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KHRUSHCHEV AND THE WRITERS

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Why Kommunist (No. 7, 1961) should now find it advisable to reprint Khrushchev's speech to the Soviet intellectuals, which was made nearly a year ago,¹ is by no means certain. However, it is known that the writers have been in the forefront of the movement against the excesses of Stalinist "justice," and now that Khrushchev has embarked, however temporarily, on a course of reaction in the field of crime and punishment, he may perhaps have thought that a reminder of the artist's duty to the Party would be timely. Even now, ten months later, Kommunist provides only a shortened version of what Khrushchev said, but since there are sixteen pages of it, the extracts published probably convey a fair impression of the whole speech.

Khrushchev began by reminding his audience that in 1957, the year of his previous dacha speech to the writers, the situation had been much more acute. (In fact he had then said that the Hungarian revolution might have been avoided if some of the Petöfi circle authors had been shot at an early stage. "Our hand is not going to tremble") He did not repeat the threat in all its crudity, but made a pseudo-allegorical reference to it:

"You remember what the weather was like -- the lightning flashed, it thundered and rained in torrents. In speaking of it, our comrades probably recalled that the lightning flashed and the thunder roared not only in the heavens.... And it is good that the lightning flashed...."

¹ 17 July 1960.

The roar of the thunder helped some of those who are hard of hearing to come to their senses.... The torrential rain swept away everything superficial, which was preventing some ideologically immature people from seeing reality correctly. All this lightened their way, they felt that they could breathe, work and fight more easily."

Then Khrushchev switched to one of his biblical parables in a thrust which appeared to be directed against Dudintsev:

"The bible legends say that the first people on earth were Adam and Eve, whom God doomed to earn their daily bread by struggle. And in this sense, I would say that we are continuing the work of Adam and Eve...."

After a highly optimistic glance at the USSR's economic position ("we shall catch up in the near future with the US in steel production, and perhaps overtake them"), Khrushchev switched back to his favorable meteorological comparison:

"I won't conceal from you that today's meeting pleases me more than the previous one" (Gay animation, applause). ...Why are we talking today like this, without thunder, without lightning, and why do we feel fine?"

Answering his own rhetorical question, he admitted that in 1957 "some people did not understand the measures taken by the Party. Some of them even swallowed the bait of bourgeois propaganda.... There were such people among scientists, writers and artists. We were forced to tell them openly and sharply about their mistakes. Better to be sharp, and warn someone in time, than indulge his erroneous views and wrong actions which, if they are treated liberally, may lead to serious consequences. Perhaps this sounds crude, but in my opinion it is better to take him by the ear and pull him away from the abyss, than to let him slide over it." (Applause)...

Khrushchev then described the case of the three "anti-party" members of an institute² who were expelled from the party despite the efforts of one of their senior academicians to intercede on their behalf by a telephonic appeal for clemency. "In our conditions, there is every opportunity to correct those who stray without resorting to extreme measures." The confidence of this assertion contrasts strangely with the need, less than a year later, to introduce the death penalty for crimes as ill-defined as large-scale embezzlement and attacks on labor camp administrations.

Khrushchev also went to considerable lengths to assure the intellectuals that no return to the indiscriminate condemnations of the Zhdanov era is contemplated. People who have erred, he said, should not be written off as hopelessly incorrigible, because some of them are not bad. But the firmness of the

² See Le Monde, 13 May 1961.

Central Committee towards those who had wavered or strayed could be justified by "the right of leadership" -- a phrase strangely reminiscent of "Führerprinzip."

It appears that it was the Presidium, certainly not the CC, which had decided to invite the intellectuals to the government dacha, but after talking at length in the first person plural ("we in the Presidium") Khrushchev later switched back to the more collective form "we in the CC."

He admitted that there are still some writers who do not subscribe to the party's views on the direction and freedom of art, and went on to give yet another defense of the principles of regimentation:

"Why conceal the fact that there are still a few people among us who do not like it when publishers or magazines, theaters or film studios justly criticize works sent to them for publication or production? Such people are inclined to see in the just advice of their comrades the cramping regimentation of their work. But can you imagine an organized human society without norms and rules of everyday life which are obligatory for all its members? If everyone began to impose his subjective ideas, personal tastes and habits on all the others, life would become unbearable, it would be like the Tower of Babel."

Despite this, purges must be selective, Khrushchev argued. In pruning an orchard, the fruit-bearing trees should not be cut down. Similarly, critical articles which totally reject certain books, films or plays are wrong because the strong as well as the weak aspects of them should be brought out. In other words, the whole tenor of his argument is that while the principles of socialist realism must be maintained, the critical methods to be used should be more flexible, more constructive, and more sophisticated than the wholesale black-and-white denunciations of the Zhdanovshchina.

At the end of his speech, Khrushchev switched from literary problems to bloc politics for a moment in what looked like a veiled thrust at Peking.

"The workers see in the successes of the socialist countries, in the development of their economy and culture, in the uninterrupted growth of the material prosperity of the working people the most convincing, irrefutable arguments for the fertile ideas of Marxism-Leninism. That should be remembered all the time by certain dogmatists who enjoy abstract theoretical disputes. And sometimes these disputes are not worth twopence."

He went on to compare these dogmatists with a party committee which knows its political line, but achieves no practical results:

"The masses of the people judge political parties not only by the ideas they proclaim, but mainly by the way they carry them out. If our party only engaged in showing how good its ideas are, and did not ensure that on the basis of these ideas life should be rebuilt for the better, the people would not follow us."

Despite this concluding passage, the overall tenor of Khrushchev's speech showed that domestically, he is now more concerned at the pressure from "bourgeois ideas" among his writers than with the left intellectuals. Only yesterday he again showed his extreme conservatism in art when he spoke of the US pavilion in Moscow:

"The American exhibition in 1959 produced some rather unpleasant sculptures. The Americans thought they would impress people with those things" (UPI, Moscow, 19 May 1961).

Khrushchev clearly feels that, although the dangers of revisionism in art are now much less than they were four years ago, when he was reduced to threats of summary execution, "thunder and lightning," they are still real enough to warrant a restatement of his determination to maintain control in the critical months ahead of preparation for the new ideological platform which will be embodied in the Party program now being drafted.

r.r.g.

