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**LOFTY IDEOLOGY AND ARTISTIC  
CRAFTSMANSHIP ARE A GREAT  
FORCE OF SOVIET LITERATURE  
AND ART**

***SPEECH BY N. S. KHRUSHCHOV  
at a Meeting of Party and Government  
Leaders with Writers and Men of Art,  
March 8, 1963***



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Dear Comrades, this is the second time we are meeting in the past months. And if one takes into account the meeting at the Central Committee of the Party with young writers and men of art arranged by the Ideological Commission, then today's meeting is the third.

The materials of these meetings were published in the press and aroused keen interest. We note with pleasure that the position of the Central Committee of the Party on problems of art has received warm support from the creative workers, the Party and the people, our foreign friends.

In his speech Comrade Ilyichov has already told you about the lively comment that the statement of the CPSU Central Committee on problems of literature and art had aroused among the Soviet and foreign public. He has justly noted the growth of activity of the creative workers in our country in the struggle against unhealthy tendencies in literature and art.

Many comrades who spoke here have expressed interesting thoughts and advanced a number of valuable proposals. All this clearly shows that the questions we are discussing now are of paramount importance for the development of socialist culture, Soviet literature and art in the direction outlined in the Programme of the Communist Party.

### *Construction of Communism and the Tasks of Creative Art*

The work of the writers, artists, composers, sculptors, film and theatrical workers, of all the intellectuals, is always being closely followed by the Party and the people. And this is perfectly understandable. We are living at a time when literature and art, as Vladimir Ilyich Lenin predicted, have become an inseparable part of the common work of the people.

The Soviet people, under the guidance of their Leninist Party, are building a communist society. Our main aim in building communism, and I stress this, is to create all the conditions for a better life for the people of labour. And the communist society will be precisely a society of people of labour.

The need for work is an organically inherent quality of man. Only capitalism, by placing the men of labour in inhuman conditions, corrupts them and has a demoralizing effect upon the attitude of many people to labour. Those who do not reconcile themselves to oppression of man by man develop their class consciousness in the labour process and become active fighters for the interests of the working people, against the exploiters. Others, who are guided only by their own, proprietary interests, are passive in public life and do not participate in class battles for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the building of a new society. There are also those who live at the expense of the labour of others. These are the exploiters and the oppressors of the working people.

Communism is built by labour, and only by the labour of millions. That is why the Party exerts every effort so that all the Soviet people in one united collective—workers,

collective farmers, engineers, designers, technicians, teachers, doctors, agronomists, scientists, cultural workers and men of letters and art—take an active part in building communism.

Now everybody can see that the Party's efforts are yielding wonderful results, that our people have achieved important successes on the road to communism. But we cannot overlook the difficulties that have to be overcome in building a new society. To these difficulties belong the survivals of the past in the consciousness of some people in all sections of society. This is manifested primarily in the negligent attitude to work, to the fulfilment of one's social duty and duty to the people.

Of great importance in the battle for communism that we are waging is the education of all the people in the spirit of communist ideals. And this is the main task of the ideological work of our Party at the present time. We have to bring into fighting trim all types of the Party's ideological weapons including such a powerful means of communist education as literature and art. (*Applause.*)

Our meetings with you which have become a good practice in our life are actually a kind of review of the forces of literature and art, of their creative verve and revolutionary fighting spirit.

The Party and its Central Committee are of the opinion that Soviet literature and art are developing successfully and in the main fulfil their task well.

But it would be very harmful to exaggerate the successes of literature and art and not to see the serious shortcomings in the work of writers, artists, composers, film and theatrical workers. There have been no inordinate creative failures of an ideological nature, but nevertheless there were important shortcomings, and in some cases even errors, which cannot be tolerated.

Life has shown, and this was confirmed also by the speeches of some comrades at the last meeting and today, that not all the creative workers understand correctly the tasks in the field of literature and art outlined in the Programme of the Party. Therefore it is necessary to explain once again our Party's view on vital questions of creative art in the period of the comprehensive construction of communism.

What sort of works of art are the Soviet people expecting? Which ones do they appreciate, and which do they reject?

Literature and art of socialist realism have reached great artistic heights, have rich revolutionary traditions, and enjoy world renown. Remarkable works of art, great spiritual values, of which the peoples of our country are justly proud, have been created in all Soviet republics.

The creative work of outstanding representatives of Soviet literature and art is their great service to the people, an inspiring example of a creative artist serving his country.

What greater satisfaction can a creative artist enjoy than from the feeling that his talent is fully dedicated to the struggle of the people for the construction of communism, that his works are accepted and highly appreciated by the people.

Remember how popular the poetry of Demyan Bedny was in its time among our people. In the years of the Civil War, when the Soviet people defended the world's first socialist state of the workers and peasants in a fierce battle with world imperialism,

the Red Guardsmen and the Red Armymen and the guerillas went into battle singing Demyan Bedny's songs. These songs stirred everyone, were understandable to everyone, even illiterate peasants, in the Red Army.

The thoughts of the people are expressed in *My Mother Saw Me Off to the War*, a highly popular song in its time. The poet was in the fighting ranks of the soldiers of the Revolution and devoted the whole of his enormous talent to the great cause of liberation of the working people from the yoke of exploiters.

Demyan Bedny possessed the amazing gift of probing the soul of the toiling peasant. With what understanding and power of artistic skill he revealed the duality of the soul of the peasant. In his works of the Civil War period, the poet convincingly shows the psychology of the peasant with all the features peculiar to him at the time. On the one hand, the peasant is pleased that the new, Bolshevik government has given him land, of which he had dreamed and for which an armed struggle went on at the time. On the other hand, some peasants, having received land from the Soviet government, were reluctant to understand that the people's power, the gains of the Revolution had to be defended with arms in hand.

The tremendous educational importance of Demyan Bedny's works consists in the fact that he wrathfully condemns from revolutionary positions the hesitation and instability of the peasant, and, at the same time, explains to him the disastrous effects of this unsteadiness and vacillation for the interests of the peasantry itself. The poet helps the peasant to realize that it is in his interest to be in a firm union with the working class under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party.

Now, too, when people of my generation get together on festive occasions, they recall with pleasure their experiences in the Civil War, and sing Demyan Bedny's songs, because these songs have a fresh and topical ring today. (*Applause.*) Their charm lies in that they remind us of times, which, though trying, were wonderful. They fill our hearts with pride for those who, in most difficult conditions, heroically fought for Soviet power, for the liberation of men of labour, for the people, for socialism, and were victorious in this struggle.

Let us take another example, convincingly showing what strong and noble sentiments are evoked among the people by genuine works of art. Most of you, apparently, know the memorial to Soviet soldiers in Berlin, the author of which is the noted sculptor, Evgeni Vuchetich. The delegations of the fraternal Parties, which attended the recent Sixth Congress of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, took part in laying wreaths on the graves of Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht and other revolutionaries, who gave their lives for the cause of the working class.

Later wreaths were laid at the foot of the monument to Soviet soldiers in Berlin. Those were moving minutes. Hundreds of people came, the music rang out solemnly, everyone approached the memorial silently, no one would talk loudly, the atmosphere itself impressed the people. The grand sculpture evokes feelings of profound respect for and gratitude to the heroic Soviet soldiers, feelings of reverence for those who fell in the struggle against the sinister forces of fascism.

A short time ago Presidium Members and Secretaries of the Central Committee of the Party examined the sketches of a Victory over Fascism Memorial, to be erected in Moscow in accordance with Vuchetich's project. The sketches give us grounds to believe

that a work of realistic art of great force will be created, glorifying the victorious people and calling for a struggle to build up the might and impregnability of our great socialist country.

The monument to Karl Marx in Moscow, created by Lev Kerbel, is a splendid work of art. The sculptor succeeded in reflecting the greatness of the brilliant founder of scientific communism. One cannot pass without stopping to admire this wonderful monument.

Only important works of great revolutionary and creative tenor reach a man's heart and mind, arouse lofty civic feelings in him and a resolution to devote himself to the struggle for the happiness of people. The authors of such works justly, deservedly enjoy the recognition of the people. It is to create works of such lofty ideological content and artistic impact on the minds and feelings of people that the Communist Party urges the writers, artists, composers, cinematographers and theatrical workers. (*Prolonged applause.*)

Our people need a militant revolutionary art. The task of Soviet literature and art is to reproduce in vivid artistic imagery the great and heroic epoch of communist construction, to depict truthfully the assertion and victory of new communist relations in our life. The artist must be able to see the positive things and to rejoice at them as they comprise the essence of our reality; he must support these things but, at the same time, of course, not overlook the negative phenomena and all that interferes with the rise of the new in life.

Every undertaking, even the finest, has its dark sides. Even the most beautiful of human beings can have faults. The whole thing is how to approach phenomena in life, from what position to assess them. You find what you are looking for, as the saying goes. A person without prejudice who takes an active part in the people's constructive effort, objectively sees both the good and the bad in life; he correctly understands and assesses rightly these phenomena and energetically advocates the assertion of what is progressive and paramount, of all that is decisive for social progress.

But those who look at our reality from the sidelines are unable to see and reproduce a truthful picture of life. It unfortunately happens that some representatives of the world of art judge reality only by the smells coming from the latrines; they portray people in a deliberately distorted way, lay dismal colours on thick in their paintings which can only plunge people into a state of despondency and hopelessness, they depict reality according to their own biased, distorted, subjective impressions, through anaemic stereotypes of their own invention.

Last time we saw the sickening concoctions of Ernst Neizvestny and were disgusted that this man, who is evidently not devoid of talent and who has graduated from a Soviet institution of higher learning, is repaying the people with such black ingratitude. It's a good thing we have few artists of this sort, but, unfortunately, he is not alone among our art workers. You have also seen some other fabrications of the abstractionist artists. We denounce such monstrosities openly, and will continue to do so.

Comrades, our Party regards Soviet cinematography as one of the most important artistic means for educating the people in the communist spirit. There is nothing to compare with the cinema in its power of impact on human minds and hearts, in the size of its audiences. The cinema is accessible to people from all walks of society,

all ages, from schoolboy to ancient. It penetrates into the remotest of districts and villages.

That explains why the Central Committee approaches all that has to do with the development of Soviet cinematography with such attention and exacting demand.

