus without any pressure [...]” The same understanding can be seen in the Central Committee resolution proclaiming a “new course,” although the emphasis which Sapronov placed when speaking to this particular audience was different. Public discussions were pervaded by mistrust and, as a consequence, there was a demand for “safeguards.” For example, Georgii Andreichin, a former

activist in the Bulgarian and American socialist movements, noted that “the strongest guarantee is open debate, open elections.”<sup>23</sup> There is at least one letter, which Saprnov addressed directly to factory cells, calling for the immediate reelection of the apparatus. Curiously, a week later, a response to Saprnov’s letter with an expression of confidence in the Central Committee was adopted by a vote of nine to four.<sup>24</sup>

The Opposition’s “campaigning” influenced both the Party “electorate” and the candidates for the Party bodies. On December 29, 1923, in response to the “hesitation” of the subordinate apparatchiks (apparatus functionaries), the members of the Siberian Bureau of the Central Committee approved a letter to a narrow circle of the Party staff, in which they claimed that the Opposition had the aim of seizing the apparatus for themselves and that “they want to do this under the guise of reelecting the apparatus, deposing its members, and so on while dressed up in a ‘democratic’ garb” (Demidov 1994, 22). Articulating the same argument to an audience in Moscow, Zinov’ev exclaimed, “Everything else is empty gibberish, all the words about democracy – this is not worth a jigger.”<sup>25</sup> Zorin, a supporter of the Central Committee, argued that “democracy” meant settling “personal debts” for the Opposition.<sup>26</sup> Feliks Dzerzhinskii made one of the most spectacular juxtapositions of different projects of “democracy.”

Our democracy is not about people coming and saying that the Central Committee is not good at all, that there are such-and-such mistakes and such-and-such mistakes, and so on and so forth. All the more reason for the Party organization to express the unanimous opinion and the unanimous will that we ought to continue the struggle to solve the problems which history has put before our Party. And we shall be promoting democracy, but not that of which Comrade Preobrazhenskii and Comrade Rafail are the heralds (*applause*).<sup>27</sup>

Negative examples of democracy were drawn from the Party’s history, with the 1920–1921 debates being particularly often used for that purpose. For Kamenev, for instance, it was a time when

there was a race throughout Russia for the co-rapporteurs and rapporteurs, and [when] some voted for the Lenin line and others for the Trotskii line. We tried to avoid this by all means. We realize that if this was dangerous under Lenin, it is ten times more dangerous without Lenin.<sup>28</sup>

Such a “race” was avoided in 1923–1924, when, unlike their opponents, the members of the Opposition made very few attempts to mobilize support across the country and never succeeded. Preobrazhenskii also offered to recall the facts of the “trade union discussion” in order to be “justified in saying: we do not want democracy winded up or wrapped up in a paper

resolution.”<sup>29</sup> Vagarshak Ter-Vaganian, speaking at the same meeting with Preobrazhenskii, referred to earlier years to emphasize the lost democracy of the Party. “In 1917 I was secretary here and often did not know what was being put forward [at the Party meetings].”<sup>30</sup> Such a kind of leadership style seemed anachronistic in 1923.

As represented by its leaders, the Central Committee apparatus took an active part in the intraparty struggle. Lazar Kaganovich, the head of the Organizational Department, for instance, had earned the nickname “Commissar of the Central Committee” among the Opposition members in the Zamoskvoretsky District (Rees 2013, 37). But the Opposition in the capital’s Party organization also gave the impression of an organized force. According to Rykov, the Opposition group’s “apparatus for connecting with the district, apparatus of speakers, apparatus for recruiting speakers” were “better than ours.”<sup>31</sup>

This was largely due to the energetic activity of the Opposition leaders in fighting for the votes of rank-and-file Party members. For example, as early as November 30, 1923, at a joint meeting of the cell of the Central Executive Committee and the Auto-Military Unit of the Central Executive Committee, a resolution by Rikhard Rein on Saprnov’s report was adopted with only two votes against and several abstentions. It was no coincidence that many of the cells that voted for the Opposition had leaders of the Opposition among their ranks; such examples included the *Ikar* Factory (Ivan Smirnov), the Sixteenth Printing House (Petr Drobniš), and the Paris Commune Factory (Boris Breslav) (Ignat’ev 1969, 149). Most importantly, many of the signers of the “Statement of the Forty-Six” (which was seen as the program of the Opposition) spoke in the cells. Lev Sosnovskii, for instance, opposed Rykov and Mikhail Kalinin and received 200 votes in favor and only 68 against at the Mining Academy; Vladimir Kosior and Ter-Vaganian received 400 votes from students at the Institute of National Economy.<sup>32</sup>

At the same time, of course, the Opposition also suffered many defeats. For instance, Saprnov’s resolution was rejected at a numerous meeting of workers’ cells of the Sokolniki workshops in Moscow, the *Geofizika* Factory, the Hosiery Factory, and the *Posadchik* Factory.<sup>33</sup> On December 19–20, 1923, at a joint meeting of the cell of the Joint State Political Directorate and other agencies, Nikolai Bukharin, who was opposed by Preobrazhenskii, received an overwhelming majority out of 1,500 votes.<sup>34</sup> These and many other facts were later used against the Opposition as a proof of its rejection at the grassroots level.

