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**Report by Deputy Head of the General Division of
the CC CPSU G. Orlov on the Party Archives**

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Summary:

Orlov reports on issues with the organization, ownership and access to the communist party archives. He makes recommendations for reorganizing and centralizing the archives and prioritizing access to party members.

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Secret

Deputy General Secretary of the CC CPSU
com. V.A. Ivashko

□ Respected Vladimir Antonovich!

□ Among the difficult issues for the whole party now, the problem of the CPSU archive, which contains up to 75 million files [dela] with documents from the beginning of the 19th century up to 1990 in storage in the Central and provincial party archives, is taking on ever more significance.

□ The political, scientific, cultural, and social-legal significance of the party archive and its material value is great. And this defines its place and role in the activity of the CPSU and the social-political life of the country.

□ The archive of the CPSU is a very important part of the source base for the development of social sciences, the formation of societal consciousness, and the accumulated historical experience of the party and the people. It is also an object for the possession of which destructive forces are fighting a political, and not only a political, struggle with the CPSU. The documents in the CPSU archive are extremely powerful weapons in the political struggle.

□ But new approaches to resolving the problem of the party archive have not yet been worked out.

□ Importantly, the CPSU's right to ownership of the archive has not been fortified, and the necessary organizational conditions for the party's realization and defense of that right have not been created.

□ The organization of the party archives (created in 1939) up until now has been operating in a practically unchanged manner. The party archives of the republic committees, the regional committees [kraikomy], and the district committees [obkomy] of the party are not included in the apparatus of the party committees and, at the same time, are not party establishments. The party archives in the union republics, Moscow and Leningrad are directly subordinate to the institutes and centers of political research, being their structural subdivisions. The central party archive is included in the corpus of the ITIS [Institute of Theory and History of Socialism] CC CPSU.

□ The TsPA carries out the scientific-method [nauchno-metodicheskoe] leadership of the local party archives. There has not been and is not currently a subdivision or even a single worker in the apparatus of the CC CPSU to act as curator of the party archives.

□ As in past years, the party archives have been seen as "subsidiary" or technical subdivisions which provide archival information to meet the scientific demands of society and, to a certain extent, which assist mass agitation-propagandistic campaigns through different forms of uses of documents.

□ The decentralization of leadership, ambiguity in the construction of the system, and the indefinite status of the party archives diminishes party committees' responsibility for work with the party archive, and hampers the conduct of a unified policy in work with the documents of a single CPSU Archival Repository [fond].

□ In a decree of 7 March of this year, "On reforming the system of scientific and academic institutions CC CPSU," the Politburo CC instructed the IT IS CC CPSU, and the Ideological and General Divisions of the CC to prepare the draft of a new Statute on the Archival Repository of the CPU. In June of this year, ITIS presented such a draft to the CC CPSU.

□ Having analyzed it thoroughly, we consider that its statutes to a large degree do not correspond to the conditions of the situation and that they are not aimed at a qualitative reconstruction of work with the documents of the party's Archival Repository.

□ The CPSU's right to ownership of the archival documents is only declared. The role of the CC CPSU in work with the documents of the CPSU's Archival Repository is limited to participation in deciding [some] separate issues. The ITIS's practically monopolistic role over the distribution and use not only of the documents of the Central Party Archive, but of the entire party archive, is consolidated.

□ The party archives of the republic committees, the regional committees, and district committees of the party are slated for reorganization in the sector of party committees. But the present position of the Central Party Archive, the party archives in the union republics, Moscow and Leningrad (in the corpuses of the relevant institutes, functions and tasks, which today have substantially changed), is to be preserved in the future.

□ There are also other erosions [razmytye] in the draft, and sometimes erroneous theses as well, and it needs to be seriously reworked.

□ In the new Statute on the CPSU Archival Repository, it should be written, having established the CPSU's right to ownership of the archives, that it is implemented by the CC CPSU in the person of its leading organs - the Politburo and the Secretariat, which delegate a series of powers over the use of the party archive to other party committees.

□ The central party archive must be transformed into a scientific-research institution - the Central Party Archive of the CC CPSU, acting on the rights of a sector of the CC CPSU and having a Charter confirmed by the Secretariat of the CC CPSU.

□ All local party archives must be turned into archives of party documentation - the sectors (subdivisions) of the archive for the CC of the communist parties of the union republics, the republic committees, regional committees and district committees, having allocated to them, besides the present ones, the functions of the current party committee archives.

□ Priority in the right to use of the party archive's documents should be given to the CC CPSU, the party committees (related to the archives which are located under their authority), as well as the scientific, academic, museum, editorial-publishing institutions of the party, and [those involved] in the preparation of the collected writings and other editions of the works and documents of K. Marx, F. Engels and V.I. Lenin - the ITIS CC CPSU.

