4 May

I was secretary for a meeting of the Politburo. Once again, a whole array of international questions. In connection with the Polish offensive, Trotsky suggested that a half-hour ‘strike’ be held at 1 o’clock throughout the entire country following news of the seizure of Kiev, which can be expected within a day. Prepare all provincial committees for this possibility now with encrypted telegrams. Preparations were rejected. Lenin commented: ‘They will say that everything was fabricated in advance’. It was resolved to arrange a work-stoppage and meetings after the seizure of Kiev. All the while, Trotsky emphasised the lethargy of the press and the sluggishness of party-comrades despite the seriousness of the situation.

A general conviction that the Poles will be defeated and things will, in all probability end with the declaration of Soviet power in Warsaw.

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1. [E.A. Preobrazhensky’s diary was apparently seized by the NKVD organs at the time of his arrest. It is kept in the TsA FSB RF (Central Archive of the Federal Security-Service of the Russian Federation).]

2. [From TsA FSB RF. Handwritten.]
There were curious comments in connection with a discussion of Brusilov's letter, read by Trotsky. Kamenev drew attention to the fact that the letter mentioned 'Orthodox' people, which might provoke scoffing and mockery on the part of workers. He suggested making it appear that the typist 'overlooked' this word and that it not appear in print. Il'ich supported the skulduggery, commenting that the workers [would notice] nothing else in the letter and would ridicule the fact that we want to rely upon the 'Orthodox'. Trotsky insisted on the need to publish the letter in its entirety because this word is absolutely essential to Brusilov, who wants to say that he has not changed his views even while siding with Soviet power out of patriotic considerations. Stalin supported this approach: 'It is not our letter but Brusilov's, and he is the one who answers for it'. Radek also joined them. As a result, someone joked that the 'Orthodox' be replaced by the 'Jews'. It was decided to publish the entire letter.

In view of the possibility of all kinds of machinations on the part of patriotic officers, I suggested they be more carefully monitored by the VChK. This was agreed without discussion.

There was an interesting exchange of opinions regarding the composition of the delegation being sent to England. Il'ich insisted that Krasin go to Germany, not to England. He expressed the thought that England, by way of Poland, is at war with us. A bloc with Germany, even if only tacit, already half exists; and in terms of the opportunity to order locomotives, it is precisely Germany that can provide us with something. In his opinion, our alliance with Germany is maturing in opposition to the Entente. Kamenev made some objection. The question was set aside.

The following decision was taken on Georgia: send a telegram to Sergo not to take Tiflis, which he promised to make Soviet within two weeks, and not to 'self-determine' Georgia at all. Several people laughed at the fact that the [Georgian] delegates signed an agreement by which they are obliged not only to hand over all the interned Denikinites, but also to expel the Entente from Georgia. Il'ich laughed aloud and remarked that it would be like walking a puppy around the Kremlin. Someone joked that the puppy may indeed 'do' what a badly behaved puppy is expected to do. It was agreed to leave the Georgian Mensheviks in

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3. [Following the October Revolution, A.A. Brusilov remained in Soviet Russia. From May 1920, he was chairman of a special conference under the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Republic. The diary is referring to a letter from Brusilov to former Russian officers calling upon them to defend the homeland.]

4. [The original text is damaged and this word could not be read. 'Would notice' appears to be the most probable variant.]

5. [This word, too, is illegible.]

6. [The Cheka, or All-Russian Extraordinary Commission responsible for state-security.]

7. [The text is also damaged here.]