SOVIET LITERATURE IN THE DOLDRUMS

by Max Hayward
Partisan Review
 Winter 1960

In February of this year the French journal Esprit published an anonymous essay by a young Soviet writer on the topic of socialist realism, a brilliant and original effort to explain the stagnation of Soviet literature. Early in his discussion the writer observes:

Art does not fear dictatorship nor severity, nor repressions, nor even conservatism and clichés. If needs be, art is narrowly religious, stupidly étatiste, without individuality, and yet it is great. We are enthusiastic about the style of ancient Egypt, Russian iconography, folklore. Art is fluid enough to fit the Procrustean bed imposed by history. There is only one thing that it cannot tolerate: eclecticism.

The author points out that in a "theological" society where everything is subordinated to the achievement of a supreme Purpose, it is incongruous to employ modes of expression adequate only to lack of faith, skepticism and self-deprecating irony. A "religious esthetic" cannot be based on nineteenth-century models. Yet this is precisely what is demanded of Soviet writers. Ever since Gorky commanded them to "learn from the classics" they have been trying to glorify the "positive hero" and his devoted, single-minded struggle for communism in the style of Balzac, Tolstoy, de Maupassant and Chekhov. There is, then, a patent contradiction between form and content. Positive heroes and militant optimism cannot be convincingly portrayed in language associated with the "superfluous man" and deeply pessimistic uncertainty about the purpose of life. Thus, says the author:

If many writers are going through a crisis at the moment ...it is because they have to seek a compromise and unite what cannot be united: the positive hero who logically lends himself to schematized, allegorical treatment -- with psychological character-study; an elevated, declamatory style -- with description of prosaic, everyday life; a sublime ideal -- with verisimilitude to reality. This results in a monstrous salad. The characters [of Soviet fiction] torment themselves almost à la Dostoevsky, grow sad almost à la Chekhov, arrange their family life almost à la Tolstoy and yet at the same time vie with each other in shouting platitudes from the Soviet press: "Long live peace in the whole world," "Down with the war-mongers." This is neither classicism nor realism. It is semi-classical demi-art of a none too socialist demi-realism.

In the author's view the only Soviet writer who has ever given original artistic expression to the Soviet epoch was Mayakovsky. He hated analysis and psychologism. He never

described everyday life (byt) or nature. He did not try to imitate the Russian classics, but devised a hyperbolic, homeric style of his own. Since his day Soviet writers have been condemned to a ludicrous eclectic epigonism, including, if they are poets, even elements of Mayakovsky. This eclecticism was imposed in the 1930's and was in line with other extraordinary miscegenated forms (e.g., the combination of one-man rule with a "democratic" constitution) invented by Stalin.

The greatest source of contradiction and tension in Soviet intellectual life since the famous 20th Congress of 1956 is that these ideological hybrids have not been allowed to lapse with the partial eclipse of their maker.

Free Content vs. Free Form

Students of communism have tended to ascribe all the ills of Soviet literature and art to the principle of "partiinost" (i.e., conformity to party guidance) with special emphasis on the restrictions that this places on what the writers says. As the author of the Esprit articles suggests, however, perhaps an even greater handicap for the Soviet writer is the fact that party doctrine prevents him from freely elaborating an original style. Freedom to express certain ideas is less important in art than freedom in the choice of form. It is only this latter freedom that is essential to art.

It is odd that the more imaginative post-Stalin leadership has not realized that by granting this freedom it might win much more effective support from the writers as propagandists for the Cause (at least from those of them who still have not lost faith in it) and at the same time deflect them from their interest in the extension of more general freedoms. Since the events of 1956, this has been understood by the party leadership in Poland and even in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, where considerable discretion is allowed the writers in their choice of style. Thus, while it retains control in the realm of political ideas, the party gives the writers relative freedom to be an artist, and by removing a major frustration, reduces his potentialities as a rebel. This particular lesson of the Polish-Hungarian revolts has not been learned by the Soviet Central Committee. Instead of allowing writers to be artists it forces them to be second-rate publicists -- "second-rate," because to be a first-rate publicist one needs a political and intellectual freedom much wider than the license of form required by an artist. The policy of the Central Committee, therefore, has compelled Soviet writers to seek an improvement in their position by striving for a measure of liberty, which, if granted, would undermine the political and ideological foundations of the regime.

The "controversial" novels, plays and articles of the last few years (Ehrenburg's Thaw, Zorin's Guests, Pomerantsev on "Sincerity in Literature," Dudintsev's Not by Bread Alone, etc.) were the first truly publicist works to appear in the Soviet Union for decades. They also demonstrated that the realist style is effective only when it is employed to express the mood and outlook of those Russian writers of the last century who created it. In other words, they broke down

the specious distinction between "socialist realism" and "critical realism." The Thaw reintroduced the theme of the Superfluous Man into Russian literature. Instead of faith in the future we find uncertainty in the present. Reality becomes complex and hence rather sad, instead of simple and joyous. Doubt, hesitation and introspection ("What is the meaning of life?" asks a character in one of Vera Panova's novels) belie the optimism of the still obligatory happy ending. In all this post-Stalin literature, however conformist the author tries to be, the "shining heights of communism" are gradually being overcast by a haze.

Since the counterattack against "revisionism" in 1956 the party's policy in literature has been to suppress overt challenges to its authority while encouraging the writers to give a more balanced and truthful picture of life. They have been asked to write on contemporary themes with greater plausibility and artistic skill. Since perfection is always unconvincing, positive heroes may be endowed with human weakness and the difficulties and hardships of the transitional stage between socialism and communism may be frankly exposed. These concessions to greater realism have, if anything, made the writers' educational task more difficult. Virtue is tedious and Soviet readers are not exceptional in being far more interested in vice.

A Grounded Literature

The official speeches at the Third Congress of Soviet Writers, which was finally held last May after two unexplained postponements, show little evidence of concern at the obvious inadequacy of this modification of literary formula. In its formal address to the Congress, the Central Committee told the writers that their "high calling" is "to show truthfully and vividly the beauty of the people's labor exploits...to be passionate propagandists of the Seven-Year-Plan and to imbue the hearts of Soviet people with courage and energy." They are to do this by "giving every support to realist art which is opposed to formalist, idea-less Art."

The monumentally tedious speech delivered by Andrei Surkov, outgoing head of the Writers' Union, spells out these two incongruous demands at inordinate length. But there are passages which suggest that he is aware of the contradiction between them no less than the author of the Esprit article. Speaking of the poverty of language in many recent Soviet works he observes that "content that has not found the right form cannot influence the minds and hearts of the readers." He virtually admits the incompatibility of realism and the portrayal of romantic, inspiring heroes when he says:

We have many truthful and talented books about the life of the people, but what one of our great writers said ten years ago about our literature not being sufficiently winged is as valid now as it was then. Indeed, we seem to have difficulty in poeticizing the people of the present day.