On December 14, 1923, it was announced at the Plenum of the Moscow Committee that the Opposition had its own agitation department (Garniuk 2014, 165). The rumors of an Opposition apparatus soon spread to other regions. The main task that such a “center” would perform was sending its speakers to discussion meetings in order to replicate the actions of the Party committees. “They know that they have to attract votes, that they need to have communication, that they need to select speakers, to select resolutions,



to prepare cheat sheets for speakers, which are sent out to the provinces.”<sup>35</sup> Speaking at the district Party conference, Radek unequivocally supported the notion that there was a “center,” admitting, “It is clear that I was not called by the district committee. I got a phone call today and was told to come to the conference [...] I felt that it was not an invitation from the district committee (*applause*).”<sup>36</sup> Being a moderate member of the Opposition, Radek was being ironic about the mutual accusations of “factionalism” in this case. However, very few members of the Opposition could afford making such risky jokes, as the consequences could be very serious.

Breslav, one of the “forty-six” signers, had to refute the accusations that he was involved in adopting the most radical and critical resolution in Moscow by several military organizations on December 14. In his statement, which he demanded to be read out before the delegates to the Moscow Provincial Conference, Breslav pointed out that the Moscow Military District cell was “just as much a Soviet cell as, for example, the apparatus cells of the Central Committee and the Moscow Committee of the RCP,” that is, a cell of employees, and its decision was entirely independent. Breslav, the Head of the Moscow Military District, claimed that he was attached to another cell and did not take part in the meeting, and that therefore “the members of the Central Committee are trying in vain to use this resolution against the Party members of the Staff.”<sup>37</sup> These Central Committee members were Molotov and Zinov’ev, who specifically referred to the December 14 resolution during the district Party conferences in early January 1924 in order to fully defeat the Opposition.<sup>38</sup> Here is the most problematic point of the resolution on intraparty democracy.

The cell believes that the All-Russian Conference, scheduled for the middle of January, which will be composed mainly of the Party functionaries who have actively pursued an antidemocratic policy within the Party, cannot be considered fully competent in resolving the questions relating to the implementation of the principles of workers’ democracy. Therefore, provided it is not possible to reelect the district [*uezd*] committees and provincial committees before this date, it is necessary to try to intensively influence the delegates at the Conference from below by means of a resolution [“On Party Construction”], by submitting voter instructions [*nakazy*], and via the Party press.<sup>39</sup>

Having thereby expressed distrust of the supporters of the Central Committee, the meeting considered “it necessary to extend the discussions until the Thirteenth Party Congress (concerning the questions regarding the genuine implementation of the workers’ democracy).”<sup>40</sup> While Kamenev could say that “any democracy is an organized distrust and that democracy is no good if it is not an organized distrust,”<sup>41</sup> for Molotov the Opposition’s points were no good. He said that by articulating them the “rampant” members of the Opposition were “presenting an unheard-of challenge [...] by juxtaposing

themselves to the forthcoming Conference in advance.”<sup>42</sup> One of the authors of the resolution was given the opportunity to respond to Molotov’s criticism. Insisting on his correctness, he expressed the concern that “the Central Committee might overestimate the importance of the [January] Conference.”<sup>43</sup> It was this controversial point that Molotov latched on to, arguing that it was impossible to “protect the authority of the Central Committee” from the Conference delegates, many of whom had previously been appointed or recommended to leadership positions by the same Central Committee. Certainly, this was outright self-defense of the apparatus, but the facts were in favor of the Central Committee’s secretary: a week before the All-Party Conference, no Party organization had “demanded an immediate change of its provincial and regional Party committees.”<sup>44</sup>

The Central Committee supporters were concerned not only by individual vociferous statements but also by the significant presence of the Opposition members at assemblies. During an exchange of accusations of violating the principles of “workers’ democracy” at the Khamovniki District Party Conference, for instance, a Central Committee supporter stated that “a number of Opposition comrades” were bringing “staffs” of supporters to Party meetings, “who were influencing the elections” (the response was: “lies,” *noise in the hall*).<sup>45</sup> Such an accusation was also heard at some other meetings in Moscow, but it is impossible to determine the scale of this phenomenon. There were also accusations which allegedly came from the workers: “Comrade Ter[-Vaganian] travels around and votes in all districts.” “Some of the indignant, like the Georgian deviators, go to all university meetings and vote,” claimed another Central Committee supporter.<sup>46</sup>

The intraparty struggle was sometimes seen as a kind of “election campaign.”<sup>47</sup> One of the most straightforward dialogues on this subject occurred during Kamenev’s speech at the Military Academy:

