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SINO - YUGOSLAV PAPER ON WITCH-HUNTING IN CHINESE LITERATURE

MUNICH, December 22 (Stankovic) -- The Chinese writer Woo Yen, who three months ago claimed that "it is necessary to possess talent in order to become a writer", is now accused by the official Chinese Communist press of "cherishing bourgeois views about literature and arts".

The Peking correspondent of the Belgrade daily "Politika" and the news-agency Tanjug, Branko Bogunovic, published a report in the paper's December 20 issue under the title "Herostratus From Tientsin" dealing with Woo's troubles.

Three months ago, said Bogunovic, Woo published an article in the periodical "New Harbor" under the title "It is necessary to possess talent in order to become a writer". In his article Woo dared to assert the following: "I think that even in a Communist society not all people can become writers.... In order to become writers people must possess talent in the same way as a scientist who studies interplanetary flight must possess a talent of a special kind. Not all people possess all talents".

On the other hand, however, Woo stated that this request for talent in literature should not be taken too rigidly "but in no way should it be simply abandoned". In this connection Woo said: "There are people among us today who are almost illiterate, which does not prevent them from living in the illusion that they can achieve the title of 'writer'; they even publicly state they really intend to become writers. There are even such people (especially among the young generation) whose general knowledge and life experience are more than poor, but they courageously make statements to the effect they would write novels with 'a million hieroglyphs' dealing with 'experiences' from the previous twenty years."

"Cold Water" For "Hot Heads"

True, Woo is against "any monopoly in literature" because it is not "a privilege of some 'big classes'"; he advocates "the right of the people's masses to develop their initiative" but adds that his idea with publishing this article was "to douse some

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people's heads with cold water.... because cold water can sometimes influence certain hot heads very favorably."

Bogunovic asked how was it possible that the answer to Woo's article came only three months after its publication? In his opinion the reason for such a late reaction lies in the fact that only now a new witch-hunt against "rightist opportunists" in all spheres of life in China has started.

This is why "Jen Min Jih Pao" published a sharp attack against Woo Yen in its issue of November 3. According to this article "Woo Yen's theories about talent and creative work represent 'bourgeois views about literature and the arts'; that these theories are in opposition to the general line of the Chinese CP and that their 'basic aim is to pour cold water on the creativeness of the people's masses". Soon afterwards other papers and magazines also started attacking poor Woo and his ideas."

In the trade union paper Kung Jen Jih Pao, a critic of Woo, stated that "workers and peasants possess the greatest talent for creative work" and that "to think otherwise means striking blows against the literary activities of the working masses and cherishing completely bourgeois views about literature and the arts".

"Peking Jih Pao" published an article under the title "Long Live the Literary Creativeness of the Masses". In this article Woo is criticized for "not having confidence in the wisdom and creative power of the masses". The paper claimed that Woo's views are the views of "rightist opportunists and bourgeois rightists in literary circles."

Bogunovic concluded his report as follows: "'Kwang Jih Min Pao' and all youth papers and periodicals write in the same manner. Even discussions are organized in the papers in which on the one side is but poor Woo Yen -- 'the Herostratus From Tientsin' -- on whose head hot water is poured, and on the other side are all the other critics."

End.

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