Earth and air, it seems, mix no better in Soviet literature than they did in medieval alchemy. Surkov goes even further when he says: "We often forget that the portrayal of what is new in life demands innovation (novatorstvo) in form."

What would be simpler, then, than to encourage writers to go ahead and experiment? The answer is that it cannot be done because freedom to experiment might lead to formalism and "pseudo-innovation." Surkov's argument at this point is quoted in full because nothing could better illustrate the crabbed, infantile perversity of pseudo-dialectical logic:

In the 1920's and the beginning of the 1930's there was often heated discussion among writers about the novelty of Soviet literature in general, and innovation was understood as the search for a new form, for new linguistic possibilities of expressing the new material of revolutionary reality. Admittedly there was much that was false and pseudo-revolutionary in the debates of those days. Formalist quirks were often passed off as innovation...The struggle against these false interpretations of the idea of innovation was successfully concluded about a quarter of a century ago, because the rich literary practice of the Soviet epoch mercilessly destroyed all the inventions of the pseudo-theoreticians. Formalism now manifested itself only in certain cases of recidivism. But now it has come about that serious discussion of innovation in our literature has ceased altogether. Our literature is not subjected to a profound analysis from the point of view of the compatibility of the form of literary expression with the new material of reality.¹

The older writers at the Congress will have remembered sadly that in many cases the pseudo-theoreticians were destroyed together with their inventions. They will also have wondered how it is possible to seek for new forms without courting the charge of formalism. Everybody will have thought back to the period just after Stalin's death when the party launched an appeal for "boldness" and when those who responded were soon being charged with "pseudo-boldness."

A Plea for Growing-Room

It was one of the older writers, Vsevolod Ivanov, who gently pointed out the absurdity of asking people to experiment without allowing them to do so. In what was almost the only noteworthy speech from the floor, he made a plea that the younger writers be given their head in this respect:

¹ Surkov's reference to recidivism is a fascinating example of how the language of criminology has become commonplace in Soviet literary debate. It is quite natural to talk of an "amnesty" for erring intellectuals.

Young writers must be allowed and helped to experiment to find their own style, their own manner of writing. ...It would occur to nobody to dispute the fact that a progress in science is unthinkable without experiment. Yet attempts to experiment in literature are not met with approval and the experimenter risks being classed as a formalist. In my opinion this is nonsense. There is not and cannot be any danger of formalism in our literature because formalism was a short and by-gone stage in the lives of certain literary critics and it by no means embraced the whole of Soviet literature.

The last sentence makes an important and obvious point that has probably never been publicly made before, namely that the very use of the term "formalism" (as in the Central Committee's message to the Congress) is an unwarranted extension of its original meaning. In the 1920's it was the term chosen by a small but very influential group of literary critics to describe their method of analyzing the linguistic and structural aspects of works of literature. Its pejorative application to writers was a misappropriation of the term.

Apart from Khrushchev's address, the only other notable contribution to the Congress came in the shape of an article by Konstantin Paustovsky, one of the more outspoken and rebellious of the older writers.² He discusses with notable frankness some of the factors that "impede the free development of literature." The first is the lack of tolerance towards various, as he puts it, "isms." He speaks of them with unprecedented indulgence:

All these isms are the children of extravagant Paris and America. Beyond the outer ring of the Paris fortifications they lose their glamor, the soil that feeds them and they look far-fetched and unnatural. But even these extravagances (surrealism, decaphonism, dadaism and other isms) are essentially a completely normal expression of youthful impetuosity. There is no reason whatsoever to sound the tocsin and shout with panic, for the recklessness of youth is useful -- it prevents the older generation from going to seed and regarding itself as infallible and "untouchable."

His second point is even more radical. Flying in the face of "anti-revisionist" orthodoxy, he disputes the standard charge that writers who fail to make a judicious balance between "negative" and "positive" have lost contact with the people. In a cautious phrase which could well refer to Pasternak as well as Dudintsev, he asks whether those writers accused of "isolation from the people" are really the ones

² About two years ago, using the comparative immunity of old age, he made a sensational speech at a public discussion on Dudintsev. It was never printed in the Soviet press, but a transcript appeared in a French newspaper.

guilty of it.³ His answer, in so many words, is that the writers who are alien to the people are rather those who try to combine realism with phony optimism (bodryachestvo), who lace their work with high-minded sentiment, insert saving clauses and devise happy-endings. "Perhaps," he writes, "we shout so much and so loudly about truth in literature just because there is lack of it....The people see everything and understand everything and they will never excuse falsity and deceit in a writer, however talented he may be." Comparing the saving clauses and the happy endings to the bows which a clown makes to the spectators before he leaves the ring, he comments:

It is well that Tolstoy was able to write Anna Karenina before the appearance of this tradition. He did not have to "bow" to anybody, even the publisher, and he allowed Anna to disrupt her family and die for purely personal and, therefore, impermissible, reasons. It is not acceptable to write about defects, however harmful they may be for the life of our society, without first making an exculpatory "bow" by mentioning our achievements.... Another useless and burdensome tradition is the reluctance to write about suffering, the fear of any suggestion of sadness, as though our lives should take place under a sugary sky to the cheerful laughter of "militant" men and women...

This article by Paustovsky amounts to a manifesto, audaciously close in spirit and tone to the demands for freedom (at least freedom from the absurd formulas bequeathed by Stalin and Zhdanov) which caused such a furor when they were first enunciated in 1953-54 and again with even greater insistence, in 1956. The fact that these demands could be reiterated at the Congress by a writer who previously had compromised himself as their ardent champion shows very clearly that, surface appearances to the contrary, the movement towards the emancipation of literature (and hence of intellectual activity in general) is still strong and undefeated. Talk in the West about the end of the "thaw" has been grossly exaggerated. The current flows even more strongly than before, but under a thin covering of ice. In a curious negative way the Writers' Congress indeed bears witness to the victory of the opposition. The lack of controversy, the calculated absence (or at least failure to participate) of all those writers who could have

³ The Pasternak affair was scarcely mentioned at the Congress. Only Surkov saw fit to refer to his "treacherous activities." But none of the other speakers took up the subject. The only other reference is by Galina Nikolaeva in an article published in Literaturnaia Gazeta on May 18, the opening day of the Congress. In a strikingly different tonality to Surkov's remark, she speaks en passant of Pasternak's "mistake."

injected a spark of life into the proceedings, turned the Congress into a rather pathetic parade of old-timers.⁴ It was all reminiscent of a demonstration by some dwindling political group whose members turn out to keep the flag flying, but whose arguments and slogans are so irrelevant that nobody bothers to contradict them anymore.