□ The proposed system of organizing the archives is based, first of all, on an understanding of the fact that these documents, including those stored in the Central Party Archive, are a very important part of the sources base for scientific research in the area of all of the social sciences, which is being conducted not only by the ITIS CC CPSU, but also by other (not only party) scientific and academic institutions, and by social scientists from all over the country. And a consolidation of control over the documents of the party archive by only one of these institutions is impermissible.

□Second, in the interests of assuring the preservation and the use of archival documents in the multifaceted activities of the party, the right to control, use, and distribute [the contents] of the archive must be carried out directly by the CC CPSU and the party committees in the localities, and not through scientific institutions.

□Third, the party archives' first priority should be an all-sided use of the documents (and of its organization) in the scientific, propaganda, mass-agitation, organizational work of the party committees and organizations. Including all of the party archives in the apparatus of the party committees will assist a fuller realization of this task.

□Fourth, entrusting the functions of party committees' current [tekushchii] archive will allow better work with documentation in the party, which is important given the cuts in the staff of the party apparatus. At the same time, the creation of a unitary, organically linked system of working with documents in the party will be created [between] the file-generating-current archive and the archive of party documentation which is accessible for broad usage.

□A Draft Statute on the Archival Repository of the CPSU which includes the aforementioned theses has been prepared (see Attachment No. 1). But, taking into consideration the presence of the point of view of the ITIS CC CPSU on organizing the system of party archives which differs in principle [from our own,] we request at the given stage that a new "Statute on the Archival Repository of the CPSU" to examine our thoughts.

□Besides this, in our opinion, it would be expedient at the same time also to examine the following questions:

□- about the inclusion of clauses on the CPSU's right to ownership of the Archival Repository of the CPSU in the CPSU Charter, and on the tasks and organization of the party archive system (Attachment No. 2);

□- about the inclusion of a clause in the Program of the CPSU on the study and use of the historical experience contained in the documents of the CPSU's Archival Repository in the work of party organizations;

□- about defending the rights and interests of the CPSU in the area of archival work in the preparation and adoption of a Law of the USSR on the Archival Repository of the USSR. The general division of the CC on its own initiative is completing preparation of such an alternative draft law and inclusions to the draft laws of the Main archival administration and a group of scholars which has already been introduced to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR (introduced by Yu. Afanas'ev);

□- on the preparation of new normative and normative-method acts on the issue of work with the documents of the Archival Repository of the CPSU;

□- on the organization of propaganda for the positions of the CPSU in the area of archival affairs in the party press while taking into account the efforts of anti-Communist forces to base and inculcate the idea of the necessity of nationalizing the party archive into societal consciousness;

□- on working out ways of defending the ownership rights of the CPSU to documents of the CPSU Archival Repository and models of the functioning of party archives in conditions of potentially diverse social-political circumstances (in case of the withdrawal of a union republic from the USSR, in conditions of limitation on the activities of the Communist party, and so on.);

□- on the redistribution of documents between the archive of the CC CPSU and the archive of the apparatus of the President of the USSR (former Sixth sector of the General Division of the CC);

□- on the adoption of a Statute on the archive of the CC CPSU and on measures to perfect its work on the basis of modern programming-technical means, strengthening its mutual action and mutual connection with the archives of the party and, first and foremost, with the Central Party Archive of the CC CPSU;

□- on ways of preserving the possibilities of decentralizing the preservation sites of documents from the CC CPSU archive and the Central Party Archive.

□In the interests of strengthening the leadership of archival affairs in the party, establishing stable working contacts, mutual ties and mutual activities with the Central party Archive of the CC CPSU and the party archives in the provinces (with the archives of party documentations - sectors/ subdivisions/ of the archive of the CC Communist Party in the union republics, republic committees, regional committees, and district committees of the party), it would seem to be essential to establish, by transforming and redistributing members of staff (without increasing the staff), to establish a new post of deputy head of the division in the General division of the CC CPSU and to strengthen the archival sector with qualified employees.

□In connection with the efforts of destructive forces to seize and nationalize the party archives and establish control over them which are taking place in Armenia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Moldavia, and in districts of the Western Ukraine in connection with the Order by the President of the RFSFR [Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic] on doing away with party affiliation [departizatsiia], and [given] the other possible and likely steps in this direction, the problem of the archives of the CPSU has become acutely urgent.

□In these conditions, in our opinion, there is now a need to conduct a discussion with your participation of the state of affairs in party archives, to work out and begin realizing a program of defending them and radically reconstructing their activities in keeping with the demands of the contemporary social-political situation.

□We request your examination.

Deputy head of the General division of the CC CPSU

(G. Orlov)

"5" August 1991