We see and greatly appreciate the achievements scored in the making of feature films. At the same time we maintain that what has been achieved is not on a par with our tasks or the possibilities which cinematographers command. We cannot be impassive to the ideological trend of cinematography or the artistic merits of pictures released on the screen. In this respect affairs in the film world are far from being as fine as many cinematographers imagine.

We are worried by the fact that many rather mediocre pictures of poor content and impotent form, which either annoy or bore the cinema-goer, are shown in our movie theatres.

We were given a preview of the material for a film bearing the responsible title of *Zastava Ilyicha*. The film is being made by M. Khutsiyev at the Gorky Film Studios under the art direction of the well-known film director, Sergei Gerasimov. One must say quite frankly that there are some moving sequences in it. But as a matter of fact they serve to cover up the real meaning of the film which is to assert ideas and norms of public and private life that are unacceptable and alien to Soviet people. That is why we emphatically oppose such an interpretation of a great and important theme.

We need not have spoken about this, as work on the film is not yet completed. But since the "outstanding qualities" of this picture are being praised high and low in our press and in certain public statements by writers and film workers, we feel we too must state our point of view.

The name of the picture *Zastava Ilyicha* is allegorical. After all the very word "Zastava" meant a watch post before. Even now we use this word for our frontier posts on the country's borders. We are apparently to believe that the picture's main characters represent precisely those advanced sections of the Soviet youth, who staunchly stand watch over the gains of the Socialist Revolution, the behests of Ilyich<sup>1</sup>.

But anyone who sees this picture will say that this is not true. Even the most positive characters in the film, the three working lads by no means personify our wonderful youth. They are portrayed in a way which shows that they do not know how they should live and what they should aspire to. And this, mind you, takes place in our time of the comprehensive building of communism, a time illuminated by the ideas of the Communist Party Programme!

Is it indeed young men of this sort who today together with their fathers are building communism under the Party's leadership! Is it indeed young men of this sort that our people can rely on in their hopes for the future, or believe that they will be the successors to the great gains won by the senior generations who accomplished the Socialist Revolution, built socialism, defended it with arms in hand in bitter battles with the fascist hordes, and created the material and cultural requisites for the comprehensive building of a communist society!

No, these are not the sort of people society can rely on. They are no fighters, no

<sup>1</sup> Vladimir Ilyich Lenin — Tr.

remakers of the world. They are morally sick people, who have aged while young, who have no lofty aims or callings in life.

The film reveals attempts to show in a negative aspect and criticize the still existent among our young people idlers and semi-degenerate characters who love and respect no one; they not only distrust their elders; they hate them. They are displeased with everything, sneer at everything, mock and despise everything, spend their days in idleness and their nights in carousals of a shady nature. They speak of labour with arrogant scorn. While gobbling his daily bread, this good-for-nothing in addition jeers at those who make this bread by the sweat of their brow.

The makers of the film were not able to materialize their intention of castigating the idlers and parasites. They lacked the civic courage and wrath to stigmatize and pillory such degenerates and scum; they made do with just a mild slap in the face of the scoundrels. But a slap in the face will never reform such riff-raff.

The film-makers orientate the audience not on those sections of the youth that they ought to. In their life, their work and struggle our Soviet youth carry on and multiply the heroic traditions of the generations who went before, the generations who demonstrated their great loyalty to the ideals of Marxism-Leninism both in peacetime construction and at the fronts of the Patriotic War. Our youth are well depicted in Alexander Fadeyev's *Young Guard*. It is a great pity that Gerasimov, who filmed this novel, did not advise his pupil Khutsiyev to show in his picture how our youth keep alive and develop the wonderful traditions of the Young Guards.

I already said yesterday that the sequence in which the hero meets the shadow of his war-killed father evokes serious objections on points of principle. When the son asks the ghost how he ought to live, the shadow in turn asks the son how old he is. Hearing the son say 23, the father says: and I am 21... and vanishes. Do you really want us to believe such a thing could be true? No one will ever believe that! It is common knowledge that even animals don't abandon their offspring. If you take a puppy from its mother and throw it into the water, she will at once dash in at the risk of her own life to save it.

Can one indeed believe that a father would not answer his son's question and help him out by advising him how to find the correct and proper road in life?

There is more to this than meets the eye. There is a definite meaning underlying this. The idea is to impress upon the sons that their fathers cannot teach them in life, that there is no point in asking them for advice. In the opinion of the film-makers, young people ought themselves decide the question of how they should live, without asking their seniors for advice and help.

Well, we can say that the viewpoint of the film-makers is rather clearly stated. But haven't you overdone it? Do you really want to set the youth against the older generations, make them quarrel, and introduce discord in the big friendly Soviet family which unites both young and old in the joint fight for communism? We tell such people with full responsibility: Nothing will come of your efforts! (*Stormy applause.*)

In our time the fathers-and-sons problem is not what it was in Turgenev's day, because we are living in a historical epoch that is quite different, one characterized by a different type of relations between human beings. In our Soviet socialist society there are no contradictions between generations. There is no fathers-and-sons problem in its

old sense. It has been invented by the makers of the film and artificially fomented not for the best of intentions.

This is how we understand the relations between the people in our society and we want these relations to be truthfully portrayed in works of literature, in plays, films, in music and painting, in every field of art. Let those who still do not understand this, stop to think about it. We shall help them to adopt a correct position.

We are quite justified to ask Comrade Khutsiyev, the director of the picture, and Comrade Gerasimov, his teacher, how could the idea of such a film come into their heads?

The film's grave errors are obvious. One would have thought that the film workers who saw it would have told its director so quite frankly and bluntly. However, some incredible things went on around it. Though no one had seen the picture, a broad campaign to boost it as the most outstanding "extraordinary phenomenon in our art" was started on an international scale. Why was that necessary? Things like that can't be done, comrades, simply can't!

### *Party Spirit and Kinship with the People Are Paramount Principles of Our Art*

In their creative work of recent years writers and artists have been paying great attention to the period in the life of Soviet society bound up with the Stalin personality cult. All this is quite logical and natural. Works in which Soviet reality of those years is truthfully portrayed from Party positions have appeared. One could mention among these works Alexander Tvardovsky's poem *Space Beyond Space*, Alexander Solzhenitsyn's novel *One Day*, some of Evgeni Evtushenko's poems, and Grigori Chukhrai's film *Clear Skies*.

The Party supports artistic works that are really truthful, whatever negative aspects of life they may deal with, as long as they help the people in their effort to build a new society, as long as they weld together and strengthen the people's forces.

Everyone knows what an important role is played by satire, fables in particular. Comrade Mikhalkov, for example, often produces things in this genre. Satire is like a sharp razor-blade. It points to man's extraneous growths and at once removes them like a good surgeon. However, one must know how to wield the weapon of satire, just as skilfully as the surgeon uses his knife, so as to cut out the morbid growth without endangering the organism, without doing it harm. Mastery is necessary in this case. If you haven't got this mastery don't undertake this job, because you will do others harm and cut your own hands in the process. Those mothers who don't give children sharp things until they learn how to use them are doing the right thing. (*Applause.*)

Nevertheless, we think it necessary to draw the attention of all creative workers to certain erroneous motives and tendencies manifest in the works of individual authors. The wrong tendencies are manifested mainly in a one-sided concentration on the facts of lawlessness, arbitrary reprisals and abuse of power.

The years of the personality cult indeed had grievous consequences. Our Party has told the people the whole truth about that. At the same time one must bear in mind and remember that those years were not a period of stagnation in the development of

Soviet society, as our foes imagine. Under the leadership of the Communist Party, under the banner of the great Lenin's ideas and behests, our people were successfully building socialism and have built it. By their efforts the Party and the people turned the Soviet Union into a powerful socialist state, which withstood the test of the grimmest ordeals of the war and won battles unprecedented in history, fully routing the fascist hordes. (*Stormy applause.*)

That is why we say that writers whose assessment of that stage in the life of our country is one-sided and who are trying to make out as if nearly everything was gloomy, to paint everything in black, are doing the wrong thing. We still have writers who prefer to poke around in refuse heaps for material and who want to pass such works as being truthful portrayals of the people's life. The advocates of this point of view maintain that all works speaking of our people's achievements, of positive things in life, are works that "varnish" reality. One cannot agree with such assertions. It is common knowledge that we had prettifying in some works and that the Party expressed its negative attitude towards that. But, after all, not everything in that period was bad; during that period of socialist construction, too, the people showed heroism and for that reason we cannot smear everything with tar.

We must rebuff the sort of people who indulge in labelling as "varnishers" those writers and artists who bring out the positive in our life. What name should we give then to those who ferret out only the bad in life and depict everything in black? Apparently we should call them the tarrers. The good sides of life must be fittingly reflected in literature and art.

Writers and artists must make a deeper study of the things taking place in life and correctly depict them in their works. Each one must serve the people and our common cause with the weapon at his disposal. I mean every writer, sculptor, composer, cinema and theatre worker. And the weapon of each kind of art must be used to bring our people benefit, crush our enemies, and pave the way for the bright future—the communist society.

We must always keep that in mind. Bombastic phrases are unnecessary. The people judge of every creative worker by what he has created. There are some who censure all writers who published works at that time in which they described also the positive in our life. We must not denigrate wholesale everything that was created during that time. Some will say that this is a departure from the 20th and 22nd Congresses. Not at all. It is the assertion of the line of the 20th and 22nd Congresses! (*Stormy applause.*)

Reading Ehrenburg's memoirs one cannot help noticing that he presents everything in gloomy colours. Comrade Ehrenburg himself was not persecuted or subject to restrictions in the period of the personality cult. The life of a writer like, let us say, Galina Serebryakova, who had spent many years in prison, was quite different. But for all that she did not lose heart, remained loyal to the cause of the Party and upon her rehabilitation immediately plunged into creative life, took up her weapon and has been creating works needed by the people and the Party. (*Stormy applause.*)

Mighty productive forces have been created and a cultural revolution accomplished in the country. Now the whole world sees the remarkable fruit of those outstanding victories of the Soviet people in the powerful tread of our country marching towards communism, in the great discoveries of science and engineering, in space conquests. Our present victories

cannot be regarded as isolated from the economic and cultural achievements of those years.

A question is often asked now why the violations of legality and abuses of power were not exposed and cut short during Stalin's lifetime and whether it was possible then? Our viewpoint on the matter was more than once stated fully and with sufficient clarity in Party documents. Unfortunately, some people, including certain art workers, still try to present events in a false light. That is why we have to dwell on the question of the Stalin personality cult today again.