Culture and Corn

It was only the appearance of Khrushchev which enlivened the Congress and perhaps saved it from being a fiasco. His speech was an impressive example of his impromptu oratory in the intimate and rather bantering style that he adopts in his discourses to the peasants and other producers of material goods. There are even agricultural similes: the fostering of young literary talent, for instance, is elaborately compared with the cultivation of corn.

It would be useless to look for any new thinking on ideological or cultural questions in Khrushchev's address. What he says is so conventional as to be irrelevant to the problems which vex the writers. Gone is the angry exhortative note which marked his three "literary" speeches of 1957, when he personally intervened to rap the knuckles of the "revisionist" recalcitrants. Indeed he now evinces something close to boredom with literary questions, and there is a note of mock-humility in his constant assurance to the audience that he is not really competent to judge literary matters. He informed them apologetically that he didn't really have much time left over from matters of state to do much reading and even then he often needed to prick himself with a pin to keep awake. One can only imagine the discomfiture of certain people in the hall when he went on to mention one book he had read recently without the aid of a pin, namely Not by Bread Alone: "Anastas Ivanovich Mikoyan, who read this work before me, said to me, 'Read it -- from some of the things he says it looks as though he has been eavesdropping on you!'" The embarrassment of those who led the campaign against Dudintsev can have been matched only by the relief of the majority on hearing that their works are no longer passed upon by an omniscient and malignant judge.

Khrushchev's main concern is evidently not that the writers should be ideologically pure but that they should keep the peace and not trouble the government with their intermin-

⁴ Mikhail Sholokhov, who arrived back in Moscow from his foreign tour two days before the opening session, did not speak, even if he attended. At the last Congress in 1954 he spoke scathingly of the "Olympian calm" of the proceedings and all but disrupted them by a series of scurrilous personal attacks on various conformist colleagues. It would be interesting to know what he thought of this Congress.

able squabbles. He also makes it quite clear that they are no longer regarded as being so important as they believe: "Life is incomparably richer, more full-blooded and deeper than any work of art." Their mistakes, therefore, scarcely warrant all the fuss made about them. The following passage in his speech could very well have significant implications since it suggests a certain abdication by the party of its exclusive prerogatives in the control of literature, in favor of the corporate judgment of the writers themselves:

You will ask: what guarantee is there against mistakes? Yes, it is difficult to give guarantees, because a writer, if he is a real Soviet writer, makes mistakes not consciously, not intentionally, but for a whole number of reasons, such as inadequate knowledge of life and incorrect premises, etc. In order to prevent this, one must remember that writers live in society, reflect the life of society, that their work must be guided by the criticism of society and that they must take account of this criticism....Again you may say: "Criticize us, control us, if a work is incorrect, do not print it." But you know that it is not easy to decide right away what to print. The easiest thing would be to print nothing, then there would be no mistakes....But it would be stupidity. Therefore, comrades, do not burden the government with the solution of such questions, decide them for yourselves in a comradely fashion.

This grant of relative autonomy to the writers is accompanied by guarantees that there will be no return to the "intolerable phenomena" associated with the "cult of personality" and also by a plea for tolerance and tact in dealing with colleagues, however seriously they may have erred. Wayward intellectuals, like hardened criminals (see footnote 1), are not incorrigible if they are given every chance to reform. Apologizing for the "crudity" of his analogy, Khrushchev told his audience how he himself had recently reformed a thief with a little kindness. In calling for comradely love and reconciliation, however, Khrushchev makes it quite plain that forgiveness depends on penitence and a contrite admission of defeat. One must "not strike a man when he's down"; but neither must one forget the immortal words of Maxim Gorky: "If the enemy does not surrender, he must be destroyed." Nor must the writers be allowed to forget that their role is primarily to assist the party in the education of man. At the end of his speech, through a remarkable unconscious blunder, he reformulated this sacred task of the Soviet writers in words rather familiar to Western ears:

I saw some Americans three days ago. Among them was an old man, a judge. At the end of our talk he said..."I fear that when I get back and tell my friends about my impressions, some of them will say, 'The Russians have washed the old judge's brains.'" That's literally what he said. Not a bad expression. So there you are, comrades, you should wash people's brains with your works.

Despite the ominous reservations in Khrushchev's speech, it gives some hope that the life of the writers may now be easier. It may encourage editors to take greater risks in publishing ambiguous works, and it may give a weapon to the opposition against the hacks. If this comes to pass, the latter will feel much less sure of their ground in exposing "mistakes" and they will have to fight out their battles within the writers' organization instead of appealing for the Central Committee's arbitration. The composition of the new Secretariat of the Writers' Union, elected immediately after the Congress, shows that the conservatives will now have to contend with formidable opposition from liberals who wish to free literature from the trammels of the past. It now includes Tvardovski and Panforyov,* the editors of Novy Mir and Oktyabr respectively, both of whom were temporarily relieved of their posts by Surkov a few years ago for pursuing an overly independent line in their editorial policies. Surkov himself was dismissed as First Secretary of the Union and replaced by K. A. Fedin, who takes a rather cautious but tolerant view of the new moods among the writers. In his speech at the Congress he in fact came out on the side of freedom to experiment in form: "We value and respect innovators in science, industry and agriculture. The question is, may a writer rest content with the working methods of the nineteenth century?" It seems highly likely that under this new leadership there may at last appear in the Soviet Union some literary works of lasting and distinctive artistic quality. We may see the emergence of a new style which will give adequate expression to the age. It is idle to speculate what new forms might arise, but the author of the Esprit article offers one intriguing suggestion:

I put my hope in a phantasmagorical art, with hypothesis instead of a Purpose, an art in which the grotesque will replace realist description of everyday life. This is what would best correspond to the spirit of our epoch. Let the outré images of Hoffman, Dostoyevsky, Goya, Chagall and Mayakovsky...teach us how to be truthful with the aid of absurd fantasy.

Mr. Hayward has added the following observations on recent events that have taken place since this article was written:

Developments in the few months after the Writers' Congress show that Khrushchev's speech and the subsequent changes in the secretariat of the Writers' Union have, for the time being, decisively tipped the scales in favor of the "progressives." Before the Congress the Stalinist diehards (Surkov, Sobolev, etc.) though showing increasing signs of lack of confidence and nervousness, were nevertheless able to browbeat the progressives with appeals to high Party authority. This no longer seems to be the case and with the Party observing some degree of neutrality, as foreshadowed by Khrushchev in his speech, the diehards now create the impression of being on the defensive.