Why do you go to meetings, do you want to have your resolution adopted? (*applause*). What did I come for? To win a majority (*applause*). I say: let us not cover ourselves. The question is clear. The question is who will hold the majority at the next congress (*voice: you*). If you know in advance that we will, then don’t forget that we have won [...] (*Radek: far too much*). Comrade Radek says we won too much at the last congress. I believe that if we are to win, we must win to the end. Your task is to win a majority in Moscow, because with a majority in Moscow [...] you will win in general. As we are used to looking at what is being done in the organization, we can see that Comrade Serebriakov is undoubtedly a *tsekist* [Central Committee member] by nature (*voice: are there any?*), he is campaigning in the Baumansky District. I. N. Smirnov, a member of the Central Committee [...] is suddenly operating in the Baumanovsky [Baumansky] District [...]. Of course, district committees must be won, because this is the first step to winning a majority in the Moscow organization.<sup>48</sup>

Sapronov recounted a speech made by the *Kauchuk* Factory worker at a Party meeting: "I want to criticize, but I am afraid they will think I want to get into the Central Committee."<sup>49</sup> Nikolai Nemtsov, an honored Party official from amongst the workers, a member of the Supreme Court cell, reflected on the group of "forty-six" in the following way: "I will die first, but I will never vote for them."<sup>50</sup> However, curiously enough, Nemtsov, like the majority in his cell, was on the side of the Opposition. Most likely, he needed such a turn of phrase to once again refute the idea that there was a fight for seats in the Central Committee. In support of his words, Nemtsov went on a long historical excursus, explaining how he was offended by the Opposition leaders of a district committee in 1921.

The actual campaign at the grassroots level manifested in the reelections of cell bureaus. The transition from theory to practice was expressed in the fact that reelections were either held or planned at the meetings at which the resolution on intraparty democracy was discussed. The election of cell delegates to Moscow district conferences were held in the middle of December 1923. According to the statistics compiled by the Moscow Party Committee, in the Khamovniki District there were 44 *tsekists* and 15 supporters of the Opposition among the 67 delegates from the workers' cells; among the 21 delegates from the *soviet* cells there were 11 *tsekists*, 4 supporters of the Opposition, and 6 vacillators; among the 111 delegates from the university cells there were 51 *tsekists*, 47 supporters of the Opposition, 11 vacillators, and 2 uncertain; among the 78 military delegates there were 35 *tsekists*, 37 supporters of the Opposition, 2 vacillators, and 4 uncertain. According to other data of the Moscow Party Committee, there were almost twice as many *tsekist* delegates as supporters of the Opposition.<sup>51</sup> If the functionaries were guided by this data, they should have been surprised by the Opposition's majority at the Khamovniki District Conference. In any case, these facts show that the competition between various factions was real.

Finding themselves in the minority at the Moscow Provincial Conference, the members of the Opposition ostentatiously exercised their democratic rights. During a discussion of the members of the new Moscow Committee, the members of the Opposition were not allowed to put their candidates forward. However, they managed to put the removal of ten other candidates, including Bukharin and Kaganovich, to vote. It was then decided to discontinue individual voting "in view of the fact that the counting produced the same figure."<sup>52</sup>

In the midst of this intraparty struggle, *Pravda* named an important aspect of the Opposition's parliamentarianism: the demand for "proportional representation" in the Moscow Party Committee (obviously, in the district committees as well). According to the supporters of the Central Committee, this constituted the Opposition's "minimum program." *Pravda's* editorial board based its assertion on a letter by Ivan Skvortsov-Stepanov recounting Preobrazhenskii's speech at a meeting of the State Power Plant on December 21, although it was noted that Preobrazhenskii immediately stated that he had

been misinterpreted.<sup>53</sup> An interpretation of this principle was also given by Rykov, who said that it meant

a coalition of two parties in all Soviet organs, a reorganization of the Central Committee on the basis of an agreement between the two factions [...] and that means organizing a joint committee, as it was under the Mensheviks, and that means a split.

In this quote, Rykov is referring to the prerevolutionary period of Party-building, during which the Bolsheviks had been in the minority. Preobrazhenskii, who spoke next, confined himself to a simple promise, to “set an example of loyalty to the Party” for his opponents: “If we get a majority, then we will pick them as we would under normal circumstances.”<sup>54</sup> At the Moscow Provincial Conference, when there was no longer any doubt that the Central Committee majority would prevail, the Opposition member Nazarov put forward the idea of proportional representation in a most transparent form:

I ask [...] is it necessary to take into account the proportion of the opinions that have been revealed in this discussion? [...] I am sure that only by the joint work of the representatives of these two opinions in the organization will you build that old steel apparatus which the Party yearns for and which we had while we were underground and which the Party masses so persistently demand. Do not ostracize the Opposition, but draw it into the apparatus, make it responsible, as you are, for everything you do.