Did the leading cadres of the Party know about, for example, the arrests of people in that period? Yes, they did. But did they know that absolutely innocent people were arrested? No, they did not. They believed Stalin and could not even imagine that repressions could be used against honest people devoted to our cause.

From the very first days of the October Revolution till the complete liquidation of the exploiter classes in the country Soviet society lived in an atmosphere of a most acute class struggle. The class enemies were defeated in the open battle of the Civil War but they were not destroyed physically and did not give up their perfidious schemes to harin the Soviet system. They changed the forms of struggle and started using such methods as sabotage, subversion, assassinations, terroristic acts, and revolts.

Was it necessary for the Revolution to defend its achievements? Yes, it was; and the Revolution started doing it with utmost resolution from the very beginning. It is known that an organ so formidable for the enemies of the Revolution as the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for combatting the counter-revolution was set up on Lenin's decree in the first months of Soviet power. When conspiracies against the Revolution were exposed Stalin, in the capacity of the Secretary of the Central Committee, carried on a struggle for purging the country of the plotters and did so under the slogan of combatting the enemies of the people. He was believed and supported in that. And it could not have been otherwise, for there was more than one case of treachery and betrayal of the cause of the Revolution in the history of our Party in the past, as, for example, the provocative activity of Malinovsky, a member of the Bolshevik faction in the State Duma.

At that time Stalin headed the struggle of the Party against the enemies of the Revolution and of socialist construction. That raised his prestige. Everybody also knew about Stalin's contribution to the revolutionary struggle before and during the October Revolution, and in the subsequent years of construction of socialism. Stalin's prestige rose particularly high during the period of the struggle against anti-Leninist trends and opposition groups within the Party, the struggle for strengthening the ranks of the Party and Soviet power, against such anti-Leninist tendencies and opposition groups within the Party as the Trotskyites, Zinovievites, the Right-wing opportunists and the bourgeois nationalists.

After Lenin's death the Party carried out a discussion with the Trotskyites and Zinovievites on the cardinal problems of the construction of socialism and the situation within the Party. That discussion revealed and exposed the anti-Leninist and hostile to socialism views and activities of Trotsky, Zinoviev and their henchmen, aimed at frustrating the Leninist policy of the construction of socialism in our country in the conditions of capitalist encirclement.

Following the Trotskyites the Right-wing opportunists headed by Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky came out against the Leninist course of the Party aimed at the industrialization of the country and collectivization of agriculture. Their views, if they had gained foothold in life, would have inevitably made Soviet economy dependent on the capitalist countries which could have led to the restoration of capitalism in our country. The Right-wing opportunists' line was fraught with danger of making our country unarmed militarily in the face of the aggressive capitalist encirclement hostile to us.

Our Party's policy of the industrialization of the country and collectivization of agriculture was a Leninist policy supported by the entire Party, by all the working people of our country. In ten years we had to cover a historical path in economic development as had been covered by Western Europe in a hundred years. In the first years after Lenin's death Stalin upheld Leninist positions in the struggle against the Trotskyites, Zinovievites, Bukharinites and bourgeois nationalists and had played an important role in it. Therefore, the Party and the masses believed in him and supported him.

But grave faults and errors, to which Lenin drew the attention of the Party at the time, were characteristic of Stalin.

The great Lenin pointed out the danger that Stalin accumulating in his hands great power would not be able to use it correctly due to his major individual shortcomings. Advising that Stalin be replaced by somebody else on the post of General Secretary of the Party Central Committee, Vladimir Ilyich at the same time considered that for this post a leader should be chosen "who would have this one advantage over Comrade Stalin, namely, would be more tolerant, more comradely, more courteous and considerate towards comrades, less capricious, etc."

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin considered Stalin a Marxist, a prominent worker of our Party, loyal to the Revolution. Lenin outlined his considerations in a letter to the regular Party Congress which was consequently discussed by the delegations to the 13th Party Congress. When deciding this question, the Party based its decision at that time on the actual correlation of forces within the Central Committee and taking into account Stalin's positive qualities as a leader, believed his assurances that he would be able to overcome the shortcomings pointed out by Vladimir Ilyich. Later, Stalin violated his promise and abused the Party's confidence, and this led to those grave consequences which were practised during the period of the personality cult.

The Party uncompromisingly denounced and denounces the gross violations of the Leninist norms of Party life, the arbitrariness and abuse of power committed by Stalin which inflicted great harm to the cause of communism. But nevertheless the Party pays its due to Stalin's services to the Party and the communist movement. Today as well we maintain that Stalin was devoted to communism, he was a Marxist and this cannot and should not be denied. His fault was that he committed gross mistakes of a theoretical and political nature, violated the Leninist principles of state and Party leadership, abused the power entrusted him by the Party and the people.

At Stalin's funeral many, including myself, had tears in their eyes. These were sincere tears. Although we knew about some of Stalin's personal shortcomings, we believed him.

To have a clearer picture of how great was the belief in Stalin and his authority, I will cite the following example. Many remember Comrade Yakir. He was a major

military leader and a Bolshevik of crystal purity who perished tragically and guiltlessly in those years. Sentenced to death, he believed that Stalin had nothing to do with this and his last words before he was shot were "Long live Stalin!" During the inquest Comrade Yakir told his interrogators that his arrest and indictment was a provocation, that the Party and Stalin were misinformed, that they would look into all this, would see that such people as he were losing their lives as a result of provocations. Not only Comrade Yakir but also many other outstanding Party leaders and statesmen who had suffered guiltlessly thought likewise.

In the last years of his life Stalin was a seriously ill man, suffering from suspiciousness and the persecution mania. The Party widely informed the people how Stalin hatched such "cases" as the "Leningrad case," the "doctors' case" and others. But, comrades, there would have been a considerably larger number of such "cases" if all who had worked next to Stalin during that period would have agreed with him in all matters. In one of my speeches I mentioned how Stalin intended to whip up the so-called case of "the Moscow counter-revolutionary centre." However, as we know, he was not supported in this and the cadres of the Moscow Party organization were not subjected to new mass repressions.

It is also known that Stalin intended to destroy a considerable part of the creative intelligentsia of the Soviet Ukraine. Evidently on Beria's and Kaganovich's instigation he suspected that some kind of nationalist tendencies and sentiments were maturing among the creative intelligentsia in postwar Soviet Ukraine and started to push matters in the direction which would enable him to do away with some of the most prominent writers and art workers of the Ukraine. If the Ukrainian Bolsheviks had at that time given in to Stalin's wishes then the Ukrainian intelligentsia apparently would have suffered great losses and probably a "case" of Ukrainian nationalists would have been hatched.

Knowing Stalin's morbid mistrustfulness and suspiciousness, the intelligence services of the imperialist countries "planted" such cases and such "documents" which looked quite authentic and created a plausible certitude that groups of military specialists were operating in our country against Soviet power, against the Soviet state and that complots of different subversive groups were being engineered.

Lovers of memoir writings often describe events of that period as though from a distant foreign land, more, they describe events which indeed were very remote from them both in essence and in the consequences they entailed.

But we also have comrades and very well-known writers and art workers who, one may say, felt on their own backs the effects of Stalin's arbitrary rule and who, even during those extremely difficult times, did not reconcile to such phenomena, protested and addressed frank statements to Stalin directly.

In the spring of 1933, our esteemed Mikhail Alexandrovich Sholokhov raised his voice in protest against the arbitrary rule that reigned on the Don at that time. Not long ago two letters of Mikhail Alexandrovich to Stalin and Stalin's replies to these letters were found in the archives. One cannot help but feel deeply moved reading Sholokhov's truthful words, written with the blood of his heart, about the shocking deeds of people who engaged in criminal activities in the Veshenskaya and other districts of the Don.

Mikhail Alexandrovich wrote in his letter of April 16, 1933, to Stalin: "Such examples could be quoted indefinitely. *These are not isolated cases of overdoing things,*



but a legalized, on the district scale, 'method' of conducting grain procurement. I have heard about these facts either from Communists or from collective farmers themselves, who, after having been subjected to all these 'methods,' came to me asking 'to have this printed in the papers.'

"Joseph Vissarionovich, do you remember Korolenko's story *In a Pacified Village?* The same kind of 'disappearance' has fallen to the lot of tens of thousands of collective farmers and not three peasants suspected of having stolen grain from a kulak—and, as you see, with a wider use of technical means and in a more competent way."

Further on Sholokhov asked Stalin to have a closer look at what was happening in the districts. "The deeds of not only those who committed outrages against collective farmers and Soviet power, but also of those whose hand directed them should be investigated. . . ."

"If everything I have described merits the Central Committee's attention send to the Veshenskaya district real Communists who would have enough courage to expose, irrespective of the person, all those responsible for the mortal blow delivered to the collective-farm economy of the district, who would properly investigate and expose not only all those who applied loathsome 'methods' of torture, beating-up and humiliation to collective farmers, but also those who inspired them."

Other extracts could be cited from Comrade Sholokhov's letter—a direct, frank and courageous letter which, incidentally, has never been printed in his works or reminiscences.

But I want to dwell on another thing, on what Stalin replied to the letters of the writer Sholokhov. He wrote to Mikhail Alexandrovich that "your letters create a somewhat one-sided impression." In his letter Stalin said:

"I thanked you for the letters, for they reveal a sore spot in our Party-Soviet work and show how our workers, wishing to curb the enemy, sometimes unwittingly hit friends and come to sadism. But this does not mean that I agree with you on all points. You see only *one* side, though you see it quite well. But this is only *one* side of the matter. In order not to go amiss in politics (your letters are not *belles-lettres* but 100 per cent politics) one has to observe, to be able to see the *other* side as well. And the other side is that the esteemed grain-growers of your district (and not only of your district alone) carried on an 'Italian strike' (sabotage!) and were nothing loth to leave the workers, the Red Army without bread. That the sabotage was quiet and outwardly harmless (without bloodshed) does not change the fact that the esteemed grain-growers waged what virtually was a 'quiet' war against Soviet power. A war of starvation, dear Comrade Sholokhov. . . ."

"This, of course, can in no way justify the outrages which, as you assure, have been committed by our workers," Stalin wrote further on. "And those guilty of these outrages must be duly punished. Nevertheless, it is clear as day that the esteemed grain-growers are not so harmless as they might appear from afar."