* Since this article was written, Panforyov's death has been announced.

The great change in the climate may be illustrated by two examples: In December, 1958, the Union of Writers of RSFSR, a recently created body which is dominated by reactionaries (its president is L. Sobolev who made quite a career out of baiting "revisionists" in the difficult months after Hungary), held its constituent congress. Several of the speakers made vicious attacks on Pasternak and one of them added a new charge, namely that of "corrupting youth." It appears that two young poets, Pankratov and Kharabarov, students of the Moscow Literary Institute, had fallen under the spell of Pasternak, made "secret" visits to his dacha, written verse in imitation of him, hung his portrait in the Institute hostel and circulated a manuscript copy of Doctor Zhivago among their fellow-students. For these heinous offenses they "underwent their deserved punishment" -- expulsion from the Komsomol.

In August this year the Central Asian newspaper Kazakhstanskaya Pravda announced that the two well-known young Moscow poets Pankratov and Kharabarov had arrived in Kazakhstan on a travel-warrant issued by the Central Committee of the Komsomol and had honored the editorial board of the paper with a visit. The announcement is accompanied by two specimens of their work. Kharabarov's poem is entitled "On an Untrodden Path" and is a moving appeal for the right to go one's own way. Evidently there has been very powerful intervention on their behalf since last December and it seems highly likely that their total rehabilitation was made possible by the changes at the Third Congress of Writers in May.

The second example is an interview given by Ehrenburg in August to a correspondent of Literature and Life. He says here what he had said in a rather more disguised way in an article on Chekhov published just before the Writers' Congress. Among other things, he makes an unprecedented appeal for "solidarity" among writers:

"In the very difficult times of the eighties Chekhov spoke of the solidarity of the writers of that generation. Is it not time to give serious thought to the question of solidarity among writers in our Soviet epoch? Savage attacks on young writers, cliquishness, and novels in which authors settle accounts with their fellow-writers (i.e. Kochetov's infamous Brothers Ershov-M.H.) would be incompatible with such solidarity..."

The mere fact that such an unheard-of appeal for solidarity among intellectuals -- the Party's grip on them has always depended on their lack of solidarity -- can now be made speaks more eloquently than anything of the radical change of atmosphere since the Congress.

THE PERSONAL REALM VS. THE OFFICIAL

by George Gibian
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February 13, 1961

Leningrad

In Leningrad I met a young woman art historian who is writing a book on 19th Century French painting. We spent several afternoons together in the Hermitage Museum, and she told me frankly what she thought of the paintings in the various rooms we wandered through. Her opinion of most 19th Century Russian art, for example, and of almost all Soviet art on exhibit was as low as would be that of any Western art enthusiast. Most of it was calendar art to her. She liked only the mystical, demon-ridden canvasses of Vrubel. Her chill thawed in the top floor room of the Hermitage, where French impressionists are shown. There, in the meeting place of the Soviet avant-garde, the "aware" artistic intelligentsia, she felt at home. She saw no reason to withhold from me her preferences.

But she also worked as a part-time guide for foreign tourists, and as we were leaving the museum one afternoon, we encountered a lady from Pittsburgh whom she had accompanied as an Intourist interpreter on a sightseeing tour of the city. The lady came straight to us and asked with the unironic smile of a Helen Hokinson clubwoman: "Could you tell me where they show modern Soviet art?"

"Right here. The museum has hundreds of modern Soviet paintings," the Russian art historian answered.

"Oh no," the lady tourist insisted. "I have been through the whole museum, and I have not seen anything like what was shown years before the war in Pittsburgh. What they show here is not modern. I mean really modern paintings. Where are they?"

The Russian girl, much embarrassed, repeated: "I don't know what you mean. There is a lot of modern Soviet art in this museum."

It all seemed very strange to the lady from Pittsburgh, who went away shaking her head, still ignorant of the existence of the storage room where the Maleviches, Kandinskys, Chagalls, and other early Soviet "formalistic" works are locked away.

When we were alone, the Russian woman turned to me, and I still remember what she said almost word for word: "What do people like that expect me to say? What does she mean by putting a question like that to me? I am an Intourist guide. I must tell her what I know the people who employ me expect me to say. When I speak personally, for myself, I can say what I think; but when an American tourist asks me like that, I must speak for my position."

The Russians have a tremendous capacity for role-sensing, role-playing. The official world -- of "what the position demands" -- and the world of private opinion are entirely different in Soviet Russia. When we read Soviet magazines, we are exclusively in the world of the official. It is necessary to go to Russia -- and then to be lucky -- to encounter the realm of the personal.

We should be seriously mistaken about the nature of Soviet literary life if we did not take into account this submerged world of informal opinion. It is elusive, amorphous, and crops up seldom in "documents" or "sources." Yet it is a most important sphere of experience to the Russian.

This was brought home to me by two literary meetings. One was official: I was the American professor of Russian literature who was being spoken to by a Russian in his official capacity. The other was an amazingly free, heterodox gathering, meant only for Russians interested in literature, en famille. The two meetings took place within 24 hours of each other, in the same city, Leningrad. Both are representative; neither is entirely understandable without the other.

The unregimented meeting was a "Readers' Conference" organized one evening by the journal Problems of Literature in the Leningrad Public Library. There was a capacity audience of about 150. The scholarly-literary magazine (which has its offices in Moscow) sent to Leningrad a group of its editors, accompanied by a few creative writers, in order to explain its editorial policy to anyone who cared to come and to solicit readers' suggestions and questions.

From the first, one could feel a free inquiring mood, even an eagerness for variety.

The critic Trifonova reported on a questionnaire which the magazine had distributed among its readers. The results showed, she said, that its public had a wide range of tastes. Some like historical novels, others books about nature. She described the readers as one family with a great deal of variety within it. Trifonova, herself evidently a partisan of plurality and differentness, defended a controversial story by Tendryakov ("Three, Seven, Ace") against some doctrinaire detractors. She stressed that wherever she goes to speak, she is asked about foreign literatures. Remarque and Laxness are currently enjoying a particular boom among Soviet readers, she said. The journal therefore must have more articles about the "creative experience" of non-Soviet writers and about the formal side of foreign literatures.