(XI Moskovskaia gubernskaia konferentsiia RKP(b) 1924, 78)

But already then, the supporters of the Central Committee called the Opposition “unprincipled.” An article titled “What They Promise and What They Give” appeared in *Pravda* on January 11. Its author referred to the case of the Voskresensk District Party Conference, at which the Opposition, “led by Sapronov,” did not allow the minority of people who supported the Central Committee to join the delegation to the Provincial Party conference. Thereby, the author argued, Preobrazhenskii’s promise had been broken.<sup>55</sup> Whatever circumstances might have played a part at this conference, the attitude of the Opposition members to proportional representation had its nuances. “Comrades, we in the Party are not federalists, we are not putting forward any slogan advocating for proportionality,” Radek said, not clarifying on behalf of which group he was speaking.<sup>56</sup> However, rejecting this slogan did not mean rejecting proportional representation. A statement by a minority of delegates to the Zamoskvoretsky Party Conference, for instance, read:

We believe that we indeed do not uphold any principle of proportional representation, and we have always endeavored to form our executive

bodies in a homogeneous manner, so that they are able to implement the majority line of our congresses and conferences, but we have always sought to ensure that all shades of sentiments and opinions within our Party have the ability to reveal themselves [...].<sup>57</sup>

At the cell level, this aspiration was expressed in the following election results for delegates to the Conference: the *tsekist* candidates were elected most often unanimously, while the Opposition candidates got through by a “ratings vote,” often accompanied by the *tsekists* second to them and the vacillating ones.<sup>58</sup> The results of the elections to the Moscow Conference appeared miserable to the Opposition (Hincks 1992), making Preobrazhenskii draw the following reasonable conclusion regarding the technology which would be used to prepare a future “unanimous” condemnation of the Opposition:

At the Krasnopresnensky District Conference, the Opposition had 188 votes and we were denied representation on the list. In Zam[oskvoretsky] District we have a ratio of 260 to 230 votes. Furthermore, in Rogozhsko-Simonovsky district we have 127 to 90, and yet only 4 Opposition representatives were elected. When we see such politics, what can we count on? In Moscow, according to the Central Committee’s estimate, it [the Central Committee] has slightly more than a half, and it seems to us that we have a half, we won’t debate this, but the ratio roughly stands at that level, yet at the conference elections this ratio has been reduced in all places. At the provincial conferences there will apparently be a similar method of electing delegates, which hides the actual proportion [of votes] in our Party. This is nothing but the preparation for the bureaucracy’s wellbeing, a conference of 600 members will gather with only 50 or 60 representatives from the Opposition. This does not represent the real balance of forces.<sup>59</sup>

The actual All-Union Conference turned out to have even fewer Opposition members, and they sent statements to the Moscow Provincial Conference protesting the disproportionately low number of their delegates.<sup>60</sup> “We have never previously, even [during the] trade union discussions, had the Opposition excluded from representation in an organized manner,” protested Preobrazhenskii.<sup>61</sup> Addressing the more friendly atmosphere of the Conference, Sapronov said that in the Rogozhsko-Simonovsky District not a single Opposition delegate was picked for the Moscow Provincial Conference, even though the supporters of the Central Committee had a majority of only 30 votes; in the Zamoskvoretsky District, where the supporters of the Central Committee won by 31 votes, 3–4 Opposition members were delegated to the Provincial Conference out of 40 in total. In response to the shout that “this was proportional,” Sapronov replied that the number of delegates did not have to reflect the abstract total strength of the Opposition, but that it should be appropriate for the particular assembly,

“so that its opinion is reflected in its entirety.” “Is this an atmosphere of concessions and agreement on issues within the Party?” Sapronov resented. “This is a schismatic arithmetic (*applause*).” He ironically suggested that the Opposition could only get a majority if 95 percent in the Party supported it, and that 80 percent was no longer enough.<sup>62</sup>

At the Krasnopresnensky District Conference, the Opposition was denied proportional representation in the District Committee and to the Provincial Party Conference, but this was a peculiar conflict. In reference to another member of the Central Control Commission, Emel’ian Iaroslavskii told the Political Bureau members that after this:

[...] Rafail proposed that a meeting of the Opposition be opened and declared the session open to discuss the situation and to elect delegates to the Provincial Party Conference and to the District Committee from the Opposition. But the meeting could not in fact take place because of the continuous roar and noise which lasted from two to four in the morning, after which everyone dispersed in an incredibly angry mood.<sup>63</sup>

The Opposition won virtually no majority in the elected bodies anywhere. This relieved the Central Committee’s anxieties only partially. Shortly after this triumph, Bukharin requested that Zinov’ev did not

overestimate the size, character or strength of the victory. We fought essentially only in Moscow. We had the entire apparatus in our hands. We had the press, and so on. Finally, we had – very importantly – in our hands the ideals of unity and of continuing the tradition of the Party, personally embodied [in Lenin]. And yet the Opposition proved to be quite considerable in Moscow, to say the least.

(Iakushev 1990, 61–62)

But Bukharin naturally publicly denied the importance of “formal democracy” for intraparty affairs during the debate (Vilkova 2004, 400). Against all odds, political pragmatism prevailed.