Here you are: it turns out that the writer Mikhail Alexandrovich Sholokhov, who wrote to Stalin about atrocious lawlessness, saw events "as they might appear from afar." And this was said to a writer who was in the very midst of the people and created the best, truthful communist-spirited book about collectivization, *Virgin Soil Upturned*. (*Prolonged applause.*)

As a real Bolshevik writer, Sholokhov refused to put up with crying injustice; he rose against the lawlessness that was rampant at the time, but Stalin remained deaf to these signals from Sholokhov, just as he did to numerous similar signals from other courageous Communists.

Stalin's abuse of power and the facts of his arbitrary rule became known to us only after his death and the exposure of Beria, this sworn enemy of the Party and the people, this spy and villainous provocateur.

It should be borne in mind that Beria, this loathsome person, who did not even deem it necessary to conceal his joy at Stalin's coffin, was frantically reaching out for power, for leadership in the Party. Such a danger was real at that time: That was fraught with a grave danger to the gains of the October Revolution, to the cause of communist construction in our country and to the successes of the international communist movement.

Already in the first days following Stalin's death Beria began to take steps disorganizing the work of the Party and directed at undermining the Soviet Union's friendly relations with fraternal countries of the socialist camp. For instance, he and Malenkov came out with the provocative proposal to abolish the German Democratic Republic as a socialist state, to recommend the Socialist Unity Party of Germany to abandon the slogan of the struggle for building socialism. The Central Committee promptly rejected these traitorous proposals with indignation and gave a crushing rebuff to the provocateurs.

The measures taken by the Central Committee protected the Party and the country from the foul intentions of Beria, this inveterate agent of the imperialists.

Comrades, every one who creates works about the life of Soviet society, about its present and past should well remember all this, and be able to gain a profound understanding of historical events. The Soviet people have traversed a great and glorious path from the destruction of the old, bourgeois world to the building of the new, socialist society which has won a final victory in our country. (*Prolonged applause.*)

It has not been an easy path. In the struggle for the victory of socialism our people have been heroically overcoming all the difficulties and hardships that confronted them. It is the overcoming of difficulties that has formed the spiritual make-up of the Soviet man, the man of the new society, the fighter for the revolutionary remaking of the world. A lofty, Leninist adherence to the ideals, an unbending will, the readiness to sacrifice oneself for the sake of the triumph of the communist ideals—such are the remarkable traits of the generations of Soviet people educated by the Communist Party. Scepticism, a weak will and slackness, pessimism and a nihilistic attitude to reality are alien to Soviet people.

It is surprising to see how some literary works, films and plays go to any length to present gloomy, despondent feelings of people, caused by difficulties in their life. Such a portrayal of life can only be done by persons who have no share in the constructive effort of the people, who are not carried away by the poetry of their labour and look at everything from a distance. I can tell from my own experience as a participant in the events in those years, which are sometimes painted in gloomy colours and dull shades, that those were bright, happy years, years of struggle and victories, of the triumph of communist ideas. (*Prolonged applause.*)

Not long ago Comrade Walter Ulbricht showed us a documentary film, *The Russian*

*Miracle*, made by the German film makers Annelie and Andrew Thorndike. It is a remarkable film. When we saw it there passed before our eyes truthful pictures from the life of our country. Looking at it, in the masses of participants in the Civil War I saw, as it were, myself; such were the Red Army fighters of those days. The film is based on our documentary materials. Here is hoping that our own film workers will create more such good, truthful films as this. *The Russian Miracle* contrasts our yesterday with today. Seeing this film you marvel at the colossal stride forward our country has made! (*Applause.*)

And we would like to give a piece of advice to our young people: learn from the lessons of the Revolution, from the history of the struggle in which your fathers and mothers took part, and preserve sacredly the memory of those who are not with us any longer, treat respectfully those who live on, and equip yourselves with everything they have so as to be worthy people, worthy continuators of the cause of your fathers. (*Stormy applause.*) If you fail in this, you will disgrace yourselves.

We have a profound faith in our people, in their strength, in their creative revolutionary spirit. We believe that our young creative workers will carry on the cause of their fathers, that they will always be marching in step with the people.

A fighter inspired by the lofty urge for victory does not notice the difficulties of the marches and battles, no matter how great they may be. He gives his life for the sake of the idea, because at the moment of the keenest struggle the idea becomes for him more important than any difficulties, it becomes first and foremost.

A man's assessment of phenomena of life and historical events depends on what ideological positions he has held and holds in his attitude to these phenomena and events. There exist books about our Revolution and socialist construction, written by people who observed the Revolution and the work of the people on remaking life "as if from garret windows."

Books about the Revolution, about the life and deeds of the Soviet people were also written by people whom the Revolution had driven out of long-occupied warm nests, who had not understood and refused to accept the Revolution. The waves of events had been tossing them about—from Moscow to the Crimea, from the Crimea to Tbilisi, from there to all parts of the world. In their stories, novels and memoirs they make a great fuss over their experiences due to the difficulties that came down upon them and their like, over having had to eat rotten fish and other such things. At that time our Soviet people were scoring victories over the enemies while being poorly dressed and half-starved and sometimes not having even rotten fish; yet they did not whine or groan but fought staunchly, defended selflessly the gains of the Revolution. (*Stormy applause.*)

Our Party has always been for partisanship in literature and art. It hails all men of letters and art, both old and young, Party members and non-Party people, provided they firmly adhere to communist ideology in questions of creative work. They are the Party's support, its faithful soldiers. (*Applause.*)

We render them support and will continue to do so, we show concern and will continue to do so in order that our creative forces grow bigger and stronger, rallying into a single militant family of revolutionary artists, consistently defending in their creative work the victorious ideas of Marxism-Leninism, artists irreconcilable to all that is rotten, alien and hostile, no matter what quarter it comes from. (*Applause.*)

We have heard the poet Robert Rozhdestvensky speaking here and arguing against Nikolai Gribachov's poem *No, Boys!* Comrade Rozhdestvensky's speech was imbued with the thought that the sentiments of our youth are expressed solely by a group of young authors, and that these authors are the tutors of our youth. That is certainly not so. Our Soviet youth has been brought up by our Party, it follows the Party and sees in it its teacher and leader. (*Stormy applause.*)

I would like to offer as a model to young poet Rozhdestvensky the poet-soldier and poet-Communist Gribachov, who has a keen eye and never misses when striking at the enemies of our ideology. (*Applause.*) We live in a period of acute ideological struggle, in a period of struggle for the minds and the re-education of people. This is a complicated process, much more difficult than the reconstruction of machine tools and plants. Speaking figuratively, you men of letters and art, are the smiths who reforge human psychology. You have powerful weapons at your disposal, weapons which should always be used in the interests of the people. (*Applause.*)

Strictly speaking, there is actually no such thing as non-partisanship in a society. Those who advertise their non-partisanship do this with the purpose of concealing their disagreement with the views and ideas of the Party in order to enlist supporters. There were cases in history when the most inveterate reactionaries and counter-revolutionaries employed the slogan of non-partisanship, and it was only later that their bourgeois partisanship became manifest.

One can quote quite a few such examples from the history of the struggle of the working class and working peasants of our country for strengthening the Soviet power. At different stages and at different periods of time the enemies of the workers and peasants used different means for fighting against Communists and against the construction of socialism, camouflaging their actions by non-partisanship.

In the early years of the Soviet power the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Anarchists, Mensheviks, Constitutional Democrats and other riff-raff, expressing the will of the exploiters and interventionists for whom they acted as agents and servitors, came out openly and directly against the Revolution, against Lenin and against the workers' and peasants' power.

In the years of the Civil War the camp of the enemies of the working class and peasants had capitalists and landlords acting in alliance with the foreign interventionists. All the Menshevik, Socialist-Revolutionary and Anarchist scum started serving the counter-revolutionaries.

In the flames of the fierce battles against the counter-revolutionaries and interventionists the working people of our country went through a school of political education, they learned the political ABC from their own experience and decided whom they were to follow, with whom they were to side, they became Bolsheviks.

This is depicted in a very fine and convincing way in Dmitri Furmanov's book and the film *Chapayev*, in Alexander Serafimovich's novel *The Iron Flood*, in Alexander Fadeyev's novel *The Nineteen*, in Nikolai Ostrovsky's novel *How the Steel Was Tempered* and in other works by our Soviet revolutionary writers. Imbued with ideas of partisanship, their works are still very important and are our Party's weapons in its ideological struggle. No wonder that the book *How the Steel Was Tempered* enjoys great popularity in Cuba and in some of the other countries fighting for their freedom and independence.

As Lenin's ideas conquered more and more the minds of workers and peasants, and the influence of the Communists increased among the people and the prestige of the Soviet power kept growing, the enemies of the Revolution made an attempt to oust the Bolsheviks and to seize the Soviets, and with this purpose they advanced the slogan: "Soviets without Communists."

What are Soviets without Communists? They represent an empty form devoid of revolutionary content. The counter-revolutionaries realized this very well, and by setting forth the slogan of "Soviets without Communists" they counted on transforming them from organs of revolutionary power into a medium of their influence on the masses, they wanted to use the prestige of the Soviets for implementing their designs against the people.

The point is not how an organization is called, but what policy it pursues and the interests of which class it defends.

For instance, communes have been existing for quite a long time in France. As you see, these organs of administration have a revolutionary name, but a capitalist essence and they defend the interests of the monopolists. The French bourgeoisie is not at all afraid of the revolutionary word "commune" because that is how it calls its organs of administration.

There are many bourgeois leaders now in different countries who disguise their bourgeois policy with socialist phrases. They talk about the construction of socialism and at the same time imprison and execute Communists. They outlaw Communist Parties and say that they are fighting for socialism. They do this because the ideas of socialism are becoming ever more popular with the masses in all countries and win their minds.

The example offered by the peoples of the Soviet Union is a revolutionary beacon for other peoples. That is why bourgeois leaders, particularly the representatives of the Left-wing bourgeoisie, make extensive use of the slogan of the construction of socialism for deceiving the working people.

### *We Are Against Peaceful Coexistence in the Field of Ideology*

Historical experience shows that in the political and ideological struggle one cannot trust words and declarations. One must be capable of telling who has advanced them, and for what purpose. For this it is necessary first of all to be a Marxist-Leninist, a convinced Communist who has devoted his whole life and talent to the struggle for the happiness of all the working people on earth.

One cannot regard himself a champion of the working people's interests and stand at the crossroads between the struggling parties, "listening equally indifferent to good and to evil."