She was followed by the young prose writer Julian Simonov. By his manner of speaking (and to some extent haircut and dress) he reminded me a little of a Greenwich Village or Sausalito poet. He spoke with great vigor and excitement, a little incoherently, very warmly and personally, jumping from point to point, and with a predilection for gnomic utterances. Critics must show writers "where to aim the rocket" was one of

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his figures of speech. We must analyze literature "according to the story of the devil and the felt shoe (val-enki), keeping in mind that the big question is: how is it made." Without bothering to explain the transition, he launched into a defense of Rabelais. "Do not throw out Rabelais," he urged. "He is very much needed today. We must analyze him."

I had the feeling that an American poet or artist would feel at home with the uninhibited Julian Simonov, as he painfully but hastily thought aloud.

Still more free-wheeling speeches followed. Lebedenko, also a writer, urged that Soviet literature deal more openly with love. "Why have we turned over this subject to Remarque?" he asked, thus incidentally suggesting one reason for the German author's current vogue in Russia. "Love is a very important part of life. Why should we not write about it in our literature?" He spoke of an editor who had turned down a story because "all that stuff about kissing is vulgar." Lebedenko said he felt like telling that editor's girl friend what the editor thought of kissing. He wanted to tell her, too, he said, that she was dating a eunuch. Another writer at the speaker's table broke in loudly, "And you ought to take his girl away from him!"

Story of the Flies

Sergey Mikhalkov, a popular satirist, dramatist and author of children's books, urged more publication of satire and humor. Two-thirds of the readers who sent in the questionnaire asked for that. Then Mikhalkov sharply ridiculed the opponents of satire, the timid soul of Soviet positive thought who find a threat in every satirical or negative portrait in fiction.

He said he had been sued by someone who felt that because in one of his books he had satirized a man in a certain profession, he was thereby undermining the authority of all men working in similar positions. He quoted a letter published on August 20 in the Literary Gazette, in which some "Candidate of Historical Science" (roughly equivalent to our PhD) in Tashkent attacked Korney Chukovsky's poem for children, "The Fly That Buzzed." In this brief work, the letter writer complained, the heroine is a fly whom Chukovsky presents sympathetically. But flies are harmful insects: they ought to be exterminated. In our great fraternal Republic China, the letter continued, flies already have been exterminated. A poet should not present favorable portraits of flies and thus give children the wrong impression. The indignation of the Tashkent correspondent reached its climax when he attacked the conclusion of the poem, in which the fly marries a gnat. This is a biological impossibility, thundered the Candidate of Historical Science. Works containing such fairy tale misinformation ought to be burned.

Mikhalkov, it can be imagined, had an easy time poking fun at the letter writer. Despite his learned title, he is

just a stupid, uneducated man, Mikhalkov said, asserting, incidentally, that no book is or ought to be burned or forbidden.

The rest of Mikhalkov's speech consisted of an attack on Pedagogical Institutes (Teachers' Colleges), which according to him teach literature in such a way that the students never want to read another book again. They set examination questions such as "Of what social class is Famusov (the hero of Griboedov's comedy Woe From Wit) representative?" or, about a poem: "What effects does the song of the nightingale have on the surroundings?"

In the United States four discourses would be more than sufficient for a full evening's program. In Russia, where everything lasts longer, from theater and ballet to political speeches, the fun was only beginning, for after the set speeches, the audience was heard from.

There followed some reasonable comments, a few factual questions, and for the most part, to my surprise, wild speeches by crackpots, to whom the chairman and everybody else listened with indulgence and patience far beyond that they would be accorded by an American audience.

Two outbursts were particularly astonishing. One of them began innocently enough. A man came to the front of the room and asked why the journal was called Problems of Literature. A spokesman for the magazine replied with a counterquestion: "What is your point? Do you mean you don't like the name? Would you like to suggest some other, more appropriate title?"

The questioner from the floor answered: "No, I do not like the name. Every magazine is now called The Problems of something or other. We have Problems of Economics, Problems of History, Problems of Philosophy, Problems of Literature." And then came the incredible part. "Did you give it this name because Khrushchev told you to call it that? Do we have to do everything that Khrushchev tells us to do?"

The man was hushed up and made to return to his seat, with some vague assurance that the editors would give consideration to the matter of the name of the magazine. I had the impression that this outburst, astonishing to me, seemed only mildly unusual.

A still more unexpected question was addressed to Mikhalkov. A man went to the front of the room and asked: "Did I understand you to say that no books are being burned and forbidden?"

Mikhalkov, as if he had already guessed what was coming, did not look up and squirmed uncomfortably in his chair.

"Did you say that no books are now being banned?" the man insisted. Mikhalkov still did not answer. He had said

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so, of course, but his probably unconsidered remark was only part of his libertarian attack on the man who wanted to burn Korney Chukovsky's poems.

"Because if you say that no books are being forbidden, I could tell you a few titles of books which are being banned," the man said threateningly.

At this point the audience was sitting on the edge of their chairs. Mikhalkov still did not answer. But a few rows behind me, a lady was shouting, "Yes, what about Pasternak. Zhivago! Zhivago!" People turned around. Half the audience must have heard. Several people repeated the names of Pasternak and Zhivago.

Only then did the chairman intervene. He said the question was not connected with the subject of the evening's program and persuaded the man to sit down. But the point had been made.

Several others followed. A young man gave an impressively prepared evaluation of the entire publishing record of Problems of Literature. He divided the articles and features into several categories, evaluated, and suggested specific changes. It was such a brilliant job that the audience and editors burst into applause.

One man asked that all Soviet books publish a biographical sketch of the author, so the readers can feel a personal relationship toward him. Another regretted the absence of bibliographies of Soviet literature for genres other than prose. But most of the comments and questions were decidedly oddball and off the subject. One man, for instance, launched into a criticism of the Leningrad Public Library for having refused to let him see an old grammar.

Another incoherent and long-winded speaker took 10 minutes to say that he was an engineer and another 10 to describe how he once took a drawing to his superior, who looked at it and threw him out. This, we gathered, the speaker considered an example of improper behavior by his boss, but we could not see the connection with the Readers' Conference. After five more minutes, the engineer admitted in passing that he had never even seen a copy of Problems of Literature. Then he said that, although he really knew nothing about literary criticism, he knew what he liked.