It was not only the Opposition leaders but also its rank-and-file supporters in the cells who initially remarked that “many people do not know what democracy means.”<sup>64</sup> The worker Okhapkina exclaimed in her overemotional and confused speech during a conference in the Khamovniki District of Moscow: “Here is a meeting of the Central Committee, the Moscow Committee, the District Committee, the Comintern, but there is not a single worker.”<sup>65</sup> It was then that dozens of Party members signed up to participate in the debate, and the question of whether to stop giving speeches altogether or to limit them to five minutes was repeatedly being raised. Eventually, however, a decision was reached using a class-based approach: to give the floor only to worker delegates “from the machine.” One of them, a worker from a printing house, based his whole speech on the rhetoric of confusion:

what was such an obscure struggle about?<sup>66</sup> A woman worker who spoke next expressed it literally: “[...] we cannot work out which of them is right and which is wrong, the devil knows, they are probably fighting over their ministerial posts, and they are messing with our heads. We don’t have a clue about it.” The worker did not question her class status, on the contrary, she stressed it in order to urge the “upper class” to stop “fighting” on behalf of her class.<sup>67</sup> As one of the Joint State Political Directorate’s intelligence reports shows, even those workers who had been Party members since 1900 could also perceive this discussion as a question of “who would be in power: Zinov’ev or Trotskii.”<sup>68</sup> It was not surprising that the political conflict was perceived through the traditional framework of the “struggle for power.” Not only a participant at a small meeting in Petrograd could say that “the hype raised by writers and newspapermen creates the opinion that someone aspires to power,” but the old Bolshevik Matvei Muranov could also not resist exclaiming:

[...] Our leaders had launched the revolution as a people’s revolution, a proletarian one, and now they are ending it as a palace revolution (*shouting, noise*). This is why it is necessary for the leaders to come to an agreement, and there will be no discussion in the grassroots either.<sup>69</sup>

One could reasonably assume that the majority was also resentful when one of the workers in his speech openly and insistently persuaded his audience that “democracy,” as the word was being understood by the members of the working class, would only bring “harm.” From his point of view, the workers “do not support democratic centralism.” It is not important whether what was being referred to was specifically “worker’s democracy,” here the keyword is “democracy.” The Central Committee supporter was emphatic: “Comrades, the workers know very well that they are underdeveloped, they understand this very well (*loud noise*). Comrades, the workers know very well that they are underdeveloped (*noise: enough*).” The solution, according to the speaker, was to maintain the regime. However, when the worker began to speak of the need, as opposed to “Sapronov’s methods,” for the State Political Directorate to be employed, “loud” and “prolonged” laughter began to sound throughout the hall. However, one of the other “grassroots” Party members who spoke also stated bluntly that the workers did not have the necessary knowledge of Marxism and needed “a higher level of socialist consciousness” in order to implement Sapronov’s suggestion to replace the *apparatchiks*.<sup>70</sup>

It is possible that some members of the Opposition walked out of the room during speeches of this kind. This served as an opportunity to contrast the working-class grassroots with the elite of the Opposition. Iaroslavskii added a phrase in *Pravda* which was absent in the transcript of his speech: “You only talk about democracy, but when the workers from the

neighborhood spoke here, you did not want to listen to them and you left the hall like herds (*voices: right; applause; noise*).<sup>71</sup>

One of the sharpest and somewhat paradoxical juxtapositions between the “tops” and the “bottoms” was voiced by the head of the Soviet government, Kalinin, who stated that “the people, the working class are not in fact suffering from a lack of democracy, rather, it is the Party which is suffering from a lack of it.”<sup>72</sup> One of the workers’ Opposition activists from the *Kauchuk* Factory would probably not agree with this, as he claimed that the Moscow Committee had twice canceled the results of their cell’s reelection. Being certainly aware of such controversies, Bukharin, at a closed-door Central Committee Plenum on January 14–15, 1924, stated that the Opposition was heterogeneous and set the objective: “The workers who express a healthy tendency should be isolated from the Opposition leaders” (Vilkova 2004, 400).

Lenin’s death on January 21, 1924, triggered a series of resolutions from factories and plants, which were aimed not so much against the Opposition as against discussion in general. Thus, the Communists and the Komsomol members of the Yaroslavl Plant *Trud i Tvorchestvo* demanded from the Central Committee to “concentrate all forces and ban all discussions”; all discussions were deemed “self-destructive” for the Party. A meeting of thousands of workers at the Sormovo plants supported the demand “to put an end to these incomprehensible differences of opinion” (Ennker 2011, 120). In his report, the secretary of the Vasileostrovsky District Committee of Leningrad wrote: “The disputes over the [Opposition] platform’s correctness have quickly faded after receiving the news of Comrade Lenin’s death, and now many ardent supporters of the so-called Opposition are publicly admitting their mistake.”<sup>73</sup>