Every layer of society is drawn into the class struggle. It can even break up families. It sometimes happens that the members of one and the same family stand opposed to one another on different sides of the barricade.

There is a category of people who explain their non-participation in the Revolution with "humanistic" considerations; they dare not, so to say, raise their hand against their like. But who kills men, if it isn't their own like?

Revolutions are carried out by social classes. A revolution of workers and peasants to overthrow the capitalist class is the supreme manifestation of humanism. The participation in such a revolution on the side of workers and peasants is the highest manifestation of humanism. Without overthrowing the system of exploiters there can be no liberation of the working people and the creation for them of a happy life. Is it so hard to understand that those who fail to take part in the struggle on the side of the working people are virtually assisting the bourgeoisie? He who is not with the workers and peasants is inevitably against them. That should be well understood, comrades! (*Applause.*)

There have been, and still are, people who declare that they accept the idea of communism and sometimes even champion it, but do not take an active part in the struggle, they get under the feet of the fighters, getting confused themselves and confusing others.

A revolution is not merely good intentions, but a grim and acute struggle. You have to fight for the revolution not only during its making, but also in the period of the consolidation of its achievements, all the way to the upbuilding of communism. Essays, lectures, reports and the like are not enough here. It is necessary to join in the shooting too when the circumstances call for it.

In the complex conditions of the struggle between the classes, vacillating people sometimes get, against their wish, into an unenviable position. Let me remind you of a case with Anatoli Lunacharsky. Fearing that the armed workers' shooting at the enemy might hit some of the historical monuments and ruin them, he went to Lenin with a protest and even threatened to resign his post in the Soviet government. Vladimir Ilyich derided this philistine idea of the revolution. Lunacharsky himself realized this later.

In this connection I should like to say a few words about Comrade Ehrenburg. There was a time when Comrade Ehrenburg visited Lenin in Paris and was welcomed by him with sympathy, as Ehrenburg writes himself. Comrade Ehrenburg even joined the Party and then withdrew from it. He took no direct part in the Socialist Revolution, obviously assuming the attitude of an onlooker. I think we shall not be erring against the truth if we say that it is from those same positions that Comrade Ehrenburg appraises our Revolution and the entire subsequent period of socialist construction in his memoirs, *People, Years, Life*.

It is the highest duty of the Soviet writer, artist and composer, of every creative worker, to be in the ranks of the builders of communism, to put his talent at the service of the great cause of our Party, to fight for the triumph of the ideas of Marxism-Leninism. We must remember that a sharp struggle is going on in the world between two irreconcilable ideologies—the socialist and the bourgeois.

It is the artist's task actively to contribute with his works to the assertion of the communist ideas, to deal crushing blows at the enemies of socialism and communism, to fight against the imperialists and colonialists.

A vivid example of patriotic, Party understanding of the artist's mission are the works of our outstanding writer Mikhail Alexandrovich Sholokhov. Take his novels, *And Quiet Flows the Don* and *Virgin Soil Uplifted*, his story, *A Man's Lot*, and the chapters from his novel, *They Fought for Their Country*. These are real works of art of great force, revolutionary uplift, works imbued with the spirit of communist partisan-

ship and the spirit of the class struggle of the workers and peasants of our country for the victory of the Revolution and socialism. Comrade Sholokhov himself took an active part in the struggle during the Civil War, during the liquidation of the kulaks as the last class of exploiters, and during the years of the Patriotic War against the fascist invaders. He took part in those battles not as an observer but as a soldier, and in times of peace he remains the same fighter for the happiness of the working people. (*Stormy applause.*)

Sholokhov possesses the wonderful gift of deeply understanding the substance of social phenomena and events, of seeing his friends clearly and discerning his enemies, and of masterly, from Party positions, depicting impressive scenes of real life. It is with great love that he reproduces in his works the images of Communists and men of labour!

He exposes with irreconcilable class hatred the enemies of our social system and deals them a crushing blow. How vividly and convincingly he draws his battle scenes! If his characters clash in battle, they cross their sabres with such force that sparks fly. And they wield their weapons for the sake of the people's truth, and that truth wins out.

From the example offered by Sholokhov's work everybody can see that, far from cramping his artistic individuality, the writer's communist partisanship actively promotes his talent and raises his work to the highest level of social significance.

We adhere to class positions in art and resolutely oppose peaceful coexistence between the socialist and bourgeois ideologies. Art belongs to the sphere of ideology. Those who think that both socialist realism and formalist and abstractionist trends can peacefully live together in Soviet art inevitably slip down to ~~alien to us~~ positions of peaceful coexistence in the sphere of ideology. We have recently encountered such sentiments. This bait has unfortunately been taken by some Communists—writers and artists, and even by some of the leading workers of the creative organizations. It should be noted at the same time that such non-Party men, as Comrade Leonid Sobolev, for instance, have been staunchly defending the Party line in literature and art.

Last time Comrade Ehrenburg said that the idea of coexistence had been expressed in the letter in the form of a joke. Let us assume that this is so. But then it is a malicious joke. One cannot joke like that in the field of ideology. Let us try and see what would indeed have happened in Soviet art if the advocates of peaceful coexistence of various ideological trends in literature and art got the upper hand. As the first step, a blow would have been dealt at our revolutionary gains in the field of socialist art. By the logic of struggle things would have hardly ended there. It is not impossible that these people, on gathering strength, would have made an attempt to come out in opposition to the revolutionary gains.

I have already said that peaceful coexistence in the field of ideology is treason to Marxism-Leninism, betrayal of the cause of the workers and peasants. Soviet society has now reached a stage when complete, monolithic unity of all the socialist nations of the country has been achieved, of all sections of the people—workers, collective farmers, intellectuals—who are successfully building communism under the leadership of the Leninist Party.

Our people and Party will not tolerate any infringement on this monolithic unity. One of the manifestations of such infringement is the attempt to thrust upon us peaceful

coexistence of ideologies. That is why we come out both against these pernicious ideas and against their bearers. In this, I hope, we are all unanimous. (*Prolonged applause.*)

Those who are still under a delusion we call upon to reflect, to analyze their errors, to understand their nature and sources, to overcome their mistakes, and together with the Party, in joint ranks, under the red banner of Marxism-Leninism, to participate actively in the building of communism, to multiply the successes of socialist culture, literature and art.

Abstractionism, formalism, for whose right to existence in socialist art some of its champions are advocating, is one of the forms of bourgeois ideology. It is to be regretted that this is not understood by some people, including some of the creative workers with extensive life experience.

In Comrade Ehrenburg's memoirs there is the following passage. I shall cite it here: "There was a multiplicity of literary schools: comfutists (communist futurists), imagists, proletcultists, expressionists, fuists, non-objectists, presentists, accidentists, and even nothingists. Of course, some of the theoreticians talked a lot of nonsense. . . . But I wish to defend those distant times."

It appears that the author of the memoirs regards with great sympathy the representatives of the so-called "Left" art and makes it his task to defend this art. The question is, defend against whom? Apparently, against our Marxist-Leninist criticism. Why is this being done? Apparently, in order to uphold the opportunity for the existence of such or similar phenomena in our modern art. This would mean recognition of coexistence between socialist realism and formalism. Comrade Ehrenburg is making a gross ideological mistake, and it is our duty to help him to realize this.

At our meeting last time Comrade Evtushenko came out in defence of abstractionism. He attempted to justify his position by alleging that there are good people both among realists and formalists, and he referred to the example of two Cuban artists who had sharply differed in their views on art and then died in one trench fighting for the revolution. Such an instance could occur in life as a private case.

An example of a totally different nature could be cited. After the Civil War an ugly formalistic monument was erected in the city of Artyomovsk, the Ukraine, the author of which was the cubist sculptor Kavaleridze. It was a disgusting sight, but the cubists were rapturous over it (the monument was destroyed during the war). The author of this formalistic monument, who remained on the territory occupied by the fascists, behaved in an unworthy manner. Therefore the example cited by Comrade Evtushenko cannot serve as a serious argument in favour of his views.

Comrade Evtushenko's stand on abstractionism essentially coincides with the views upheld by Comrade Ehrenburg. This poet, who is still a young man, apparently fails to understand much in our Party's policy, wavers, displays instability in his views on the questions of art. But his speech at the meeting of the Ideological Commission gives us confidence that he will succeed in overcoming his waverings. I should like to advise Comrade Evtushenko and the other young writers to cherish the confidence of the masses, not to seek cheap sensations, not to play up to the sentiments and tastes of philistines. (*Prolonged applause.*) Don't be ashamed, Comrade Evtushenko, to admit your mistakes. Don't be afraid of what the enemies will be saying about you. It should be clear to you that when we criticize you for departing from positions of principle, our

opponents begin to praise you. If the opponents of our cause start praising you for works agreeable to them, the people will justly criticize you. So choose what suits you best. (*Applause.*)

The Communist Party is fighting and will continue to fight against abstractionism and all other formalistic distortions in art. We cannot be neutral as regards formalism. When I was in America some artists, I do not know if they are prominent or not, presented me with paintings. Yesterday I showed you this dabbery. Apparently these men are not my enemies. Otherwise they would not have presented me with the fruits of their labour. But even under these conditions I cannot consider the gift the greatest masterpiece or in general a masterpiece of fine arts.

What does it portray? It is said that the painting gives a view of a city from a bridge. But no matter how hard you look at it you make out nothing but coloured stripes—and this dabbery is called a painting!

Here is another such "masterpiece." One sees four eyes, perhaps there are even more. It is said that the picture conveys the idea of horror, fear. Where is the limit to abstractionists' absurdity in art?! These are specimens of American painting.

And here are some instances from the sphere of our architectural art. In Moscow, in Sokolniki, there is the Rusakov Club which was built to the designs of architect Comrade Melnikov. This is an ugly and uncomfortable building, as ugly as sin. (*Animation in the hall.*) But in its time it was presented as a progressive innovation.

The Soviet Army Theatre in Moscow built to the designs of architects Alabyan and Simbirtsev is an example of unreasonable passion for form in architecture. Kaganovich foisted the ridiculous idea of building a theatre in the form of a five-pointed star upon the architects. The five-pointed star as a symbol, as an emblem, is one thing; another thing is the erection of a building for practical purposes in the form of a star. Indeed, it has so many useless corners and wasted space!