I felt a little more at home. We have people like that in the United States. At last he confessed that he wrote verse, and only then did the chairman (presumably feeling threatened by the idea that the engineer might start reciting his poetry) ask him to stop talking on the ground that his comment had nothing to do with the subject before us. Shortly thereafter the meeting adjourned. Perhaps no action will be taken on the basis of what some of the speakers from the floor demanded (it would be disastrous to follow some of them!), but

they were given ample time to speak and were heard with respect.

The Official Encounter

Very different was my interview at the Leningrad Union of Writers. I called at its third-floor office of a building entirely covered by scaffolding and explained that being a Professor of Russian literature in an American college, I should like to meet some Leningrad writers and find out from them what they think is of greatest interest in current Soviet literature. The Union's local official, a Comrade Sergeyev, said he would arrange such interviews for me. All the writers whom I wanted to see turned out to be unavailable (Vera Panova, Vladimir Dudintsev and others) -- they were on their way to America, or ill, or had moved to Moscow. But, said Sergeyev, a beefy, typically Soviet-bureaucratic looking man, if I called him back, he would arrange talks with other writers.

In the next several days, eight telephone calls failed to find Sergeyev in his office, and there was no message for me at the hotel. Just when I resigned myself to the idea that Sergeyev had no intention of helping me to talk to Leningrad writers, I tried calling him once more and learned that Sergeyev had arranged for me to meet someone in his office on the last day of my stay.

It turned out to be not a poet or novelist, but a critic, Eliashevich, who writes for the magazine Oktyabr. Sergeyev placed two chairs in front of his desk, for Eliashevich and me. He himself sat down behind his desk, poised a sharpened pencil over a sheet of paper, and said to me. "Begin, ask your question."

Throughout the interview, Sergeyev took notes on what I asked and on what Eliashevich answered. He participated in the discussion only a few times, but often he nodded vigorously to show approval, usually after Eliashevich had reasserted Party line platitudes. Eliashevich seemed constantly aware of the note taking and frequently looked at Sergeyev's moving pencil.

The meeting was unfruitful and vexing. I asked Eliashevich whether any new writers of talent had emerged recently. He said there were many and by way of proof told me that 40 new members had been admitted to the Leningrad Union of Writers in the last five years, as if literary promise and acceptance to Union membership were the same.

When it became clear that no original ideas would be ventured, I asked him to give me the names of contemporary writers who in his opinion most deserve to be read. He knew his field and gave me a long and complete list of authors and titles. He included some authors who are fairly well established but also slightly controversial. On the other hand, he praised with ardor the Stalinist extremist, Kochetov, who to most Russians is either a laughing stock or a scarecrow.

In anything other than mere name-listing, his answers were so trite and Party line as to be irritating or funny. I asked him if there were any new trends in Soviet literature of recent years. Only inasmuch as literature reflects changes in life, he said: both are now characterized by praise of "the heroic present in everyday reality." "The heroism of ordinary life" was the outstanding element of recent Soviet literature.

How would he explain the revival of interest in World War themes, the "second wave" of war novels? He responded with a tirade which could have come straight from the editorials of Komsomolskaya Pravda. Soviet writers again write about the war, he said, because it reminds the people of how they repelled one ferocious Fascist invader, and now, when danger again looms abroad and the possibility exists of being attacked by a new enemy, the Russians like to read of their victorious campaigns of 15 years ago, and so on and so forth. The patriotic anti-American flight earned him several approving nods from Sergeyev. It even seemed to me that Eliashevich was looking at me with an expression which suggested, "Of course you won't hear anything from me except this kind of stuff. What can you expect under the circumstances?" I felt that he regarded me a little as the art historian had the lady from Pittsburgh.

From the Readers' Conference, I might have carried away the impression that Soviet literature exists in circumstances as free as those in a Western country. From the interview at the Union of Writers, I could have concluded that the worst days of the Stalinist ice age had returned. The truth does not lie somewhere between the two; it encompasses both extremes, as well as many points in the middle. From my observation, freedom and restriction of thought, in Soviet Russian culture, are engaged in a seesaw battle.

TRIBUTE TO BAD TASTE

Pravda
January 27, 1961

It is pleasant to pick up a new magazine smelling of fresh printer's ink if it is laid out with taste. A cover and text illustrations on which an artist has done some work add to the content of the magazine and make the material published in it more effective. This is especially true of illustrated magazines, which consist largely of photos, drawings and cartoons.

Soviet readers are very discriminating about the layout of periodical publications. Subscriptions usually drop on magazines that are made up poorly and contain formalist monstrosities.

It would seem that editors should take this into account and lay out their magazines on a high artistic level and with taste.

It is necessary to recall this because the layouts of such illustrated magazines as Iskusstvo kino (Motion Picture Art) (I.P. Pogozheva, editor), Sovetsky tsirk (Soviet Circus) (A.I. Kotlyarov, editor), Dekorativnoye iskusstvo SSSR (Decorative Art of the USSR) (M.F. Ladur, editor) and Smena (Shift) (A.V. Nikonov, editor) sometimes betray mistaken and formalistic tendencies that are incompatible with the principles of the Soviet press.

The covers and many of the illustrations in these magazines are often imitations of bad models, primitive in form and poor in content. Such magazine layouts do not attract but repel readers.

The cover of the No. 9, 1960, issue of the magazine Iskusstvo kino is illustrated with sketches of puppet characters drawn by the artist F. Zbarsky for the motion picture "The Bath" (based on V. Maykovsky's play). Perhaps these sketches, drawn in a deliberately primitive and stilted manner, will find some place in the motion picture. But on a magazine they are repulsive. The workers of Printing Press No. 5 in Moscow, where this magazine is printed, have written indignantly that these drawings are a clear tribute to formalism. The editors were forced to change the cover in the process of printing the magazine.

The readers of the magazine Sovetsky tsirk more than once have voiced serious comments on the layout of this publication. The editors have not heeded their readers' voices. The magazine is made up, as in the past, in a manner alien to Soviet fine arts. The covers are irritatingly loud and pretentious.

The magazine itself is also made up without taste. Hand-lettered headlines and cartoons are often sloppily executed and the body of type at times is printed on grey, blue and smudgy green backgrounds, making it difficult to read. In an attempt to be original, the editors of the magazine employ completely incredible tricks of makeup. Some illustrations and articles in this magazine have been set upside down(!) and accompanied by mocking explanations, such as "This is for people who stand on their heads."

The magazine Dekorativnoye iskusstvo SSSR is called upon to wage a fight, by means of the fine arts, for high standards in the external appearance of our apartment houses, public institutions and enterprises. It must be said that the magazine is doing extensive work in this respect. Nevertheless it is regrettable that some of its issues are badly made up. Just look at No. 9, 1960, of this magazine, which carries senseless dots and bright green, yellow and black geometrical figures on its cover.