On rare occasions, Party members inclined toward the Opposition continued their activities. At a city-wide meeting in Kaluga on January 7, 1924, where the majority supported the Opposition, after the Party Conference’s decision to end the discussion, “a few comrades [...] did not calm down and brought democracy from the Party to the non-partisan masses.” Following an investigation by a special commission, “some comrades were transferred and some were expelled [from the Party].”<sup>74</sup> The members of the Opposition in Krasnoyarsk had been elected to one of the district committees while the Thirteenth Party Conference was in progress. There they gained a foothold and continued their work. The chairman of the Siberian Bureau of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, Iurii Figatner, described in a letter to a colleague that a Communist who had previously been transferred from Tula for “squabbling” had been elected as the new secretary. From then on, Figatner wrote:

[...] the work [of the Opposition] went into full swing, the cell secretaries in the First District were thoroughly treated, as the Siberians say, “to perfection,” the secretaries are all workers, good, energetic lads, the



Opposition spent all their time in the District, they not only worked in cells, they worked the public individually, they spent all their free time in the District, sleeping in the District, drinking with the lads, in short, doing everything possible to make the District their own, and they more than succeeded in this.<sup>75</sup>

The victory of the Central Committee's supporters cemented the trend of contrasting the "word and deed." Dzerzhinskii, for example, was applauded during a discussion after saying that criticism of the Opposition does not simply take place under the Party's "democracy," but leads to "arch-democracy, because no other party would allow such idle talk to take place."<sup>76</sup> By the end of 1924 no one would be any longer surprised by what Mikhail Kharitonov, the head of the Ural Bureau of the Central Committee, had to say:

I attended two *okrug* [area] conferences, one in Perm and the other in Yekaterinburg. In Perm I did not hear a single word about intraparty democracy and I heard very little about it in the Yekaterinburg *okrug*. I think it is correct to say that in each individual district, the more they talk about democracy, the less they carry it out.

(RKP(b) 1924, 110–111)

Not only could democracy's defeated supporters be blamed for talking about it, but also for being silent about it. Three members of the defeated Opposition who were located in a cell within the People's Commissariat of Finance, for instance, made a statement at a district Party conference which read, "Objectively, the Opposition has been cultivating among its followers, politically speaking, a dog's senility (passivity and unprincipledness) and organizational formlessness (abstention from voting, conscious maintenance of 'calm' at Party meetings), and so on and so forth" (RKP(b) 1924, 75). Whether this statement corresponded to reality is difficult to judge. However, one can ascertain that, even if the Opposition had not been deprived of their seats in the governing organizations (there were none of its members at the level of the district committees anymore), they would have still completely lost the initiative in implementing democracy.

For a while the intraparty struggle led to the formal democratization of the Party apparatus: electoral recommendations and "transfers" were reduced, and the leadership was partially renewed (Pavliuchenkov 2008, 327). The Tomsk Regional Party Committee democratized the election to district Party organizations to such an extent that it soon regretted it, as its secretaries became markedly "younger" and "intellectual" (Kulikov 1991, 120). Democratic practices were used in order to defeat the Opposition and to legitimize the domination of the apparatus, which had returned to the old path of bureaucratic centralism. What worried the *apparatchiks* was the atmosphere of uncertainty which democratic procedures, elections, appeals,

and endless discussions created. The members of the Opposition initially conditioned their “electoral” successes on the “terms” of the intraparty democracy resolution, being rightfully concerned about their opponents’ technologies. The latter, in turn, were confident that the Opposition had the ability to “fight for power.” The ordinary electorate was often unable to grasp the essence of this debate and perceived it as a “struggle over seats.”

## Notes

- 1 This chapter is a revised version of a chapter from the author’s book on the Left Opposition, published in Russian (Reznik 2018). I want to express here my sincere gratitude to my friends and colleagues Deirdre Harshman and Misha Lerner for their help with translation, and to Ivan Săblin for the kind invitation to contribute to this volume.
- 2 For more details on the current state of research of the Left Opposition, see (Reznik 2019).
- 3 A non-Party specialist.
- 4 A private entrepreneur within the NEP system.
- 5 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 36, l. 3 (Transcript of the meeting of the Sokolniki District Conference, January 7–8, 1924).
- 6 Ia. Iakovlev, “Iz neotlozhnykh prakticheskikh zadach partii,” *Pravda*, January 11, 1924.
- 7 *Pravda*, December 7, 1923.
- 8 The situation in the Army Party cells differed from the others, which requires a separate inquiry. According to the report of the Political Department of the Moscow Military District, “[...] the tendency toward electability of political organs and commissars, or rather toward the excessive broadening of the rights of the party organs at the expense of the commissar and political apparatus, took place in a small number of cells” (RGVA (Russian State Military Archive), f. 25883, op. 2, d. 512, l. 64). As was noted in that and many other reports, this debate was attended almost exclusively by political commissars.
- 9 RGASPI (Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History), f. 323, op. 2, d. 39, l. 2 (Transcript of the meetings of the Khamovniki District Party Conference, Vol. 2, January 8–10, 1924).
- 10 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 38, l. 189 (Transcript of the meetings of the Khamovniki District Party Conference, Vol. 1, January 7, 1924).
- 11 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 37, l. 31, 33 (Transcript of the meeting of the Baumansky District Conference of the RCP(b), January 7–8, 1924).
- 12 RGASPI, f. 325, op. 1, d. 105, l. 7 (Trotskii’s amendments to the draft resolution of the Thirteenth Party Conference, January 16–18, 1924); d. 84, l. 2–3 (Trotskii’s project of the resolution for the Thirteenth Party Conference, January 16–18, 1924).
- 13 Lev Trotskii, “Gruppirovki i fraktsionnye obrazovaniia,” *Pravda*, December 28, 1923.
- 14 TsGA Moskvyy (Central State Archive of Moscow), f. 67-P, op. 1, d. 229, l. 37ob (Minutes of the general meeting of the RCP(b) cell of the First Model Print Shop, December 5, 1923); *Ibid.*, l. 76 (Minutes of the general meeting of the Moscow State Electric Tram Station and Substation, December 19, 1923); *Ibid.*, l. 105ob (Minutes of the general meeting of the RCP(b) *Gossprint* cell, December 12–13, 1923).
- 15 RGASPI, f. 17, op. 171, d. 27, l. 73 (S. Pestkovskii, “Regarding the letter of Comrade Stalin”).