The Soviet Army Theatre probably is the most irrationally constructed building. It was this way: Kaganovich submitted his idea to Stalin who liked it, and it was decided to erect the building in the form of a five-pointed star. No one sees nor will see the star: it has to be seen from the sky. (*Laughter in the hall.*) A silly idea, a token of an immature notion of beauty and reason in art and in life.

It is beyond comprehension why, and for the sake of what sensible, educated people play the fool, give themselves airs, pass the most absurd concoctions as works of art. While the life surrounding them is replete with natural and thrilling beauty.

On New Year's Eve I was returning to Moscow from the country. I spent the whole of December 31, from early morning, in the woods. It was a poetic day, a most beautiful Russian winter day, precisely a Russian winter day because not everywhere are there such winters as we have here in Russia. Of course, this is not a national but a climatic phenomenon, a phenomenon of nature and therefore I would like you to understand me correctly. (*Laughter in the hall. Applause.*)

The forest was especially beautiful on that day. Its beauty was in the trees covered by fluffy hoarfrost. I recall how in my youth I read a story in the *Ogonyok* magazine. I don't remember the author of the story which contained such words as "tender silvery shadows" The author described an orchard in its winter attire. The story probably was well written or perhaps at that time I was less exacting as far as literature was concerned.

However, I liked the story and today I still remember the impression it made upon me. I especially liked the description of trees in their winter attire.

The winter forest on New Year's Eve was so beautiful that it strongly impressed me. Perhaps the shadows were not silvery, but words fail me to express the deep impression the forest made on me. I watched the sunrise, the forest, covered by hoarfrost. Only those can understand this charm who have been in the forest and have seen such live pictures. It is precisely the advantage of the artist that he can reproduce thrilling pictures; however, not everyone possesses this gift.

I told my companions: just look at these firs, at their attire, at these snowflakes which glisten and sparkle in the rays of the sun, how wonderfully beautiful all this is! And now the modernists, the abstractionists want to depict these firs upside down and declare this as new and progressive in art.

It is impossible that such art would ever receive recognition from normal people, that people be deprived of the opportunity to enjoy paintings of nature reproduced in the works of artists and beautifying the halls of our clubs, houses of culture and homes.

Perhaps some will say that Khrushchov is calling for photography, for naturalism in art. No, comrades! We call for vivid creative art, for a truthful portrayal of the real world in all the diversity of its colours. Only such art will bring joy and delight to people. Man will never lose the artistic gift and will not allow that dirty dabbery be passed as works of art, dabbery which can be made by any ass with his tail. (*Applause.*)

There is no doubt that the people are strong enough to rebuff such "innovators." And those of them who have not lost their faculties will think matters over and take the road of serving the people, will create canvases full of joy, inspiring people to work.

It is hard to understand why the adherents of formalism and abstractionism label as conservatives those art workers who adhere to the positions of socialist realism while considering abstractionists as representatives of what is progressive in art. Is there any ground for this? I think there is no ground, nor can there be any ground for this, because formalist and abstractionist vagaries are alien to and not understood by the people. And everything that is alien to the people and is not supported by them can certainly not be progressive.

The artist Alexander Laktionov has recently written an article in *Pravda* voicing his irreconcilable attitude to abstractionist art. The abstractionists and their patrons have upbraided this article for allegedly dealing with the conservative trend in art. And the paintings of Comrade Laktionov are slighted by these people as naturalist.

Let us compare two paintings—the self-portrait of Laktionov and the self-portrait of Boris Zhutovsky. No matter what some people think or say on the subject, it is clear to any sensible person with unspoiled tastes that the painting by Laktionov arrests attention by its humaneness and arouses respect for man. You look at the portrait with admiration and rejoice for the man.

But whom has Zhutovsky portrayed? A freak. Looking at his self-portrait one can get frightened. Is it not a shame to waste one's efforts on such a disgraceful thing? Why, the man has finished a Soviet secondary school, an institute, people's money was spent on him and he eats people's bread. And how has he repaid the people, the workers

and peasants for the money they have spent on his education, for the benefits they are giving him now—with this self-portrait, this abomination and monstrosity? It makes you sick to look at such a filthy mess and to listen to those who defend it.

No matter what abuse is hurled against the artists who adhere to positions of socialist realism, and how much praise is showered upon the abstractionists and all other formalists, all sensible people clearly understand that in the first case we have to do with real artists and genuine art, and in the second—with perverted people whose brains are, so to speak, upside down, with shameful hack-work that insults people's feelings. (*Applause.*)

Soviet society discards everything still-born in art, as every living organism discards dead cells.

A big and important place in the spiritual life of our people, in ideological work, belongs to music. In this connection it is necessary to voice certain considerations on the tendency in the development of music. We do not want to act as judges, or as conductors of composers.

In music, as in the other fields of art, there are many different genres, styles and forms. No one is imposing a ban on any one of these styles or genres. But nevertheless, we want to present our attitude to music, to its tasks and the tendency in its development.

Speaking briefly, we stand for melodious music with a message, music that stirs the people and gives rise to strong feelings, we are against cacophony.

Who does not know the song about Budyonny's army! The Pokrass brothers have composed many good songs. I like very much the song about Moscow, written, I must confess, at our request, when I was Secretary of the Moscow Party Committee. I remember at a meeting in the Moscow Committee, one of them played this song for the first time. He was not much of a singer, but the Pokrass brothers wrote good music.

How stirring are the old revolutionary songs, such as *Whirlwinds of Danger*, for example, and others. Who does not know the *Internationale*? The number of years we are singing this song! It has become the international anthem of the working class. What revolutionary thoughts and feelings it awakens, it elevates man and mobilizes him against the enemies of the working people!

When I listen to Glinka's music, tears of joy always swell in my eyes.

Maybe I am old-fashioned, am getting on in years, but I like to listen to David Oistrakh playing the violin; I also like to listen to the violinists' group of the Bolshoi Theatre, I do not know how this group is called in professional language. I have listened to it many times and always enjoyed it immensely.

I do not, of course, claim that my reaction to music should become a sort of standard for all. But we cannot indulge those who pass off cacophony sounds as genuine music, while truly popular music is slighted by some people as out-of-date.

Each nation has its traditions in music and loves its national folk melodies and songs. I was born in a Russian village and was brought up on Russian and Ukrainian folk music, on its melodies and folk songs. It gives me great pleasure to listen to the songs of Solovyov-Sedoi, the song of Kolmanovsky, words by Evtushenko, *Do the Russian People Stand for War?* I also like Ukrainian songs; I'm fond of the song *Towel*, music by Maiboroda, words by Andrei Malyshko. One can listen to the song endlessly. We have many good composers and they have written many good songs, but, as you can understand, it is impossible to enumerate them all in my speech.

But there also are some serious shortcomings in the sphere of music. The recent infatuation with jazz music and jazz orchestras cannot be considered normal. One should not think that we are against any jazz music, there are different kinds of jazz orchestras and different music for them. Dunayevsky managed to produce fine music for jazz, too. I also like some songs performed by Leonid Utyosov's jazz. However, there is a kind of music that gives you a feeling of nausea and a pain in the stomach.

After the plenary meeting of the Composers Union of the R.S.F.S.R., Comrade Shostakovich invited us to a concert in the Kremlin Theatre. We were very busy but went to hear the music because we were told that the concert would be an interesting one. And indeed we realized that there were some interesting numbers on the programme. But then for some reason one jazz orchestra appeared, then a second one, then a third, and then all three at once. Even a good thing when there is too much of it makes you feel uncomfortable but here it was very trying to stand this salvo of jazz music. I would have gladly taken refuge but there was no place to hide.

Music without melody gives rise to nothing but irritation. They say that this happens because you don't understand it. And indeed, there is some jazz music that you cannot understand and it makes you sick when you hear it.

A feeling of objection is also evoked by some of the so-called modern dances brought into our country from the West. I have had a chance to travel a lot throughout the country. I saw Russian, Ukrainian, Kazakh, Uzbek, Armenian, Georgian and other dances. These are beautiful dances, and it is a pleasure to watch them. But the so-called modern fashionable dances are simply something indecent, mad, and the devil knows what! They say that one can see such indecent things only in the religious sect of *tryasuny* (shakers). I cannot attest to this as I have never attended their meetings. (*Laughter in the hall.*)

It transpires that among the creative workers you can find young people who vainly endeavour to prove that melody in music has lost the right to existence and that its place is now being taken by "new" music—"dodecaphony," the music of noises. It is hard for a normal man to understand what the word "dodecaphony" means, but apparently it means the same as the word cacophony. Well, we flatly reject this cacophony music. Our people cannot use this rubbish as a tool of their ideology.

*Exclamations:* That's right! (*Applause.*)

We are for music that gives inspiration, that calls you to exploits on the field of battle and in labour. When a soldier goes into battle he takes along what he needs, and never leaves behind an orchestra. An orchestra is a source of inspiration on the march. The music for such orchestras can be produced and is produced by composers who adhere to the principles of socialist realism, who are not divorced from life and the people's struggle, and are supported by the people.

Our policy in art, a policy of rejection of abstractionism, formalism and any other bourgeois distortions is a Leninist policy which we have been unswervingly pursuing and will continue to pursue in the future. (*Applause.*)

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin maintained that literature and art should serve the interests of the workers and peasants, the interests of the people.

The so-called Left art, which is being extolled by some people, was described by Vladimir Ilyich as the strangest of clownery, unnatural and incongruous. Right now

the fib is being circulated that Lenin was tolerant and even sympathetic with formalistic experiments in art. Unfortunately, one of those guilty of circulating the myth about Lenin's view on art is Comrade Ehrenburg. He writes in his memoirs: "A. V. Lunacharsky told me that when he asked Lenin whether 'Left' artists can be allowed to decorate the Red Square for the 1st of May, Vladimir Ilyich replied: 'I am not a specialist in this, and do not want to impose my tastes on others.'"

In this case, Comrade Ehrenburg tries to convey to the readers that Lenin allowed the possibility of coexistence of different ideological trends in Soviet art.

That is wrong, Comrade Ehrenburg! You know very well that it was actually Lenin who set forth the principle of introducing Party ideology and partisanship in literature and art. This view was later ardently supported by Gorky and other writers who took firmly to the stand of the Soviet power, to the stand of the struggle for the cause of the working class, the stand of the struggle for the victory of communism.

It was for its partisanship, lofty ideology and artistic skill that Vladimir Ilyich Lenin valued so highly Maxim Gorky's book *Mother*.