The magazine Shift is a biweekly illustrated mass publication aimed at instilling in our young people diligence, high moral ideals and esthetic tastes. But the contents of the magazine, especially its artistic makeup, are far from satisfying the demands of the readers.

The editors have proved unable to take the proper advantage of help that has been given to the magazine, in particular the enlargement of its volume. It gladly publishes illustrations executed in a formalist style, imitating the worst examples of West European and American graphic arts.

THOUGHTS ON JAZZ

By L. Utesov
Literaturnaya gazeta
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Usually, when I am asked to write an article for a newspaper or magazine, the request is something like the following: Write something on jazz. I always turn this down, since I promised myself long ago to refrain from writing articles for the press on light popular music, not because I don't want to, but because a great deal has already been written about it and there is not much chance to say anything new on the subject.

I would have kept my word this time as well, were it not for the fact that each day I have seen how great an interest music lovers have in jazz and what impassioned controversy everything new in that genre provokes. This has impelled me to renege on my promise to myself "to write no more on the subject."

I feel that write I must.

I shall start with the assertion that jazz is not a synonym for imperialism and that the saxophone is not a product of colonialism. The roots of jazz go back not to bank safes but to poverty-stricken Negro quarters. Jazz is not a certain make-up of an orchestra; it is music, with a specific rhythmic, harmonic and tonal form. And if it is sometimes corrupted, turned into what Gorky aptly defined as "the music of the fat," this is only because the fat paunch market gives birth to this supply.

Jazz has been in existence for quite a long time, and the New Orleans style was by no means the inception of this music, but only a stage in its development. I am referring to improvisation, which some historians consider the true basis of jazz. The art of musical improvisation is considerably older. Its age is calculated to be many millennia. Generally speaking, it is older than musical notation. Always and everywhere, in all ages, both before the appearance of written notation and later after it had been invented and had become routine in music, gifted self-taught musicians have gathered in groups to make music, to improvise, displaying their talent. Incidentally, an untalented person is incapable of improvising no matter how well versed he is in the laws of harmony. Here the iron-bound formula, "Talent is like money; either you have it or you don't," is irrefutable.

Long before my birth -- and that was long ago -- musicians in Odessa, playing at weddings, would always improvise. This gives me grounds for claiming that so-called Dixieland existed in Odessa before it did in New Orleans. But some "wits" will say: "Well, here we go again. Russia is the birthplace of the elephant." I have no intention of trying to establish Odessa's priority. I only want to tell people who are unaware of it that improvisation existed long before its present recognition through the advent of American jazz.

By the way, however paradoxical it may be, musicians who have received a good professional education, with rare exceptions, do not indulge in improvisation. Unfortunately, this genre has little currency in our country, though there are very gifted musicians able to improvise with enviable skill.

In all fairness, it must be said that Negroes have had enormous success in the art of improvisation. The musical talent of Negroes is astounding. I am sure that black Africa, when it has gained its freedom, will set such an example for musical art that the white race will have to move over a bit to make room on the musical Olympus for the talent of the black race.

Everything I have said thus far applies to Dixieland.

Now to so-called commercial jazz.

It is customary to apply this term to all orchestras that play jazz music in a refined form that departs from the original sources. These are enlarged orchestras with well-organized groupings of instruments and written arrangements.

I do not know where, when or why the term "commercial" made its appearance or what, in the given instance, is meant by it. Apparently it means profitable or lucrative. Evidently when the little orchestras playing in New Orleans restaurants and cafes gave way to the big orchestras that emerged on the concert stages of the world, jazz became a lucrative business and came to be called "commercial."

By no means do I intend to blast "commercial" jazz. On the contrary, I am for it. I am in favor of any good music and am quite unable to understand people who confine their appreciation of art, specifically music, to one genre. Really, what is this? "I like symphonic music," or "I like only opera," or "I like only jazz." I, for one, like all of them -- symphonic music, opera and jazz -- if they are good, and I hate a symphony, an opera or jazz if it's bad.

Commercial jazz can be wonderful. Highly gifted American composers, such as G. Gershwin, J. Kern and others, wrote and continue to write many of their works for commercial jazz, and by virtue of this their creations have become popular favorites not only in their own country but beyond its borders.

The fact that jazz frequently assumes ugly forms, falling into formalism and various other decadent isms, is beyond dispute. But that happens to other kinds of art as well. In music, however, jazz is often criticized out of hand with no attempt to go to the heart of the matter and to analyze it with discrimination. As it turns out, if a white man has created trash, he alone is to blame; but if it is a black man, all Negroes are to blame.

Art can only be good. Bad art does not exist. A paradox? No. If it is bad, it is not art. Do we come across good jazz? We do, and then jazz is art, while a bad symphony is not. To make jazz a "forbidden fruit" is dangerous and interferes with the cultivation of musical taste in young people. Jazz is wanted. There is need for it. But for what kind?

Here I come to the main point. All art is good except boring art. This formula will exist as long as the human brain and heart exist.

Then what kind of jazz do we want? And do we have it? We do, and it has a style of its own. The style is not beeb, not bop, and not hop. Soviet popular music is never still; never resting; it is living, working, seeking, moving on its own path, a path of victories and defeats.

What has Soviet jazz accomplished? Quite a bit, it seems to me. Are not many fine examples of Soviet songs, which have earned recognition both in our country and abroad, based on it? Did not a brilliant procession of talented songwriters take inspiration from it? It was Soviet jazz that brought me together with I. Dunayevsky and gave me the joy of creative collaboration with that wonderful master.

Does this mean that we should repudiate the best examples of Western jazz music? Of course not.

Our popular orchestras can learn much from their foreign counterparts in the area of performing skill. Our major composers need to be reminded once again that great Russian musicians like Glinka and Tschaikowsky wrote not only operas, symphonies and ballets but light music as well. From our musicologists we expect penetrating and detailed, but good-natured, criticism. It is too bad when those who write about jazz are people who, owing to the narrowness of their musical horizons, detest anything that oversteps the bounds of their normal appreciation.

And finally, more consideration should be given to the tastes and wishes of our young people. I am convinced that popular music can and should play an essential role in their artistic and esthetic education.

The age creates style, dress, song and music. Everything is in flux, everything changes. New times mean new songs. Then let us produce these new songs, songs worthy of our Soviet age. We have the people for this, and we have all the means.