- 16 RGASPI, f. 17, op. 171, d. 26. l. 95, 107 (Anonymous notes to Zinov'ev).
- 17 I. Stalin, "Zadachi partii," *Pravda*, December 6, 1923.
- 18 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 33, l. 11–12 (Transcript of the Zamoskvoretsky District Party Conference, December 6–9, 1923).
- 19 *Ibid.*, l. 13.
- 20 *Pravda*, December 7, 1923.
- 21 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 40. l. 81 (Transcript of the general meeting of the bureau of Moscow RCP(b) cells, December 11, 1923); "Rech' tov. Zinov'eva" *Pravda*, December 16, 1923.
- 22 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 40. l. 92 (Transcript of the general meeting of the bureau of Moscow RCP(b) cells, December 11, 1923).
- 23 TsGA Moskvyy, f. 67-P, op. 1, d. 248, l. 98 (Transcript of the Zamoskvoretsky District Party Conference, January 4, 1924).
- 24 RGASPI, f. 17, op. 171, d. 26, l. 221–223 (Sapronov's letter to the cell of the former Dedovskii enterprise, December 15, 1923).
- 25 TsGA Moskvyy, f. 67-P, op. 1, d. 248, l. 98 (Transcript of the Zamoskvoretsky District Party Conference, January 4, 1924).
- 26 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 33, l. 40 (Transcript of the Zamoskvoretsky District Party Conference, December 6–9, 1923).
- 27 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 36, l. 83 (Transcript of the meeting of the Sokolniki District Conference, January 7–8, 1924).
- 28 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 38, l. 25 (Transcript of the meetings of the Khamovniki District Party Conference, Vol. 1, January 7, 1924).
- 29 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 33, l. 24 (Transcript of the Zamoskvoretsky District Party Conference, December 6–9, 1923).
- 30 *Ibid.*, l. 42.
- 31 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 36, l. 14 (Transcript of the meeting of the Sokolniki District Conference, January 7–8, 1924).
- 32 RGASPI, f. 17, op. 11, d. 204, l. 82, 84, 86 (Discussion material in the Zamoskvoretsky district cells for the Central Committee).
- 33 "Rezoliutsii," *Pravda*, December 21, 1923.
- 34 *Pravda*, December 22, 1923; "V iacheike OGPU i MGO," *Pravda*, December 23, 1923.
- 35 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 36, l. 124 (Transcript of the meeting of the Sokolniki District Conference of the RCP(b), January 7–8, 1924).
- 36 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 34, l. 4 (Transcript of the Rogozhsky-Simonovsky District Conference of the RCP(b), January 3–6, 1924).
- 37 TsGA Moskvyy, f. 3-P, op. 5, d. 43, l. 57 (Breslav's statement to the Conference Presidium).
- 38 V. Molotov, "So stupen'ki na stupen'ku," *Pravda*, January 3–4, 1924; V. Molotov, "Zhertvy fraktsionnosti?" *Pravda*, January 12, 1924; RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 37, l. 87–88; TsGA Moskvyy, f. 67-P, op. 1, d. 248, l. 28.
- 39 RGASPI, f. 17, op. 11, d. 205, l. 26 (Resolution of the Cell of the Political Administration Staff, the Special Purpose Unit Headquarters, and the Moscow Military District's Military Communications Headquarters, December 14, 1923).
- 40 *Ibid.*
- 41 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 33, l. 135 (Transcript of the Zamoskvoretsky District Party Conference, December 6–9, 1923).
- 42 V. Molotov, "So stupen'ki na stupen'ku," *Pravda*, January 3–4, 1924.
- 43 N. Durmanov, "V poiskakh fraktsionnosti," *Pravda*, January 12, 1924.
- 44 V. Molotov, "Zhertvy fraktsionnosti?" *Pravda*, January 12, 1924.