The strength of the works of art lies in their artistic skill, clarity and accuracy of ideological views. However, this does not seem to be to everyone's liking. Sometimes the ideological clarity of works of literature and art is being attacked under the guise of the struggle against rhetorical and mentorial tones. Such sentiments were expressed in an undisguised form in Nekrasov's notes *On Both Sides of the Ocean*, published in the magazine *Novy Mir*. Appraising the film *Zastava Ilyicha* he writes: "I am boundlessly grateful to Khutsiyev and Shpalikov that they did not drag out by his greying whiskers some old worker who understands everything and always has a clear and ready explanation for everything. Had such a character appeared with his mentorial words, the picture would have been lost."

*Exclamations:* Shame!

And such a thing was written by a Soviet author in a Soviet magazine. One cannot read without indignation such things written about an old worker in the haughty and slighting tone. I think that the tone of this kind of talk is absolutely impermissible for a Soviet writer.

Besides, the notes I've mentioned express a certain attitude not only to a particular case in art, but also proclaim a principle absolutely unacceptable for our art. This cannot but evoke our most resolute protest.

### *Guidance by the Leninist Party Is a Guarantee of All Our Successes*

One can hear some people talk about some kind of absolute freedom of the individual. I don't know what they have in mind but I consider that never, not even under complete communism, will there be absolute freedom of the individual. "We do not believe in 'absolutes,'" Vladimir Ilyich Lenin answered the proponents of "absolute freedom" in his time. Under communism, too, the will of one person will have to submit to the will of the whole collective. Unless this is so, anarchic wilfulness will sow dissension and will disorganize the life of society. Not only socialist society, but society in general, any social

system, even the smallest collective of people, cannot exist without the organizing and directing principle.

There is no need to prove that at all stages of social development, beginning with the primitive state, people united in collectives to obtain the means of existence. And in our time, the time of the atom, electronics and cybernetics, automation and production lines it is all the more necessary to have clarity, ideal co-ordination and organization in all the links of the social system both in the field of material production and in the sphere of spiritual life. Only under such conditions can we make use of all the benefits of science created by man and make them serve him.

Can there be under communism breaches of public order and deviations from the will of the collective? There can. But those will evidently be individual cases. One cannot suppose that cases of psychic disorders will be ruled out and that the norms of community will be safe from being violated by mentally deranged people. I cannot say exactly what means there will be to curb the outbursts of lunatics but obviously there will be some. Today, too, there is the strait-jacket which they put on lunatics and thereby deprive them of the possibility to rave and do harm to themselves and to others.

Under present-day conditions we have to wage a stubborn struggle against the survivals of the past within the country and to repel the attacks of the organized class enemy on the international arena. This is what we have no right to forget for a single moment. And there are some who are trying to push us on to the road of peaceful ideological coexistence and to palm off the rotten idea of "absolute freedom." If everyone will try to foist on society his subjective views as a sort of rule to be followed by all and seek to secure their observation contrary to the generally accepted standards of socialist society, this can inevitably lead to the disorganization of the normal life of the people and the activity of society. Society cannot allow anarchy and self-will on the part of anyone.

The guiding force of socialist society is the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. It expresses the will of the entire Soviet people, and the struggle for the vital interests of the people is the aim of its activity. The Party enjoys the people's confidence which it won and is winning by its struggle, by its blood. The Party will remove from the road of communist construction everything that runs against the interests of the people. (*Prolonged applause.*)

We must bring clarity into the question of humanism, into what is good for whom and what is bad for whom. We approach this, as all other questions, from the class standpoint, from the positions of defending the interests of the working people. So long as classes exist on earth, there is no such thing in life as something absolutely good. What is good for the bourgeoisie, for the imperialists, is disastrous for the working class, and, on the contrary, what is good for the working people is not accepted by the imperialists, by the bourgeoisie.

We should like our principles to be understood well by all, especially by those who are trying to foist peaceful coexistence in the sphere of ideology on us. There can be no joking in politics. He who advocates the idea of peaceful coexistence in ideology is objectively sliding down to the positions of anti-communism. The enemies of communism would like to see us ideologically disarmed. And they try to reach this perfidious aim

of theirs through the propaganda of peaceful coexistence of ideologies, with the help of this "Trojan horse" which they would gladly sneak in to us.

We are confident that all attempts of the enemies of socialism and communism directed against our Marxist-Leninist ideology will be smashed against the monolithic ideological and political unity of the working class, the collective-farm peasantry and the people's intelligentsia of our country. (*Stormy applause.*)

The press and radio, literature, painting, music, the cinema and the theatre are a sharp ideological weapon of our Party. And it sees to it that its weapon is always in fighting trim and hits the enemies unflinchingly. The Party will not allow anyone to blunt this weapon or weaken its effect.

Soviet literature and the arts develop under the direct guidance of the Communist Party and its Central Committee. The Party has brought up remarkably talented cadres of writers, artists, composers, cinematographers and theatrical workers who have inseparably tied up their life and work with the Leninist Party and the people.

The Party, the people, and Lenin are inseparable. The cause of Lenin is the cause of the Party and the people. This was well expressed by that fine poet, Vladimir Mayakovsky:

*The Party and Lenin*  
are brothers born  
*Which is dearer*  
to Mother History's heart?  
*We say Lenin,*  
meaning—  
the Party,  
*We say*  
Party,  
meaning—  
Lenin.

The Leninist Party is the advanced part, the militant, tested vanguard of the people.

Every citizen of our country, no matter who he is—a worker or a member of a collective farm, a scientist or a writer, an artist or a composer—is one of the sons and daughters of our people and he cannot imagine himself outside the life of the people, outside their creative endeavour. Partisanship and kinship with the people in art do not contradict one another; they form a single whole!

Those art workers who still do not understand their place in society, need to be helped to comprehend this well.

Just as a conductor sees to it that all the instruments in his orchestra sound in harmonious accord, so does the Party direct the efforts of all the Soviet people in the social and political life towards the attainment of a single goal.

Through the Party, as the guiding force, socialist society is removing everything that hinders and violates the normal life of the people, and is creating the necessary material, cultural and ideological prerequisites for the construction of communism.

The criticism by the Party of the formalistic perversions is in the interest of the

development of literature and art which play an important role in the spiritual life of our society.

In literature and art the Party supports only such works which inspire the people and unite their forces. The society has the right to condemn works which run counter to their interests.

All of us subsist on means created by the people, and for this we are obliged to pay the people with our labour. Everyone, like a bee in a hive, must make his contribution to the material and spiritual wealth of society. There may be some people who would say that they disagree with this, that this is coercion of the individual, a relapse into the past. To this I shall reply: we live in an organized socialist society where the interests of an individual are in accord with the interests of the society and do not stand in contradiction to them.

The policy of the Party expresses the interests of the entire society as a whole, hence, also of each individual separately, and the policy of the Party is carried out by the Central Committee, vested with the confidence of the Party, and elected on its authority by the Party Congress. (*Stormy applause.*)

In questions of creative art the Central Committee of the Party will demand from everybody—from the most merited and renowned writer and artist as well as from the young, budding creative worker—unswerving adherence to the Party line.

A considerable number of works on the life of Soviet society in the period of the personality cult and today have in recent times been printed in literary magazines and also put out by publishing houses. The striving of writers to gain an understanding of the difficult and complex phenomena of the past is quite natural. We all know that the Central Committee has supported a number of works of an extremely sharp critical nature.

But it must be said that there also appear books which, in our opinion, give an inexact, or, better to say, a wrong and one-sided picture of the events and phenomena associated with the personality cult, and of the substance of those decisive, fundamental changes which have taken place and are still taking place in the social, political and spiritual life of the people since the 20th Party Congress. I would rank Comrade Ehrenburg's novel, *The Thaw*, among such books.

With the concept of a thaw one associates times of instability, inconstancy, incompleteness, temperature fluctuations in nature, when it is difficult to foresee which turn the weather will take. One cannot by means of a literary image of this kind form a correct opinion on the essence of those cardinal changes which have taken place since Stalin's death in the social, political, economic and spiritual life of Soviet society.

Clear, bright horizons of the communist morrow have opened up before our people. Knowledge of the fact that the present generation shall live under communism swells the hearts of Soviet people with pride for their country, spurs them on to labour feats for the sake of communism. Today all people in our country breathe freely, regard one another trustfully, without suspicion, and are confident of their present and future which is guaranteed them by the entire system of life.

By eliminating the consequences of the Stalin personality cult, the Communist Party has removed the obstacles which cramped the initiative and activity of the working people, and has provided the most favourable conditions for the development of their creative forces.



A new period has begun in the life of the Party and the people. While overcoming the harmful consequences of the personality cult, the Party has been vigorously restoring the Leninist standards in the life of the Party and the state. It has been promoting socialist democracy and rallying all efforts for the full-scale building of a communist society. (*Prolonged applause.*)

But this in no way means that now, after the denunciation of the personality cult, things are let to take their own course, that the reins of government have allegedly been loosened, that the ship of society is drifting at random and that everyone can be self-willed, behave as he likes it. No. The Party has pursued and will consistently and firmly pursue the Leninist course that has been charted by it, coming out relentlessly against any vacillations in ideology and attempts to violate the norms of life of our society.

I should like to touch upon another question linked with the portrayal of the period of the personality cult in literature. Magazines and publishing houses are said to be flooded with manuscripts about the life of people in exile, prisons and camps.

I repeat once more that it is a very dangerous theme and difficult material to tackle. The less responsibility a man feels for the present and the future of our country and the Party, the more light-heartedly do those who like sensations and "spicy" stuff pounce on this material.

*Exclamations: Correct! (Applause.)*

You produce a sensation, some "spicy" stuff, and who will fall upon it? This "spicy" stuff will, like carrion, attract flies, huge fat flies, and all kind of bourgeois scum will come crawling from abroad.

He who wants to delight our enemies can easily render them a service. He who wants to serve the cause of our people, the cause of our Party, will take such a theme, look at it, weigh it up, and if he feels he can cope with this material, he will create a work useful for the people and will present the material in such a way that it will strengthen the forces of the people, help our Party rally the people and accelerate their advance towards the great goal. But not everyone can cope with such a task although, apparently, many are anxious to lay their hands on such material.

A sense of measure is needed here. If all writers started writing only on these themes what kind of literature would we have then!

