



Colonel Leonid Brezhnev, Chief Political Officer of the 18th Army, signed, 19 May 1944.

Single-page 8" x 12", front only. Addressed to Maj. Gen. Shatilov, Commander of the Political Department of the Ukrainian Front. Recommendation to approve sr. lieutenant Leonid Ptashkin for the position of deputy senior political officer of a sapper battalion. Brezhnev proceeds with a stellar review of Ptashkin's actions as deputy commander and senior political officer of a rifle battalion which fought for seven months in the so-called "Malaya Zemlya", a defensive position near the city of Novorossiysk which later became Brezhnev's main claim to fame as a military commander during WW2. This single episode was blown up out of all proportion for Brezhnev's sake, presenting it as a major battle which played a pivotal role in the outcome of the war.

Brezhnev's hand signature is first under the text of the recommendation, in red pencil, co-signed by the Chief Personnel Officer of the 18th Army Lt. Col. Evdokimov, in purple ink.

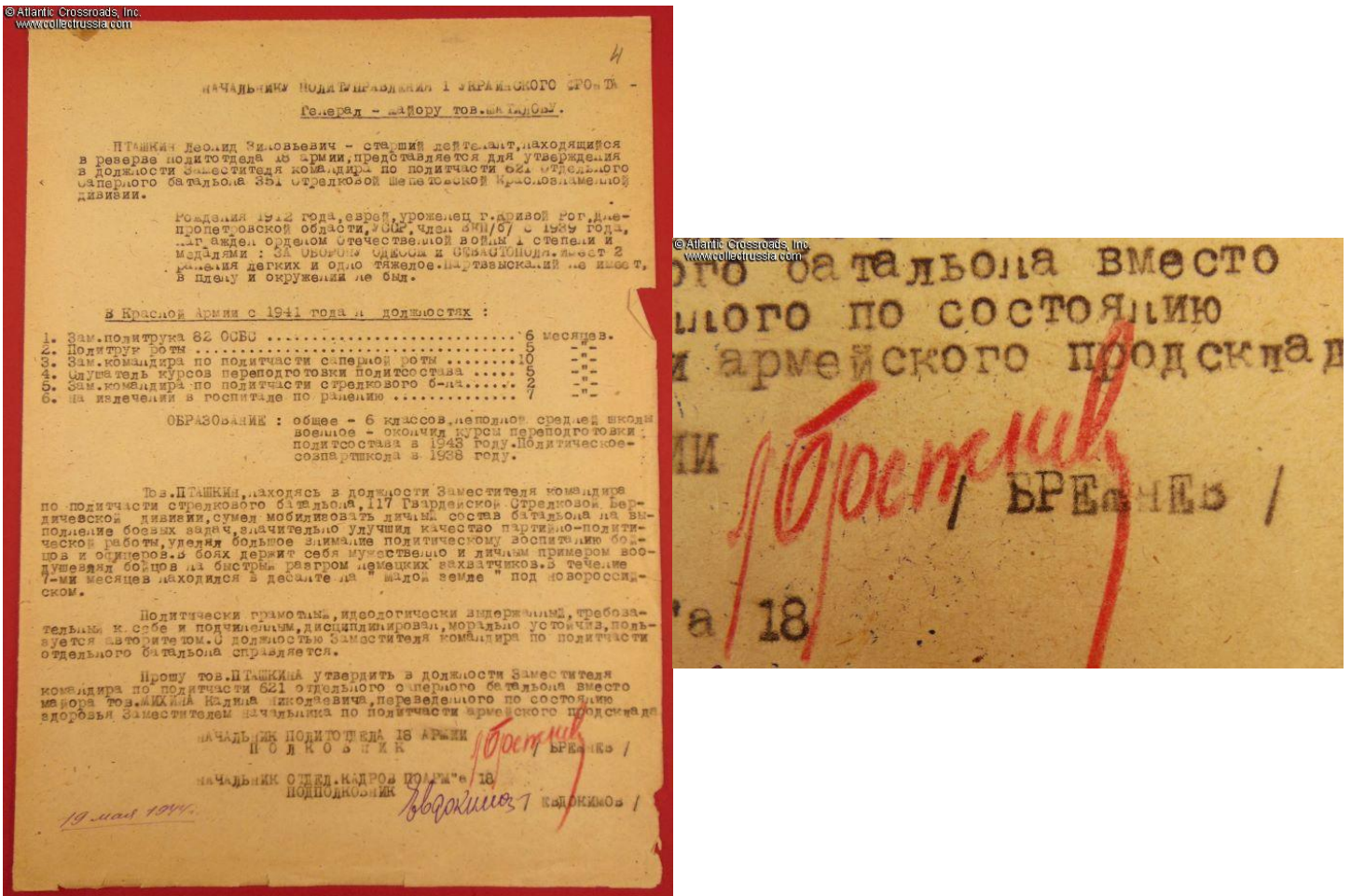
In very good condition. The left margin is folded onto the back of the page, concealing the line of staple holes. The right-side edge shows minor tears and a crease, not too intrusive to the eye. The paper is very clean and wrinkle-free.

A Khrushchev protégé, Brezhnev had no qualms about overthrowing his mentor. Only a one-star General by the end of WW 2, he had himself promoted to Marshal of the Soviet Union. The only recipient of the Order of Victory to have its award posthumously revoked.

The 18 years of Brezhnev's reign were full of internal struggle for power but he managed to prevail and become the de-facto absolute ruler of 1/6 of the Earth's landmass. He brought some level of improvement of living conditions for the Soviet people, and a lot of stability (some called it stagnation) which is still causing nostalgia among the older population, some of whom are willing to trade the turbulent abundance of modern Russia for the meager but immutable existence of the Brezhnev era.

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