- 45 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 39, l. 2 (Transcript of the meetings of the Khamovniki District Party Conference, Vol. 2, January 8–10, 1924).
- 46 Rabochii S-ev. “Rezoliutsii. V raionakh. V Rogozhsko-Simonovskom raione (Vpechatleniia rabochego),” *Pravda*, December 14, 1923; “Otkliki s mest,” *Pravda*, December 23, 1923.
- 47 See Rykov’s speech: RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 36, l. 5 (Transcript of the meeting of the Sokolniki District Conference, January 7–8, 1924).
- 48 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 66, l. 64 (Kamenev’s report to the Military Academy, December 1923).
- 49 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 38, l. 69 (Transcript of the meetings of the Khamovniki District Party Conference, Vol. 1, January 7, 1924).
- 50 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 39, 58 (Transcript of the meetings of the Khamovniki District Party Conference, Vol. 2, January 8–10, 1924).
- 51 TsGA Moskvy, f. 3-P, op. 11, d. 85a, l. 122–126 (Khamovniki Conference); *Ibid.*, l. 10 (Summary of the debate on the intraparty situation and on the elections to the district Party conference through December 29, 1923).
- 52 TsGA Moskvy, f. 3-P, op. 5, d. 43, l. 4–5 (Minutes of the Eleventh Moscow Provincial Party Conference, 10–12 January 1924).
- 53 I. Skvortsov-Stepanov, “Partiinaia diskussiia i moskovskaia organizatsiia,” *Pravda*. December 25, 1923.
- 54 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 36, l. 15, 49 (Transcript of the meeting of the Sokolniki District Conference, January 7–8, 1924).
- 55 [K. Ia.] Kadlubovskii, “Chto obeshchaliut i chto daiut,” *Pravda*, January 11, 1924.
- 56 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 37, l. 131 (Transcript of the meeting of the Baumansky District Conference of the RCP(b), January 7–8, 1924).
- 57 TsGA Moskvy, f. 3-P, op. 5, d. 43, l. 79 (Petition to the Moscow Provincial Party Conference).
- 58 TsGA Moskvy, f. 3-P, op. 11, d. 85a, l. 122–126 (Khamovniki Conference).
- 59 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 37, l. 116 (Transcript of the meeting of the Baumansky District Conference of the RCP(b), January 7–8, 1924).
- 60 TsGA Moskvy, f. 3-P, op. 5, d. 43, l. 36, 40, 42, 60–61, etc. (The Opposition members’ statements to the Conference).
- 61 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 36, l. 53 (Transcript of the meeting of the Sokolniki District Conference, January 7–8, 1924).
- 62 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 38, l. 53, 71–72, 78–77 (Transcript of the meetings of the Khamovniki District Party Conference, Vol. 1, January 7, 1924).
- 63 RGASPI, f. 17, op. 171, d. 29, l. 102 (Iaroslavskii to the Political Bureau, January 5, 1924).
- 64 For example, Kramarov, at a closed-door meeting of the *Gosstroii* cell on December 12, 1923, claimed that the failure to implement the resolutions of the Twelfth Congress lay with the “literate” upper classes, who “had not explained the resolutions to the lower classes.” TsGA Moskvy, f. 67-P, op. 1, d. 229, l. 114.
- 65 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 39, l. 99 (Transcript of the meetings of the Khamovniki District Party Conference, Vol. 2, January 8–10, 1924).
- 66 *Ibid.*, l. 82, 99.
- 67 *Ibid.*, l. 101.
- 68 RGASPI, f. 76, op. 3, d. 74, l. 67 (OGPU report).
- 69 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 39, l. 63 (Transcript of the meetings of the Khamovniki District Party Conference, Vol. 2, January 8–10, 1924).
- 70 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 40, l. 34, 49 (Transcript of the general meeting of the bureau of Moscow RCP(b) cells, December 11, 1923).

- 71 “Rech’ tov. Iaroslavskogo.” *Pravda*, December 18, 1923.  
 72 “Rech’ tov. Kalinina.” *Pravda*, December 14, 1923.  
 73 TsGAIPD SPb (Central State Archive of Historical and Political Documents of St. Petersburg), f. 4, op. 1, d. 123, l. 8 (Report on the activities of the Vasileostrovsky District Committee of the RCP(b) in January 1924).  
 74 RGASPI, f. 17, op. 33, d. 215, l. 38 (Survey of the situation and activities of the Kaluga Party organisation for the period from April 1923 to March 1924).  
 75 RGASPI, f. 17, op. 33, d. 205, l. 1 (Figatner to Dogadov, April 28, 1924).  
 76 RGASPI, f. 323, op. 2, d. 36, l. 82 (Transcript of the meeting of the Sokolniki District Conference, January 7–8, 1924).

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