The Central Committee of the Party is receiving letters in which people express their concern over the fact that in some works of literature the condition of Jews in our country is misrepresented. As you know from the exchange of letters between the British philosopher, Bertrand Russell, and myself, the bourgeois press is even conducting a campaign of slander against us.

We already touched upon this question at our meeting last December in connection with Evtushenko's poem *Babi Yar*. The circumstances demand that we again return to this question.

What was this poem criticized for? It was criticized because the author could not truthfully show and condemn the fascist, precisely the fascist criminals for the mass slaughter perpetrated by them at Babi Yar. The poem presents things in a way that only Jews were the victims of fascist atrocities while, as is known, many Russians, Ukrainians and Soviet people of other nationalities were murdered by Hitlerite butchers. The poem

reveals that its author did not show political maturity and was ignorant of historical facts.

For whom and for what purpose was it necessary to present the matter in a way that the Jews are allegedly discriminated by somebody in our country? This is not true. Since the October Revolution the Jews have enjoyed equal rights with the other peoples of the Soviet Union in all respects. There is no Jewish question in our country, and those who invent it echo alien voices.

As for the Russian working class, it was a relentless enemy of any national oppression, including anti-Semitism, before the Revolution as well.

Before the Revolution I lived among miners. Workers censored those who took part in Jewish pogroms which were inspired by the tsarist government, capitalists, landlords and the bourgeoisie. They needed pogroms as a means of diverting the working people from the revolutionary struggle. The pogroms were organized by the police, gendarmery, members of the Black Hundreds who recruited thugs among the dregs of society, de-classed elements. In towns many janitors were their agents.

For instance, the noted Bolshevik revolutionary, Bauman, who was not a Jew, was killed in Moscow by a janitor on the instructions of the gendarmery.

The internationalism of Russia's working class is beautifully depicted in Gorky's remarkable novel *Mother*. The ranks of the revolutionary workers included representatives of different nationalities. Recall, for instance, the Russian worker Pavel Vlasov and the Ukrainian Andrei Nakhodka.

I spent my childhood and youth in Yuzovka, where many Jews lived at the time. At the plant there I worked for some time as assistant to fitter Yakov Isaakovich Kutikov. He was a skilled worker. There were other Jews among the workers. I remember that the copper shop's foundryman was a Jew; this profession was estimated very highly in those days. I often saw that foundryman. He was obviously a religious man and did not work on Saturdays, but since all the Ukrainians, Russians and others worked, he also spent the whole day at the plant, without, however, doing any work.

Russians, Ukrainians, Jews, Poles, Latvians, Estonians and people of other nationalities worked at that plant. At times nobody even knew of what nationality one or another worker was. The relations among the workers of all the nationalities were comradely.

That is what class unity, proletarian internationalism is.

When I was in the United States of America and was travelling to Los Angeles in a car we were joined by the city's Deputy Mayor, as he introduced himself. He spoke Russian, not too well, but rather fluently. I looked at him and said:

"How do you happen to know the Russian language?"

"Oh, I lived in Rostov. My father was a Second Guild Merchant."

People like that lived in St. Petersburg and in other places, in fact, wherever they liked.

So you see, it appears that in tsarist times the Jew Kutikov with whom I worked at the plant could not live wherever he liked, whereas a Jew like the father of the Los Angeles City's Deputy Mayor could live wherever he wanted.

That was how the tsarist government regarded the national question. It also approached that question from the class point of view. That is why the Jews among the

big merchants and capitalists had the right to live everywhere, while the Jewish poor shared the plight of the Russian, Ukrainian and other workers. They had to work, to live in hovels and shoulder the burden of forced labour like all the other peoples of tsarist Russia.

Different people <sup>behaved</sup> ~~deported themselves~~ in different ways in the period of the Patriotic War against the fascist invaders as well. In those days a great deal of heroism was displayed by the Jews included. Those who earned the right were awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. Many were awarded Government Orders and Medals. I can name, for example, Hero of the Soviet Union General Kreiser. He was Assistant Commander-in-Chief of the Second Guards Army during the great battle of the Volga, and fought in the battles for the liberation of the Donbas and the Crimea. At present General Kreiser is in command of our forces in the Far East.

There were also cases of treason on the part of people of different nationalities. I can cite the following fact. When Paulus' group was surrounded and then crushed, a part in the capturing of Paulus' headquarters was taken by the 64th Army commanded by General Shumilov. General Z. T. Serdyuk who was a member of the Military Council called me up and said that among the war prisoners captured with Paulus' headquarters was a former instructor of the Kiev City Komsomol Committee, a man named Kogan.

"How did he happen to be with them?" I asked. "You aren't mistaken, are you?"

"No, I'm not mistaken," replied Comrade Serdyuk. "That Kogan was an interpreter in Paulus' staff."

In the capture of Paulus' men participated a mechanized brigade commanded by Colonel Burmakov, and the commissar of that brigade was Comrade Vinokur, a Jew by nationality. I knew Vinokur since 1931 when I was Secretary of the Bauman District Party Committee in Moscow and he Secretary of the Party nucleus at the dairy factory.

So, there you are: one Jew served as an interpreter in Paulus' staff, while another, serving in the ranks of our troops, took part in the capturing of Paulus and his interpreter.

The conduct of men is appraised not from the national but from the class point of view.

It is not in the interests of our cause to poke around in the refuse heaps of the past for examples of disagreements among the workers of different nationalities. It is not upon them that the responsibility for the incitement of national enmity and national oppression lies. That is the handiwork of the exploiting classes. As for the betrayers of the interests of the Revolution, the hirelings of tsarism, of the landlords and the bourgeoisie recruited them everywhere and found venal creatures among people of different nationalities.

It is absurd to blame the Russian people for the dirty provocations of the Black-Hundreders and it is just as absurd to place the responsibility for nationalism and "Bund" Zionism, for the provocations of Azef and Zhitomirsky ("Otsov"), the different Jewish organizations associated in their time with the "Zubatovites" and the tsarist Secret Political Police, on all the Jewish people.

Our Leninist Party consistently pursues a policy of friendship among the peoples, rears the Soviet people in a spirit of internationalism, of intolerance towards all and any

manifestations of race discrimination and national strife. The lofty and noble ideals of internationalism and fraternity among the peoples are upheld by our art.

An important question is that of the visits to foreign countries by our creative workers. The Central Committee of the Party attaches great importance to these visits. It is necessary that Soviet writers get an opportunity to see with their own eyes the life of the peoples in different countries, so that they might create works on the life and struggle of the working people, against imperialism and colonialism, for peace, freedom and happiness of the peoples. The works of Soviet literature and art permeated with the spirit of internationalism faithfully depict the life and struggle of the peoples of the socialist countries.

But there have also been occasions when the visits of writers to foreign countries not only failed to be of use but proved to be against the interests of our country.

One reads the statements made by some of the Soviet writers abroad and wonders what they were concerned with, whether with telling the truth about the successes of the Soviet people, or whether with trying hard to curry favour with the foreign bourgeois public. Such "tourists" hand out their interviews right and left to various bourgeois, including the most reactionary, newspapers, magazines and news agencies, in which they spread with amazing irresponsibility yarns about life in their own country.

An unpleasant impression has been left by the trip to France of the writers Victor Nekrasov, Konstantin Paustovsky and Andrei Voznesensky. Valentin Katayev was also imprudent in his statements during his visit to America.

They'll flatter an unsteady man abroad, call him "a symbol of the new epoch" or something like that, and he will forget where he has come from, where he is, and what for he has come there and will begin to talk rubbish.

Quite recently poet Evgeni Evtushenko made a trip to Western Germany and France. He has just returned from Paris where he addressed audiences of many thousands of workers, students and friends of the Soviet Union. Comrade Evtushenko, it must be admitted, conducted himself worthily during this trip. But he too, if the *Lettres Francaises* magazine is to be trusted, could not withstand the temptation to merit the praise of the bourgeois public.

The poet strangely informed his listeners about the attitude shown in this country towards his poem *Babi Yar*, telling them that the poem had been accepted by the people but criticized by the dogmatists. But it is widely known that Comrade Evtushenko's poem has been criticized by Communists. How can one forget this and fail to draw conclusions for oneself?

The bourgeois press often praises some of our workers of art for the fact that they do not attempt, as this press alleges, "to beat retreat under the covering fire of dialectic tricks," when their observations do not conform to "Party doctrine."

Such praise is insulting to a Soviet man. Vladimir Ilyich Lenin was fond of quoting the beautiful lines of the poet Nekrasov:

*He hears the voice of approbation  
Not in the dulcet sounds of praise  
But in his foes' vituperation.*

This was written by Comrade Nekrasov, not by this Nekrasov, but by the Nekrasov whom everybody knows. (*Laughter. Applause.*)

Everybody should understand the time we are living in.

Socialism has won once and for all in our country. Today the frontiers of socialism have been widely broadened. The army of the builders of socialism and communism numbers more than 1,000 million people in its ranks. And there are over 3,000 million living on the globe.

If our forces are growing, neither does the enemy slumber. Dreading the growing strength of socialism, he maliciously sharpens his weapons against the lands of socialism for the war he is preparing. The enemies of communism stake their hopes on ideological subversive activities in the socialist countries. You must always remember this, comrades, and keep your arms in fighting trim, ready for action. (*Prolonged applause.*)

Comrades, we have discussed here a wide range of questions of importance to our state, to the ideological work of the Party. The fact that we are meeting together in a comradely atmosphere, that we are discussing together problems of concern to all of us, is a manifestation of the new situation that has developed in our country in recent years.

The people and the Party are deeply interested to see that artistic creation in our country develops in the right direction. The line of development of literature and art has been defined by the Party Programme which was discussed by the entire nation and received the universal support and approval of the workers, collective farmers and intellectuals.

How best and most correctly to implement this line in works of art each of you decides in accordance with his understanding of his duty to the people and the peculiarities of his talent, of his artistic individuality.

The meetings between the leaders of the Party and Government and men of letters and art, the criticism of shortcomings, the joint definition of the new tasks advanced by life, the frank discussions which took place during these meetings—all this shows that we are unanimous in the assessment of the successes and shortcomings of literature and art. I think that today's exchange of views will be of great significance to the further development of literature and art. (*Prolonged applause.*)

We call upon Soviet writers and men of art, the true helpers of the Party, to rally their ranks even more closely and, under the leadership of the Leninist Central Committee, to direct their efforts towards achieving new successes in building communism. (*Stormy prolonged applause. Everybody rises.*)